*It saddens me because I am not
represented in the classroom and
as society becomes more diverse,
we are not recognised in the
profession.*
(A BME student teacher)

THE UNRECOGNISED:
A Study of how some Black and Minority Ethnic Student Teachers face the Challenges of Initial Teacher Education in England

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BA Hons (English) with QTS.   MA in Education.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted in substantially the same form for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Signed:

Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks go to my supervisors Dr. Sally Elton-Chalcraft and Prof. Margaret Ledwith, who guided me into the realms of in-depth research and the knowledge that it can alter thinking and make a difference. To my husband, Philip and sons, Mark, Aidan and Benedict who would not let me give up. To the research participants who urged me to complete this thesis because they believed this research would tell their story and that of other black people in teacher training.

I am indebted to the University of Cumbria for providing research study opportunity to enable the completion of this thesis.

Abstract

Racism, as a covert but pervasive presence in teacher training in England, remains a major structural issue and its effects on student teachers, from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, are real and troubling. This Study asserts that they face multiple challenges in the Initial Teacher Education process which has implications for the teaching workforce and for pupils in schools. While national statistics for recruitment of BME applicants onto Initial Teacher Education courses are at good levels, in proportion to the BME population in general, their numbers are not viable because the drop-out rate between starting and completing courses, and becoming employed as classroom teachers, is significant. Furthermore the numbers of BME qualified teachers are small in relation to both the BME and white populations in England. This Study, which focuses on 32 BME student teachers at four universities across England, looks at how they journey through and negotiate obstacles and microagressions on their ITE courses. It shows that for those who choose to continue on their teaching course, their responses and modes of coping are complex and varied. Using Critical Race Theory to analyse their stories and make visible the way that hidden racisms within ITE can silence and disempower BME student teachers, the key findings reveal that they may adopt four 'cultural positions': Manoeuvred Cultural Position, Vibrant Cultural Position, Discerning Cultural Position, Stagnated Cultural Position. These demonstrate whether they are managing, struggling, culturally visible or culturally invisible. This study has implications for teacher educators and senior managers in universities involved in Initial Teacher Education in England.

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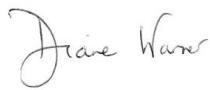
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Glossary

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CT	Critical Theory
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Educational Institution
KS1	Key Stage One (five to seven year-old children in the Primary School)
KS2	Key Stage Two (seven to 11 year-old children in the Primary School)
NC	National Curriculum
NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
TDA	Teacher Development Agency
PG	Postgraduate
UG	Undergraduate
UK	The United Kingdom of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Racism, as a hidden and pervasive presence in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England, remains a major structural issue and its effects on students from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups are real and troubling (Bhopal, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2016). While national statistics for BME student teachers are at good levels in proportion to the BME population, they are not viable because the drop-out rate between qualifying and getting into the classroom, is higher than for white student teachers (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016; Haque & Elliott, 2017). This PhD. study examines the journey of 32 Black and Minority Ethnic student teachers, from four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across England, as they journey through Initial Teacher Education (ITE). They are on full-time primary teaching courses and come from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. 'Chapter One: Introduction' will discuss my motivations for the study and my position as a critical BME researcher, situate the topic within national educational policy, defend the need for further research in this field and outline the study's aims and organisation.

1.1 Being a black researcher

Early on in my career as a black tutor in a white university I wrote an autobiographical piece published in Ledwith (2011, pp.178-179) about challenging racial and ethnic ignorance among my white student teachers (Fig.1.1).

Fig. 1.1
Challenging white student teachers as a black ITE tutor

Seeds of resistance

"As a black university teacher in a nearly all-white university, I sometimes find this a curious and sometimes exciting situation to be in. When it troubles me, I wonder what I am doing here and think a lot about the whiteness of most of my students – they both study in a white university and come from white home backgrounds. I am worried about unwittingly being part of extending this monoculture and reinforcing their existing ways of thinking and acting. As they are training to be teachers, the terrifying question is what will this racist effect have on future generations of children?

"In answering this question I recall bell hooks' (1991) desire to open our eyes to the casual and almost porous nature of racism; an entity which infiltrates our existence and to which most people are party. In talking to my students I found doorways into their worlds which defied me making simplistic views about their outlook. I admit to being dismayed about their view that teachers should not notice a child's colour or ethnicity because this betrayed an adamant blindness to the reality of being black in a white society. I was cautiously optimistic when they started telling me vignettes which revealed other dimensions about them. I call these 'seeds of resistance', resistance against adopting a negative mindset.

"There was Lou's story of growing up in a white, working-class area of a racially divided northern town, further compounded by attending a white, church school. Yet on placement, at a white primary school she described as narrow and inward-looking, she was confronted by an unpleasant situation.

> '... they had an Asian child join the school, the parents were very against it and they complained. It was white, working-class ... really old-fashioned, values like that, but they were coming from the parents, rather than the school. Maybe they [school] were concerned about upsetting people, that's why they didn't challenge it.'

"Jessica related her feelings of being hampered by the monocultural nature of the university campus and the views of other white students, who have told her that they are disappointed to be in schools with little or no white children.

> 'I think it's important ... it's the different experience. I know some people would say "teaching's teaching", but from what I know [about multiculturalism], this is very different from the way I'm teaching at the minute.'

"Will, white in colour and culture, came from Ukrainian grandparents which he realised, as an adult, did affect his outlook. He said:

> 'My grandparents were Ukrainian, my granddad was dark skinned and my mother was a single teenage mum, so although I did not know it at the time, I grew up understanding what it meant to be different.'

"After growing up in a white Lancashire village, Will recognised how his background had undergirded some of his feelings towards racial issues. He firmly stated that teachers should 'reflect what's life', not hide facts about the reality of multiracial Britain and racism.

"These students are beginning to comprehend the essence and immorality of racial injustice and inequality. They are unformed and small insights, but they make it possible for me to move forward with hope."

In this extract I show realisation that my role is key to enabling non-discriminatory thinking and practices among the white student teachers so that they could educate children similarly. I was one of a handful of BME staff at the university and felt justified in this endeavour because I saw racism as embedded in majority-ethnic thinking and wanted to explore that.   The responses of these white student teachers, also documented in Warner (2010) and Warner & Elton-Chalcraft (2018), helped me to grasp that researching race is complex. I found that these white student teachers, chosen randomly from the student teacher cohort at the university, were not narrow or closed in their thinking about race, even though I found them to have some stereotypical ideas and minimal knowledge about other cultures. They showed some understanding of racism in school and were aware of becoming teachers in a multi-racial society. My stereotypical thinking of them being unaware and dismissive of racial issues, was therefore partly unfounded. In this PhD study I take my understandings of race in ITE further, this time with BME students because I see, to some extent, in the BME participants of this study, a mirroring of myself because I too was once a BME student teacher in England. These participants showed that they are pushing within and against constraints in ITE which leaves little room for them to express themselves as raced beings (Warmington, 2008).

Through compiling and listening to the voices of BME student teachers, through their stories, this study will raise questions, challenges and insights about how ITE in England can pose problems for BME student teachers, (Basit et al, 2006; Basit et al, 2007; Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007), deny their history and cultures through standardised and majority-ethnic curricula and professional requirements (Siraj-Blatchford, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano and Yosso, 2016); raise identity challenges (Allard & Santoro, 2006; Roberts, 2007; Maylor & Ross, 2009) and

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restrict their employment opportunities (Powney et al, 2003; Haque, 2017). The idea

of BME student teachers existing within a system from which they desire success and

professional outcomes but face issues and obstacles surrounding their racial and

cultural identity, enabled me to understand that while bureaucratic rhetoric, appears to

welcome applications from a diverse range of people and show multicultural images

of teachers and student teachers on their websites, this is not matched by reality (DfE,

2010; NCTL, 2017).

1.1.1   The purpose of this study

In my diagram below of the purpose of my study(Fig. 1.2), I trace the trajectory and

outcomes I envision for the study which surround the notion that ITE in England is a

significant system of power because it encompasses structures of control and coercion

to maintain the influence of the cultural majority and reduce the impact of those

outside (Gillborn, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Leonardo, 2016).   The continuation

of racism in higher education in general in the 21st century, is recognised as pervasive

and destructive to the hopes and outcomes of BME students, student teachers and

qualified teachers (Runnymede Trust, 2010a; Alexander & Arday, 2015; Mirza, 2015;

Haque & Elliott, 2017). My diagram shows that this study aims to expose, challenge

discuss and be part of the transformation of understandings about racial and cultural

issues facing BME student teachers by using Critical Race Theory (CRT) (Ladson-

Billings, 2016). I use CRT to support understanding of the issues and to interpret and

contextualise the data through its lens of using participants' stories, to reveal how ITE

can suppress, ignore and erase BME student teachers' contributions, leading to issues

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of silence, struggle and disorientation and conversely provide a safe and fertile environment for them to express their hopes and visions (Zamudio et al, 2011; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). I explain and defend CRT in 'Chapter Three: Methodology, Methods and Ethics'.

I believe that BME student teachers experience a complex and difficult compliance, balancing their teacher education between their racial and cultural selves and fitting in with white-centric ITE requirements. They have to assess their situation more carefully than their white peers and consider amending how they express their racial and ethnic backgrounds; or if they resist they suffer the consequences of feeling demeaned and worthless, being seen as unacceptable or possible failure of the course for some, particularly if their race and ethnicity becomes an issue on school placement (Villenhas & Deyhle, 1999; Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007).   Within this picture is the idea that their responses will be complex and varied, because their situations are complex (Roberts, 2007).   It is not a simple matter of sink or swim on their ITE course but a continuum of decision-making where changing themselves to fit majority-ethnic expectations and requirements lies at one end and questioning and asserting their racial and ethnic identities lie at the other end (Delgado, 2002; Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008).

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Fig. 1.2

The purpose of this Study

This Study	Uses the tools of…. → **Critical Race Theory (Counter-story)**

Expose

Challenge   **Understand**

Interpret

Transform   **Contextualise**

ITE in England (a system of power)

A difficult compliance for BME student teachers to both uphold their cultural identities and fit in with white-centric ITE requirements.

Assess, change or amend cultural ties and background. Resist and suffer potential failure.

suppress   **ignore**   **erase**

BME student teachers' stories gained through focus groups and individual interviews.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Silence   **Struggle**   **Disorientation**

Question   **Assert**   **Resist**   **Hope**

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1.1.2 My research position

My study is qualitative and critical and therefore demands that I occupy as transparent and self-conscious position as possible (Housee, 2008).   My own journey involved some personal struggle and bemusement about how to cope with my racial and cultural identity because I completed my teacher education at a mainly white university. I shared my own journey as a BME student teacher with the participants, to demonstrate my desire to be transparent which may have given my research participants permission to 'open up' more and to share their stories at a deeper level. Critical researchers are required to be more open about their ontological and epistemological positions which should have the effect of equalising power between the researcher and participants and enabling more direct confrontation of the issues (Parker & Roberts, 2011).   Hylton (2012) and Roberts (Parker and Roberts, 2011) believe the researcher's ability to ameliorate power differentials in race research, is further promoted when using a Critical Race Theory approach, because it ensures the research is with, rather than on, the participants.   I also need to recognise differences between my privileged position as a middle-class lecturer and the participants in this study and show that I am consciously aware that my position may affect the analysis and presentation of the data (Duncan, 2005; Bhopal & Preston, 2012).   Maylor (2009a) warns that black researchers working with black participants can still face pain and rejection due to naïve assumptions of shared backgrounds and culture. It therefore requires self-examination and reflection, exercising sensitivity to the changing nature of race and placing it at the centre of inquiries (Parker & Roberts, 2011; Phoenix, 2013). BME researchers, examining BME issues, may be more emotionally connected and less dispassionate because there is a strong sense of 'we

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are travelling with you' or as Roberts (2013) states, "being implicated and embedded"

in the research (p.350). However Roberts warns that biography can also narrow your

field of vision so that you see what you want to see in a neat, self-justifying manner.

The dangers and opportunities of this are important to consider and to demonstrate an

ability to grasp a view from other sides which is part of troubling self-conceptions and

data analysis. The ethics of black researcher positionality is explored further in

'Chapter Three: Methodology, Methods and Ethics'.

1.2 The nature of ITE as a social force

It can be argued that ITE does not understand or see BME student teachers as valuable

contributors because of recruitment and retention statistics and personal stories

(Alexander & Arday, 2015, Mirza, 2015, Reay, 2015).   BME students are variably

invisible and undervalued within a white-majority system engaged in strengthening

and recycling its power (Gilroy, 2004; Hylton et al, 2011). Some race researchers

argue that this situation emanates from BME peoples negotiating obstacles of culture,

history and racisms resulting from colonialism and migration; most noticeably from

the decades of large-scale immigration in the 1950s and 1960s from the Caribbean

and Asia (Gilroy, 1987; Bhabha, 1994).   This has an impact on the sense of identity

and belonging among BME people, including student teachers, who may on the one

hand question and under-value their skills and abilities but conversely may also assert

themselves and their racial and cultural identities (Maylor, 2010).   However as they

journey through ITE, their professional identities are made to conform "to a model

powerfully imposed by policy makers at a distance" (Satterthwaite, 2006, p.1). This

raises challenges for educational systems that may not respond appropriately or at all

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because they are often designed to fit white-majority interests and mind-sets (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). All of these obstacles lead to uneasy and tough processes of acceptance and integration for BME student teachers and reveal persistent deep-rooted racism in the fabric of institutions and society (Parekh, 2000; Modood, 2010).

1.2.1   The problem of policy and teacher education

Policy makers in ITE are concerned to train teachers to educate children to meet existing and projected future needs in the country and in international life (Gove, 2013; Greening, 2017).   Ball (2017) observes that education in England in the last 30 years, has been an arena of intense policy change and overload as English educational policy has veered from neo-liberal stances of globalisation and skills, to current neo-conservative social engineering moves, focusing on values, individualism and meritocracy.   This can be seen in the the 'opportunity for all' idea with nationhood, democracy, equality and the rule of law as key components (Greening, 2017).   It built on an earlier governmental 'educational basics' vision that teachers should have strong subject knowledge, particularly in core subjects, and adhere to behaviours which reflected policy on raising pupil attainment to match international competition. There are also attempts to avert what may be deemed the possibility of social anarchy and create a sense of nationhood in initiatives such as 'Prevent' (Home Office, 2011). Teacher education faces the challenge of recognising and working for diversity and difference in the teaching workforce, because an ethnically-diverse, gender-balanced, open-minded workforce, of varying social groups, opens the pathways of knowledge

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and understanding, which in turn can lead to greater equity (Siraj-Blatchford, 1993; Davies & Crozier, 2005; Hick et al, 2011).

Within this context, the justification for further research on the issues and problems of BME student teachers recognises that their needs and the unique contributions they bring to the profession are in conflict with market-driven government policy (Tomlinson, 2011). In recent policy statements there is no mention of racial and cultural diversity as necessary components of the teaching force in England (Gove, 2013; Greening, 2017) and by 2016 grants for specific funding for recruitment of BME people into teaching have largely been stopped (Gillborn, 2016). This is in parallel to the increasing BME population in England and Wales that the Runnymede Trust (2010b) has predicted to reach 20 million or nearly 30% of the population of both countries, by 2051.   This is a rise of 21% from the current BME population of the whole of the UK which is currently about 9% (ONS, 2016).   This situation lies against the backdrop of England's historical uneasiness and hostility about immigration (Gilroy, 2000; Phillips, 1998 & 2005; Olusoga, 2016). The effect of what might become a more insular Britain, on teacher education and in classrooms, may be less understanding and tolerant of non-UK cultures; although there are signs of teacher and pupil resistance to teaching patriotic or British values in a government-defined way, and replacing 'British-ness' and anti-terrorism initiatives with learning about one another and working together (Hand & Pearce, 2009; Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2017). Nevertheless this side-stepping of race in teacher education is a recurring theme in policy and affects BME student teachers' progression (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Hick et al, 2011; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016). Furthermore Mirza (2015) believes that research into BME issues is a "legal and moral" imperative (p.29).

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1.3 The nature of Initial Teacher Education as a process for BME student teachers

Existing studies of BME student teachers' experiences, document recurring difficulties of fitting into white-majority settings and mind-sets, both at university and on placement, and most importantly, the microaggressions and inequalities they perceive that arise from these (Pole, 1999; Roberts, 2007; Wilkins & Lall, 2011; Bhopal, 2015). As stated earlier, funding for the specific recruitment and retention of BME applicants, in the first decade of the 21st century, largely diminished and disappeared and race and ethnic minority issues became notable in their absence in policy making over time (Tomlinson, 2011; Gillborn, 2016).   In addition, wider questioning of the politics of a 'top-down' discourse and an assertion of speaking 'truth to power' has been made as a response to the politics of overlooking of minority issues in ITE (Satterthwaite, 2005 & 2006).   Studies of BME student teachers' experiences sharply critique and challenge existing policy by exposing the social and cultural engineering of the neo-conservatism of contemporary UK politics that demands compliance to a uniform way of expressing and performing (Tomlinson, 2008).

Significant literature covering recruitment and retention, experiences of racism and adoption of professional identities, examines the shifting sands of individual understandings, perceptions and experiences, which reveal teacher education for BME student teachers to be a complex and trying process (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005; Basit et al, 2006; Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007; Maylor & Ross, 2009; Bhopal, 2015). The field exposes how the 'one size fits all' discourse of successive governments has omitted issues of race and ethnicity, creating a 'deracialised' ITE

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(Gillborn, 2004, and Troyna, 1993).   On campus BME student teachers are required

to take part in courses which reflect and assume white-majority modes of thinking,

and on school placements they must teach curricula that embodies a white-majority

view (Jessop & Williams, 2009).   Having to accept and be silent about their cultural

identity can be emotionally and mentally draining for BME student teachers,

impacting on their recruitment and retention while their white counterparts occupy

advantageous, expected and privileged positions (Picower, 2009).   Further details

about the specific BME student teacher position are discussed in 'Chapter Two:

Literature Review'.

1.4 The old is still new

Why is there a need for another study like this one, on BME student teachers' issues?

As presented earlier and more deeply discussed in 'Chapter Two: Literature Review'

this field contains some important and pertinent studies. Milner, Pearman & McGee

(2013) believe there is a lack of race theory and research in teacher education which

impedes conceptualisation of the reality of racism in the field, so new and further

insights need to be continually developed. As racism continues to evolve, so does

race research, particularly of new and emerging issues, because the old is still new

and racism remains "lodged deep within our institutional walls" (Mirza, 2015, p.27).

If BME student teachers are to be valued, recognised for their worth and seen as equal

to the majority culture, my study will be a contribution towards this so that there is

greater acceptance and change in ITE provision (Smith, 2013; Bhopal, 2015).

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Continued race research is also necessary because while England has made significant changes to law, education, employment and healthcare and other areas of social infrastructure, division based on skin colour and country of origin, persists (Gilroy, 1987 & 2004; Gillborn et al, 2016).   This division is "purposefully, skilfully slow to change" (Milner, Pearman & McGee, 2013, p.344) and powerful groups continue to gain privileges, based on the repression and marginalisation of others (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). Gillborn et al (2016) assert that any improvements towards social equity for BME student teachers, are limited and largely for the benefit of white students and educators.   For example, a university that raises its profile of being inclusive, through its policies and practices, will benefit by appearing equitable, but the impact on BME groups and individuals may be negligible (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). Milner (2007) and Adams (2005) argue that a race research agenda in ITE should use precise language and have a developed conceptual space to incorporate the layers and subtleties reflecting the varieties of experiences and the changing faces of racisms. Such a response would be able to name racisms and racialised difficulties encountered regularly by BME students; reflect on these by bringing in a variety of different departments from the university to provide their perspective; and address and contribute to an evolving policy and practice to not only meet need but to also plan for the future (Pilkington, 2015).

Race research challenges the idea that we live in post-race times (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Mirza, 2015). The concept of post- race, which purports that racism is reduced due to social changes, improved equality and achievement available for all, is seen as diverting and misjudged because it simplifies racism as tangible and containable, instead of being unseen, persistent and constantly changing (Mirza, in Ali et al, 2010).

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I argue therefore that continued race research and developing theories of race, propose challenges and alternatives to this maintenance of power by those of a majority-ethnic mindset. Maylor's (2009a) argument that studies of race need to recognise the inherent tensions and challenges and the need to problematise its many aspects, has provided undergirding principles in my study.

1.5   The rationale behind this study

This research involved 32 BME student teachers in the English ITE system. They were studying to be Primary teachers on full-time, campus-based courses from four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the country. The focus of the study is on their perceptions, understandings and experiences as they journeyed through ITE as told through their stories.   My study supports the idea that education is diverse in its nature because it contains multiple and conflicting discourses (Bhopal and Preston, 2012).   This is supported by Denscombe's (2010) argument that the purpose of qualitative research is to describe "motives, constructions, perceptions and experiences" in order to present phenomena as "complex and multifaceted" (p.133). This is especially true of race research in education where conflicts and ambiguities are recognised as part of deepening understanding and building credibility (Phoenix, 2013; Roberts 2013).   My study deconstructs and examines the impact of everyday racialised difficulties and micro-agressions as well as larger occurrences in university and on school placement of the participant student teachers. The study uses the lens of Critical Race Theory that argues for a non-essentialised, non-steroetypical lens to represent BME peoples, in order to listen to their stories and re-present their realities.

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An earlier study that influenced my nascent ideas for this study identified three distinct groups of student teachers in regard to their ITE journey (Basit et al, 2007). These groups were:

> *'Racialiers' are acutely aware of racism in educational contexts and society in general, and demand action to be taken to eradicate it. The 'Disavowers' do not acknowledge the existence of racism or admit to being racially discriminated against, and are inclined to carry on. The 'Individualizers' blame themselves for the difficulties encountered and believe that if they are facing prejudice, then it is their own fault* (p.296).

This research pointed out that categorizing in race research is a complex and continuous process because experience, perceptions and external factors constantly change in response to the multi-identifications of the participants. It emphasised that the named groups of BME student teachers in the study were signifiers and heuristic, rather than simplified, concrete categories. This is important because re-presenting race is always an exploratory and listening endeavour.   Solórzano and Yosso (2016) contend that analyses of race and racism should move from a simple black and white discourse to an examination of multiple voices within a dominant power base, such as the institution of ITE.   The idea of multiple voices resonates with research which argues for the notion of changing identities of BME people, as an assertion of self (Roberts, 2007; Maylor, 2010). This has implications for student teachers, whose identity is affected as they journey through ITE and shown in their response to understanding and acting on the implications of their race and ethnicity.

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1.5.1 Using a suitable race methodology

My study uses Critical Race Theory (CRT) to examine the data and challenge the disadvantaging of BME students in English ITE.   CRT is used to expose the reality of racism in ITE, make visible and disrupt hidden and neutralised majoritarian discourses, such as those which purport objectivity and universality (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano and Yosso, 2016). I use key tenets from CRT (Delgado, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) that I apply to and use to analyse the data.   The first tenet is that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England, particularly through racial microagressions and problems at university and on school placement.   Second is the tenet that questions the idea that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers.   Third is the tenet that CRT understands race as a social construct which in ITE can be used to control how BME student teachers progress through different stages of their course, including having to learn within a white-centric ITE curricula that does not easily accept racial minority viewpoints. This means that social and economic underlying structures, that favour white students, often remain unchanged, placing BME student teachers at risk of being side-lined or failing their course.   A fourth tenet is that CRT understands that intersectionality means BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course. The fifth tenet is that BME student teachers have the authority to speak about their experiences of racism in their own way, in order to express their views and feelings. The data for this study is the stories of the BME student teachers, which

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CRT sees as counter stories because they challenge the majoritarian narrative in ITE in England.

The use of CRT as a methodology in my study listens to the voices of the BME student teacher participants and re-presents their stories, a method that Solórzano and Yosso (2016) believe is "a tool for exposing, analysing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege" (p.32). CRT will help me to forefront BME student teachers' issues and raise challenges for ITE in England.

1.6   Organisation of the study

Aims:

i.   to develop an in-depth understanding of the reasons why Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people choose teaching and analyse its effects on their racial, ethnic and cultural identities.

ii.   to critically map how BME student teachers negotiate obstacles to progress through Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

iii.   to provide a space for the voices and issues of BME student teachers to be expressed, using Critical Race Theory.

iv.   to inform those involved in the practice and development of ITE, of the racial and cultural experiences of BME student teachers and how this affects their thinking, progress and professional practice.

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Main research questions:

1. What are the variety of factors influencing and motivating people from BME backgrounds to enter teacher education and how do they overcome barriers?

2. How far do the BME student teachers in the study, acknowledge and draw on their racial, ethnic and cultural background and experiences as they develop into teachers?

3. How does the race and ethnicity of the BME student teachers in the study, impact on their practice during ITE?

4. In what ways do the BME student teachers, in the study, perceive themselves in their training institution and how do they act and react as a consequence?

1.6.1 Organisation of the chapters

Chapter Two will present literature surrounding the national picture of BME student teachers. Chapter Three will discuss the approach of Critical Race Theory as the guiding methodology of my study, the methods of focus groups and individual interviewing, the role of the researcher and the particular issues of insider-outsider tensions faced by black researchers working with BME participants and wider ethical considerations. Chapter Four will analyse and present findings, arising out of participants' stories; and my *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers* provides insights into how BME student teachers respond to their teacher education. The Indicator is used in Chapter Five to discuss the insights gained from the participants' stories. Finally Chapter Six draws conclusions and makes recommendations for ITE tutors and HEI senior managers who have a direct impact on BME student teachers.

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1.7 Implications

The study has implications for a variety of audiences, which are specifically presented in the recommendations of 'Chapter Six: Conclusion'. These recommendations are focused on the role of ITE in valuing the unique and important contributions of BME student teachers (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Bhopal, 2015). Maylor & Ross, (2009) remind us why we uphold the need for racial equality in ITE:

> *… education has the subtlety and the nuance to make each individual feel that her or his cultural set is acknowledged and valued, thus empowering her or him as a learner…Racism is very properly an important concern for all teachers, but some of the subtleties of racist practice and behaviour may be more obvious or more capable of recognition, by teachers who have themselves some direct experience of having suffered from racist behaviours…Teachers are a particular and special category: they are the one face of civil society that every child will meet, every working day, through the whole of their formal education. It is therefore particularly critical that this 'face' of civil power be seen, visibly and explicitly, to represent all of our society.*
> (pp.241-242).

This quotation encompasses an important message about the purpose of a racially-diverse teaching workforce. Crucially all learners need to see and be educated by teachers of differing ethnic groups, otherwise we can assume part of their cultural understanding will be missing. Secondly BME teachers and student teachers, need to be able to access and thrive within ITE. Thirdly BME teachers and student teachers have a valuable and as Maylor and Ross (2009) state, a "critical" role to play in the teaching workforce. This study is an exploration into the journey of some BME student teachers in England at a time when DfE statistics reveal a disturbing lack of BME teachers in English classrooms and at least 10 years of education policy in which ITE has been shown to avoid and diminish diversity and difference in favour of

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a strongly standardised approach to the training of teachers (Evans, 2011; Smith,

2013; DfE, 2016; Gillborn et al, 2016).

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature will interrogate research that examines marginalising and undermining factors experienced by Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) student teachers. The aims of the study, stated in the previous chapter, seek to expose and critique the meritocratic and social engineering forces of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) practice which undermine and make BME experiences invisible. This chapter will therefore cover these areas: BME students in higher education (HE); recruitment and retention of BME students in ITE; de-racialisation in ITE; equality and race are not adding up; the reality of being a BME student teacher; deep-rooted racisms; and whiteness as a system of impenetrable power. These areas interlink and provide a breadth of exploration that map and examine the position of BME student teachers in English ITE.

2.1 BME students in Higher Education

English Higher Education has witnessed a significant expansion in BME student numbers in the last 30 to 40 years due to changes in and monitoring of recruitment and retention (Stevenson, 2012; Alexander & Arday, 2015).   In 1994 BME students' general HE numbers were reported at 13 per cent of the BME population in the UK (EHRC, 2010). Ten years later in 2004 the figure was 16 per cent (Connor et al, 2004). Further statistics from EHRC reveal that BME students continue to be well represented in HE in comparison to the majority-ethnic population. EHRC reports

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that between 1995 and 2009 the figure for all identified BME student groups rose from 1.3 to 1.7 million so that BME students represented 23 per cent of the undergraduate population (EHRC, 2010), although this figure also included overseas students. Some of the latest statistics report that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in England show a rise of BME undergraduate students, from 19 per cent in the year 2010 to 2011, to 23 per cent in the year 2013 to 2014 (HEFCE, 2015).

This picture of rising rates of recruitment of BME students into HE is tempered by factors which negate this picture of progress and success and which are reflected in negative experiences reported by BME students in HE. Studies show that the majority of BME students are found at post-1992 and newer universities, rather than at Russell Group universities; which is disproportionate to the distribution of white students between these types of universities (Connor et al, 2004; Runnymede Trust, 2010a). At Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, about 15 per cent of students are from BME groups compared to 83 per cent white students, and out of these the highest group is Indian students at 4 per cent; while the lowest are Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean at 0.5 and 0.6 per cent respectively (Boliver, 2015). Reasons for lower Russell Group admissions include rejecting BME applicants for lower A' level grades or the wrong combination of subjects at A' level, and the rejection of alternative qualifications (Bolivar, 2015). In addition expectations of full-time study with little or no allowance, by the university, for additional working to earn money during term-time, discouraged some BME applicants who were more likely to come from disadvantaged and poorer backgrounds (Connor et al, 2004; Reay, 2015).

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2.1.1.Discrepancy in attainment

Another factor in negating the picture of rising BME rates in HE is the discrepancy in degree attainment between BME and white students. In the year 2001-2002 statistics showed that out of students in England on full and part-time degrees, 60 per cent of white students gained first and upper second degrees compared to 40 per cent of BME and 'other' categories of students (Stevenson, 2012). More recent EHRC statistics reveal that the gap is growing to show 67 per cent of white students achieving upper second or first-class degrees as opposed to 36 per cent of BME students (EHRC, 2010). Research of 65 000 students in the year 2004 to 2005, into whether ethnicity was still a predictor of lower degree attainment, showed there is still an unexplained difference of degree attainment between students from minority ethnic communities and those from white communities (Broecke & Nicholls, 2007).   It has also been shown that BME students have a greater representation on pre-degree courses, such as foundation, certificate and diploma courses and are five times more likely to withdraw from a university course (Connor et al, 2004).   Connor et al (2004) found a range of factors led to student dissatisfaction and withdrawal. These included difficulties with the academic requirements which were based on traditional A' level modes of working, financial problems, institutional racism and difficulties relating to the culture of middle-class and white expectations.   These findings concurred with the later findings of Reay (2015) who found that the overwhelming traditional university culture, based on A'levels, leaving home at 18, emotional and financial support from family, is still the core mode of being a student and the basis on which university authorities and tutors operate.   Therefore while recruitment from BME groups into HE appears to be good, their completion, attainment, employment chances and career

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prospects remain lower than their white counterparts (Stevenson, 2012).   Reay (2015)
surmises that the policy of expanding the HE population, as part of the widening
participation agenda (DfES, 2003), has led to polarisation along class and racial lines,
leading to segregation, rather than inclusion.

2.2 Recruitment and retention of BME students in ITE: some statistics

This demographic of rising numbers, yet uneven outcomes between BME and white-majority students, including factors of retention, withdrawal and in-course difficulties, is reflected in the ITE picture in England. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries HEIs received increased Government funding to: expand diversity in ITE, including attracting students from BME backgrounds; increase the number of men going into primary teaching; and increase the number of mature entrants, including those from corporate business and the armed forces (DCSF, 2009). These initiatives resulted in some diversification of courses provided, such as part-time and flexible PGCE courses and foundation teaching courses, to meet the needs of mature, non-graduates with less time and money to train for teaching (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007; Evans, 2011). The former Teaching Agency (2012), reported that over 35 300 primary and secondary trainees were admitted onto courses in 2012, of which BME trainees comprised between 12% and 13% (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1
Ethnicity of student teachers in England 2010-2013

Year	White	Minority Ethnic	Total
2010/11	33,340	4,530	37,870
	88%	12%	100%
2011/12	31,590	4,360	35,950
	88%	12%	100%
2012/13	29,490	4,250	33,740
	87%	13%	100%

 (The Teaching Agency, 2012)

These Teaching Agency figures show an increase between 2008-10 when BME student teacher numbers were just over 11 per cent (Teaching Agency, 2012).   In addition HEFCE data (2015) shows that between 2012–2014 BME student teachers comprised two per cent of the overall HEI student population, in comparison to four per cent of white students (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2
Ethnicity of student teachers in England 2012-2014

	Academic year					
	2012-13					
	BME		**Unknown**		**White**	
	Numbers	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
.Initial Teacher Training	6,330	2%	655	2%	45,185	4%
	Academic year					
	2013-14					
	BME		**Unknown**		**White**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
	5,510	2%	410	2%	41,250	4%

(HEFCE, 2015)

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These HEFCE figures, which includes national and international students studying at English HEIs, still shows a buoyant level of BME students in relation to white students. Again this reflects a seemingly positive picture of BME student teacher recruitment. However statistics show that the conversion rate between BME student teachers and majority-ethnic students qualifying as teachers, in England, is lower. In 2011 DCSF figures reported 5.7 per cent of the total teaching population were from BME groups and more recent data reports between six and seven per cent of qualified teachers are from BME backgrounds (DfE, 2014a; DfE, 2014b & 2016). Haque & Elliott (2017) add that, out of this six to seven per cent, 10 per cent of secondary school teachers are from BME backgrounds, out of a BME pupil population of 25 per cent; while in Primary schools there are only 7 per cent of BME teachers out of a BME pupil population of 30 per cent. This means there are significantly less BME teachers than BME pupils. Two tables below (Table 2.3 and Table 2.4) present some of this discrepancy, for all qualified teachers across England.

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Table 2.3

Snapshot of discrepancy between BME teachers and BME pupils in some London boroughs and English local authorities.

(BBC, 2017)

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Table 2.4
Discrepancy between BME teachers and BME pupils in English regions

Region	Percentage of BME pupils 2015	Percentage of BME teachers 2015
North East	9.4%	1.2%
North West	19.9%	3.3%
Yorkshire and the Humber	23.3%	5%
East Midlands	20.8%	5.1%
West Midlands	32.2%	9.7%
East of England	21.8%	5.1%
Inner London	81.1%	26%
Outer London	64.7%	21.5%
South East	21.1%	4.3%
South West	11.9%	1.6%

(Haque, 2017, p.11)

2.2.1 Impact on the teaching profession and career progression of BME teachers

This low rate of conversion from ITE to qualified teacher status is also shown in low numbers of BME teachers, between six and seven per cent, in senior leader roles, including head, deputy and assistant head positions (Haque & Elliott, 2017; Haque, 2017). Haque's (2017) research shows that racism issues for BME teachers begin early in their career, is widespread and wears them down. In relation to BME student teachers Lander & Zaheerali (2016) believe that this low conversion rate is

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due to the difficulties encountered by BME student teachers during and following their course, including reports of racism, stereotyping and the burden of being expected to be cultural and religious role models and experts, which make them less confident about applying for teaching posts. They also face the barriers of schools believing they only need to employ BME teachers if they have a sizeable BME pupil population and parents and other school staff viewing and treating them as less skilled than white teachers (Haque & Elliott, 2017). DCSF (2009) evidence found that the placement experience, involving stringent requirements to fulfil the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012), particularly in the core subjects, behaviour management and assessment, impacted on their retention during courses. While on placements BME trainees did not enjoy the same level of good relationships with class teachers as white trainees, with only 33 per cent rating such relationships as 'very good', compared with 43 per cent of their white peers, while others reported feeling undervalued as individuals (DCSF, 2009, p.xii). The amount and level of support from mentors, was reported as both over-exacting and less effective and forthcoming.   This drained their confidence levels, negatively affected their understanding by making them confused and reduced their enjoyment and capacity to be creative in their teaching (Hoodless, 2004; Davies & Crozier, 2005; Basit et al, 2007).   Those who qualified as teachers faced equally difficult issues in the classroom. Some described the reality of teaching as a cultural shock which challenged their values and dismantled their ideals of teaching (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Others faced problems of securing work only in inner-city and deprived areas, being offered temporary contracts and in being seen as less competent that white teachers (Pole, 1999; Runnymede Trust, 2010b; Haque, & Elliot, 2017).   Links between ethnic monitoring and the promotion of equal

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opportunities have been shown to provide a context for and support of requirements identified by BME recruits that positively affects their recruitment and retention (Callender, Robinson & Robertson, 2006).

In the last two decades, the significant steps which had been taken to increase recruitment and retention of BME people into teaching, along with other minority groups, such as male applicants into Primary teaching, have been substantially reduced (Smith 2013). The withdrawal of bursaries and dedicated central responsibility were conspicuous and with it came a virtual blank within Government discourse about racial issues in teaching (Tomlinson, 2011). The task was given to individual education departments in universities instead, thereby removing BME recruitment and retention from government duty (Gillborn, 2016). The National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) is characterised by its efforts to standardise training through the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) and the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013), rather than building and supporting a diverse workforce to reflect increasing diversity in the population (Runnymede Trust, 2010b; Evans, 2011). This is supported by Hick et al's (2011) research findings which report that university tutors' knowledge about and confidence in race equality issues is patchy and hampers their ability to understand and provide suitable support.

2.3 Some realities of being a BME student teacher

The presence of larger numbers of BME students at English universities, including in ITE, is largely a result of the 'widening participation' agenda (DfES, 2003), but it has also been construed as having a detrimental effect on BME student teachers (Roberts,

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2012). Dominating factors include feeling racially and culturally isolated; a decreased ability to cope with academic requirements; a reduction in staff numbers resulting in decreased personal and academic tutor support and a less diversified tutor workforce who do not adequately understand minority needs (Hoodless, 2004; Hick et al, 2011). There was also less monetary support in the form of bursaries and low-interest loans, leading to personal financial difficulties (Reay, 2015). Roberts (2007) calls these difficult experiences the "processes of othering" (p.146) and Bhopal (2015) speaks of 'others and outsiders', whereby BME student teachers are labelled and positioned as inadequate, rather than being respected and valued. Roberts (2012) coins the phrase 'malintegration' to describe the combination of such affecting factors.   Malintegration, she proposes, leads to "academic difficulty, incongruence and isolation" for some student teachers (p.857) over their social background. Other research shows that BME students reported incidents of institutionalised racism during the course, rather than detecting it at the admissions stage (Connor et al, 2004). They report that if they had detected it early, it would have affected their choice of institution.

2.3.1 Coping during the course

Adams (2005) supports the idea that students' experiences during the course affect retention and future success. Her research into the effect of being a BME student in a white university, notes that a 'critical absence' of discussion and engagement with race issues, caused BME students to mute their views and opinions, and internalise their feelings of inadequacy and marginalisation. In such settings, Adams contends,

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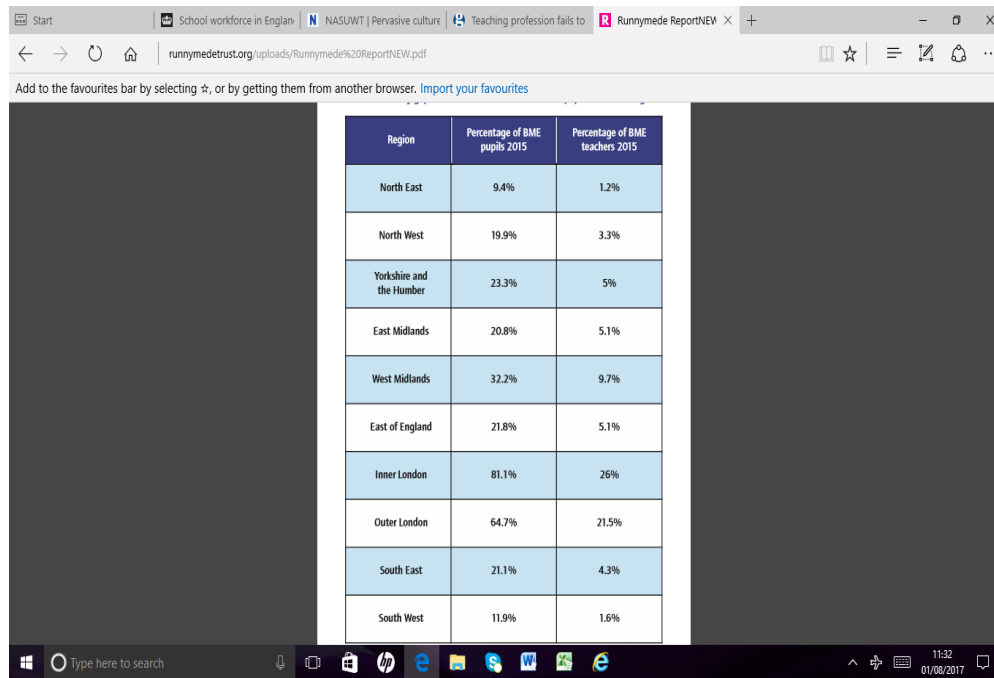
they are bound by the white norms, values and behaviours, and face an ITE curriculum lacking in diversity issues and research. The effect of being silenced often confines them to "know their places" and 'swim with the tide' (Givens et al, 1999, p.286). Jessop and Williams (2009) found that BME student teachers at a white university in England, felt "cut off from their roots" (p.98) and were shocked at the "starkly white" campus (p.100). Others reported a lack of understanding and help from the university and placement schools (Basit et al, 2006; Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Warmington (2008) asserts that BME students face an ITE curricula that is white-centred, taught by white tutors and learnt alongside white peers who are uncomfortable with discussing racial and cultural issues. He believes that this type of non-engagement makes race and racism seem less real and prevents tutors and those in positions of power in HE, from acting. In addition BME student teachers sometimes report having an exotic or 'other' mantle conferred upon them and being seen as the cultural or religious expert which releases their white university peers or placement school from the need to develop their own religious and cultural knowledge (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016). However Bhopal's research (2015) found that BME student teachers can present their race, religion or culture in a positive manner in order to educate children and staff, and to assert their identity.

These difficulties and microagressions may cause BME trainees to adopt the discourse of just wanting to become a 'good teacher' (Moore, 2004), rather than recognising the effect of their racial, ethnic and cultural heritage on their developing teacher identity (Allard & Santoro, 2006). Moore's (2004) conceptualisation of being a good teacher, identified as becoming the 'competent craftsperson', 'reflective practitioner' and 'charismatic, caring innovator' is, he acknowledges, used by student teachers to avoid cultural and other social agendas in order to meet ITE requirements. It may be easier

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for some of them to discard their own ethnic identity because it appears discordant with prevailing expectations, or they may see the difficulties of trying to assert or combine their identities within such a system (Givens et al, 1999).   The task of nurturing identity for BME student teachers involves the more difficult activity of accepting one's race and ethnicity and understanding it as complex and fluid, influencing ideas and teaching styles (Allard and Santoro, 2007).   Bhopal (2015) argues that in order to acknowledge and create a vital space for BME teachers, research, policy and teaching strategies in ITE should grasp and value their unique knowledge and experiences; seeing them as 'insiders' and assets, not idiosyncrasies.

2.4 De-racialisation in ITE

Earlier in this chapter Reay (2015) was cited as pointing to evidence that suggests the increase of BME students in HE has ironically created social and racial polarities between attainment, social class and type of university. Research shows that BME student teachers are more likely to struggle on their course and withdraw partly due to de-racialised practices which ignore and devalues them (Basit et al, 2006; Roberts, 2007, Wilkins & Lall, 2011). The process of de-racialisation can be seen in two key ITE documents, among others, *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010) and The *Teachers' Standards* (DfE, 2012). *The Importance of Teaching*, focuses on "raising achievement and narrowing attainment gaps" (DfE, 2010, p.16) in its agenda of targets, performance, accountability and its endeavour to pursue what is seen as a viable economic approach. Raising standards and narrowing attainment gaps can be achieved, it maintains, by upgrading the core subjects of English and Mathematics

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and increasing high-stakes summative assessment processes of national tests and examinations,. The role of the teacher is upheld as the instructor and controller of learning, "passing on the building blocks of knowledge" (Gove, 2013).   Initial Teacher Training is seen to be improved by raising pre-entry qualifications, particularly in traditional subjects, and in greater scrutiny and monitoring of student teachers' performance. The resulting Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) for ITE and the teaching workforce, involves the adoption of values and behaviours that reflect neutralised content, such as assessment, behaviour and subject-knowledge, and white-centric content which only acknowledges race and ethnicity as children with English as an Additional Language (Ball, 2017).   The notion of teacher education as the nurturing of well-researched pedagogic knowledge and skills are diminished (Evans, 2011). The Standards reflect *The Importance of Teaching (*DfE, 2010) where BME issues and needs are hidden within the rhetoric of an inclusion package where the words: 'race', 'ethnicity', 'multicultural', 'multi-ethnic' and so forth are not present. It mentions pupils' racial and social class inequalities as 'attainment gaps between pupils from different parts of society' (p.8) which it states arises from a vacuum of poor standards, low-quality teaching and weak leadership. The word "ethnic" (p.68) is used once to state that a child's ethnic background should not be used to expect lower attainment; and 'racial' was also used once in an example from a school in the United States, to show how high-performing curriculum organisation and teaching closed the "racial achievement gap" (p.58). Some of *The Importance of Teaching* could be interpreted as possibly referring to BME pupils' issues, such as the guidance to teachers to "have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn" (p.8).

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2.4.1 The notion of Britishness

A telling piece of evidence relaying government attitude to and understanding of BME issues in education appears in the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) where it states that teachers should:

- *not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;*
- *ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils or might lead them to break the law*. (p.10)

These requirements extend earlier counter-terrorism initiatives in education such as 'Community Cohesion' (Cantle, 2001) and 'Prevent' (Home Office, 2011). In turn they were part of national policy responses to increased terrorist activity in the UK and subsequent discussion surrounding the notion of Britishness (Brown, 2006). Along with increasing demands from other countries in the UK, for less central control from England and perceived dangers to national identity from European migrants, the UK is presented as becoming destabilised with traditional values and ideals being eroded (Phillips, 2005; Olusoga, 2016). Conversely other voices called for the embracing of diversity to re-write the national story as one of collaboration and cultural valuing for the sake of unity, a strong and vital economy and the promotion of a cohesive identity (Cantle, 2001; Parekh, 2000 & 2004; Brown, 2006). However, the teaching of British values, with its strong emphasis on counter-terrorism, is presented as a necessary and safe step, is legally required through the National Curriculum and is an ITE requirement for all student teachers (Brown, 2006, DfE, 2013, DfE, 2014c).

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The requirement of teaching British values suggests a homogenisation of the curriculum and teacher attitudes along with a dissipation of notions of difference and diversity (Smith, 2013). This denies positive benefits gained from multicultural initiatives in education and the need to build greater racial equality (Hick et al, 2011; Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2017). Smith & Lander (2012) argue that homogeneity gives rise to the notion of 'deficit' in learners who do not fit accepted learning cultures because it questions their academic ability, behaviour and values and raises suspicions about the social acceptability of their ethnicity. Homogenous ethnic-majority learning cultures are inserted into education agendas, normalised and achieve hegemonic stability (Gillborn, 2013). The outcome, Smith & Lander (2012) maintain is that teachers are compelled to focus on the "putative problems of these racialised others*"* in their teaching in an endeavour to make their learners more British (p.15). This annexes further views of deficit and stereotypes including that inequality suffered by minority students, is their own fault through lack of aptitude and capability and natural defunct and criminal qualities; rather than as a result of structural and persistent social inequalities (Jones, 2011). The Teachers' Standards, Smith (2013) argues, builds on popular fears and enables a subtle and dangerous step to be made between perceived inadequacies of BME students and action that erodes their values.

This type of simplistic understanding can be compounded by a lack of white teachers' and student teachers' confidence in and willingness to engage with racial and cultural issues in their teaching who often citing a lack of knowledge as the reasons (Davies & Crozier, 2005; Picower, 2009; Warner & Elton-Chalcraft, 2018). However, Hand and Pearce (2009) found a sizeable proportion of secondary pupils and teachers, of different ethnicities and cultures, were uneasy about what they deemed as 'patriotism' being taught in schools, and felt it could be presented differently and in a more

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balanced manner through open discussion, presentation of a fuller picture of inequity in society and a willingness to listen. Their findings indicated that this could reduce damaging and narrow thinking. ITE too has a role in transferring the focus of student teachers from blaming pupils' ethnic and social backgrounds as causes of inequality, to understanding structural racism as the instigator and therefore being more amenable to teaching for equality (Vaught & Castagno, 2008; Lander, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2016).

2.5 Equality and race are not adding up

So far I have shown how the needs of and contributions from BME student teachers are side-lined in education policy which uses such the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012) and the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) to homogenise knowledge input and performance outcomes, with little reference to diversity and difference and leading to performance-related teacher identity (Smith, 2013). This is in contrast to research that shows BME teachers' contributions and ideals are valuable (Swann et al, 2010, Haque, 2017). 'Enacting' the job, whereby the teacher makes choices in the learners' best interests, is seen as a different activity to 'demanded' professionalism (Swann et al, 2010). The latter involves adopting external demands where agendas may be largely non-educational, such as economics or manipulation of social or cultural groups (Evans, 2011; Gove, 2013). A top-down policy approach can be seen as layering teaching with external demands that do not reflect the inner values and beliefs of educators and while these external demands may appear logical, such as identifying possible terrorists in the classroom, they have been shown to disrupt and

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conflict with student and qualified teachers' inner values and beliefs, causing resistance or withdrawal from the profession (Hick et al, 2011). Furthermore, Hick et al (2011) assert that ITE policy-makers should embed race equality across the ITE curriculum, to create cultures of knowledge, understanding and inter-connectedness.

2.5.1 Ineffectiveness of policy

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the advancement and effectiveness of race equality in education has been questioned and been found to use limited and crude tools to respond to racism that has implications for BME student teachers (Ball, 2017; Tomlinson, 2008; Gillborn, 2008, 2013 & 2016).   Attempts to ensure schools, colleges and universities implement and work to eradicate racial inequity, has been un-coordinated, ineffectual and rhetorical (Tomlinson, 2011) while various taskforces, policy groups and national reports are seen as 'sound bites' pointing to "a history of policy avoidance" (Ball, 2017, p.172).   The Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) (Legislation,gov.uk, 2000) was a key piece of legislation that outlawed direct and indirect racial discrimination and required public bodies, including schools and universities, to promote race equality, but its successor, the Equality Act 2010 (Legislation,gov.uk, 2010) has cast a wider net, aiming to address inequalities across a range of positions which can lead to socio-economic and legal disadvantages. It is a legal step which EHRC (2010) boldly advocated as "one of the most comprehensive anti-discrimination frameworks in the world" (p.47). Within it 'Race' is one of the nine 'Protected Characteristics' which has the possible effect of taking away its individualised, focused identity and subsuming it into the generalised culture of

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inclusion (Ali et al, 2010). In contrast Critical Race Theory, the chosen methodology

of my study, understands how social subordinations such as race, gender and class are

intersected but also argues that race should be considered separately because of the

significant and exclusive discriminations caused by racism and the pathologies

conferred onto race by society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Lynn & Dixson, 2013).

2.5.2 Questionable and unclear policy

Despite the Equality Act 2010 (Legislation,gov.uk, 2010) race equality initiatives in

education and ITE are still questionable and unclear (Gillborn, 2013 & 2016). There

is a lack clarity and will from policy-makers which influences the views of a

generation of teachers, who may see such issues as irrelevant (Ball, 2017). Tomlinson

(2001 & 2008) traces education policy as a move from the endeavour to re-distribute

wealth and dismantle social divisions up to the 1980s, to a focus on competing in a

world market with a focus on basic subjects and core knowledge using a delivery-

style of teaching. So, hurdles are raised for the marginalised in education, who will

slow down this process, albeit hidden behind a veil of supposed support (Tomlinson,

2011). This is argued in Gillborn's (2004) point:

> *... although race inequity may not be a planned and deliberate goal of*
> *education policy neither is it accidental. The patterning of racial advantage*
> *and inequity is structured in domination and its continuation represents*
> *a form of tacit intentionality on the part of white power holders and*
> *policy-makers* (p.36).

He asserts that racism is hidden behind rhetoric of a national fear and manipulated

statistics, presenting white people as being left behind in their own country, such as

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the image of failing, white working-class boys (Gillborn, 2005 & 2008).   These statistics, which ignore racist processes, creates a story to enable policy-makers to assuage the white population and create division and hierarchies between white working-class people and BME people and between BME peoples (Jones, 2011; Gillborn, 2016).

2.6 Deep-rooted racisms

While Siraj-Blatchford (1991) identified cases of overt 'racism' on ITE courses, Pole (1999) suggests that this type of racism is rarely experienced by training or practising teachers. Covert and passive racism is the more likely form to be experienced by student teachers, but at an institutional level it becomes integrated and invisible, making it harder to identify and address (Marx, 2006; Warmington, 2008).   Indeed, Warmington (2008) asserts that HE is "sinewed by raced practices" (p.145), laid as foundations, steadily built on over time and normalised. Within these hidden structures issues of racisms from children, colleagues and senior managers have also been experienced by qualified BME teachers, as well as student teachers, demonstrating that it is a deep-rooted problem (Powney et al, 2003; Haque & Elliott, 2017). BME student teachers' necessity to accept the white-majority view of ITE has implications for their identity. Roberts' (2007) research over six years, involving 74 BME student teachers in England, revealed struggles with identity and fitting into perceived norms of a profession they saw as white-dominated. She disavows a simplistic picture of difficulty due to racism, but argues for examination of perceptions and responses from BME student teachers which involve complex

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intersections, including social class and gender. This includes how they enact their differences at university and on school placement and respond to and dismantle the resulting stereotypes. She found the silences of BME student teachers and sense of erasure, to be palpable (Roberts, 2013).

Identity, Maylor (2009a) asserts, is complex and fluid. Labels and accompanying assumptions can be offensive to some or too vague for others because it may not represent their heritage if it combines two or more ethnicities. Being of BME status involves recognising the 'multi-identifications' and intersections of ethnicity, gender, class and history which shape emotions and experiences and for many BME student teachers, who may be mature, working-class, parents, it is these intersections that are part of who they are and what they will assert in their teacher education (Essed, 1996; Bhopal & Preston, 2012).   Furthermore, Housee (2008) maintains that the binaries of black and white disperse in the face of renewed assertions of racial and cultural identity by BME students themselves. BME student teachers in England have to continually face recriminations, and covert contempt and microagressions, often resulting from national and international events such as terrorist acts and immigration from Eastern Europe, encapsulated in the policy reaction of the requirement to teach British values (Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2017). They have to wrestle with racisms in diverse and unpredictable forms, often incoherent and multiple (Bhabha, 1994: Troyna, 1994; Hall, 1996b), therefore research into their experiences has to address the issue of 'self' as a non-essentialised and complex entity (hooks, 1990; hooks, 1992; Griffiths & Troyna, 1995; Housee, 2008).

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2.7 Whiteness as a system of exclusion

So far the literature reveals that BME student teachers' in England face challenges at different levels. They are expected to fit in and get on in structures developed for the white-majority students, but which are presented as normalized and standardized so it is expedient to include some examination of whiteness as a political and racial concept present in ITE because it is acknowledged as a touchstone of racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Leonardo, 2016). Whiteness, with its characteristics of assumption of privileges and power is wide-ranging and ingrained in higher education (Warmington, 2008; Bhopal & Preston, 2012, Mirza, 2015). Gillborn (2004, 2008 & 2016) contends that white hegemony's dynamic, ever-changing nature in education involves both active and passive repressive characteristics. These involve direct resistance such as politicians or educationalists who claim racism is a fiction and that we live in post-race times; disregarding or manipulating statistics on BME failure rates; and presenting white students as the forgotten victims of dangerous, liberal practices, such as anti-racism. These characteristics and others, which Gillborn (2016) calls 'white lies', manipulate and change the goal posts to preserve the dominance of whiteness.

McIntosh's (1988) concept of the way invisible systems of white-majority privilege and reinforce dominance and superiority are visualised in her 'invisible knapsack' metaphor, which contain such expected privileges as progression and preferment in all aspects of life; being seen as an upright citizen, having inherent abilities to learn and socialise, down to the more spurious examples of 'flesh-coloured' items of clothing and plasters matching their skin tone. The essence of McIntosh's privileges is that white people can expect to be among those like them most of the time, be automatically accepted and valued, be seen as reliable, honest and credit-worthy.

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Silmilarly a study of white student teachers' book choices for children reflects this idea (Warner, 2010; Warner & Elton-Chalcraft, 2018).   Warner (2010) found that students in the study, who were at a white university, automatically chose children's books which featured white characters and were written by white authors. Out of 100 students surveyed, only four chose a book which was either about another culture or featured non-white characters.   In the following interviews and scrutiny of their academic writing, a concept of 'cultural disawareness' emerged, which identified factors such as schooling, home influences and community values as contributing to their automatic white thinking.   'Cultural disawareness' is described by Warner (2010) as a metaphorical picture of a gap in ethnic, cultural and racial awareness and knowledge about those outside of their racial ethnic grouping.   These findings built on King's concept of 'dysconscious racism' (2004) among American student teachers, that was manifested in thoughts and actions arising from uncritical perceptions and beliefs.

2.7.1 Expectations and assumptions

In ITE in England the key players are largely white policy makers, tutors, teachers and students; with the main plot resting on a premise of expected and protected whiteness (Vaught & Castagno, 2008; Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Mazzei, 2011).   Solomon et al's research (2006) goes further than just an expectation of protection to identify three strategies used by white student teachers. The first is 'ideological incongruence' which is the conflict that occurs when an individual's moral beliefs do not match their actions. For example, a white student teacher may

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believe that anyone should be able to train as a teacher but will assume that white students understand the processes of higher education and ITE better and are more able to succeed on the course, on school placement and in future employment. They see themselves as a natural part of the set-up (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011). The second strategy is 'liberalist notions of individualism and meritocracy' which refers to individualistic thinking about success by believing that anyone can achieve as long as they follow the right steps and if they do not it is their fault. Understanding of the impact of wider social forces, such as generational poverty and historical events such as large-scale immigration to the UK and its concomitant problems of instability and lack of cultural accoutrements, is minimal and seldom considered. The third strategy in Solomon et al's (2006) research is 'negation of white capital'. This involves white student teachers denying that they benefit from the privileges of whiteness or even explain it as a natural phenomenon of history. They may plead a lack of knowledge about other cultures and religions, replace analysis of minoritised positions with stereotypes and objectification and show little or no desire to recognise whiteness as a system of oppression (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011). Picower's (2009) observations echo the work of Solomon et al (2006) by premising that white student teachers are able to "deny, evade, subvert, or avoid" (p.205) while Lander (2011) found that they may also exhibit behaviours such as: a conscious 'not noticing' approach of children's ethnic and cultural needs; a lack of desire to develop knowledge about race and culture; a perception that noticing and acting on such needs will embarrass BME children or under-value white children in the school; and a fear that they are entering unknown territory.   Within this mind-set white teachers and student teachers deny their inherent privileges and are freed from the act of admitting their own racism (Vaught & Castagno, 2008). Resistance to seeing the inequity

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between white privilege and BME inferiority is often displayed in silences and a refusal to engage, a position in which their 'narratives of innocence' are reiterated to their pupils in school (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011).

Mazzei (2007) conceptualises these silences or 'absences' as the "words between the words", cultural palimpsest, which provide "form and substance to the text" (p.633). The intent of not knowing or wanting to know is present, but it is not spoken. It is a strategic and maintained position. If we bring this position into the arena of ITE, white student teachers' exhibition of a lack of personal racial, religious, linguistic and wider cultural knowledge and understanding, is less a fear of offending non-white pupils by their professed ignorance or appearing stupid but instead it is a fear of losing the status, power and comfort of their privileged position (Mazzei, 2011). Some studies show that working against whiteness in ITE involves white students and tutors sharing their life experiences and finding connections between their realities and those of BME students and tutors, although working to engage white student teachers with race needs to be approached carefully to negotiate negative responses (Housee, 2008; Ullucci, 2011; Smith & Lander, 2012). Leonardo (2016) and Zamudio et al (2011), among many other critical race adherents, argue that the only authentic way to respond to whiteness is to use critical race theories and pedagogies to reveal whiteness as a subtle, flexible and insidious culture. These will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

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2.8 Conclusion

From this review of the literature we can see that while BME student teachers represent a good proportion of the numbers in ITE and HEI in general, cracks and discrepancies reveal deeper issues that are not sufficiently addressed at national level. The issue of retention on ITE courses has been shown in qualitative studies to be affected by racism, stereotyping and a dominant culture which renders them invisible and silences their values and beliefs. National ITE policy emphasises a homogeneous approach (DfE, 2010; DfE, 2012) alongside legal requirements for teachers to embrace and teach British Values (DfE, 2013) which questions and even pathologises BME people as suspect and lacking in values (Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2017).   These impact on their levels of confidence, influencing them to fit in or leave the course. In addition conversion rates into qualified teachers is lower than their white peers (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016).

To examine what appears to be difficult and silenced experiences of BME student teachers, this study will use Critical Race Theory to listen to the stories of BME student teachers as they journey through ITE. Delgado and Stefancic (2001) defend the role of story in critical race research to challenge established, institutional racism thus:

> *Society constructs the social world through a series of tacit agreements,*
> *mediated by images, pictures, tales, and scripts... Attacking embedded*
> *preconceptions that marginalize others or conceal their humanity is a*
> *legitimate function of stories.* (p.42)

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CRT's understanding of counter-story has been chosen because it is capable of yielding deeper understandings of these participants' experiences due to its particular racial emphasis. The next chapter will expound CRT within a wider discussion on my own ontological and epistemological position, the chosen research methods and ethical considerations.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY, METHODS AND ETHICS

This chapter will examine my research position and views, present the methodological lens through which I will examine and challenge dominant ideology in English ITE in relation to its effects on BME student teachers. My methodological stance will be presented through my ontological, and epistemological understandings and followed by discussion on Critical Theory (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003) and Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). I will argue that a critical approach with a sharp and defining focus on race and racism, is necessary to frame and understand issues that BME student teachers face. As the previous chapter demonstrated, there are issues of marginalization, unspoken fears and hidden, pervasive racism that surround their journey in ITE.   This chapter will continue with a discussion of the chosen data-collection methods of focus groups and individual interviews and consideration of a range of ethical considerations including reflection on the power differentials between researcher and participants and the tensions and implications as an insider-outsider race researcher.

3.1 Ontological and epistemological perspectives underpinning this study

Qualitative research is complex because it involves examining obscure and slippery forms, such as human emotion, voice and experience, which at best can only be teased out (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). This idea of 'teasing out' is useful in race research because the development of knowledge, concerning social realities such as racism and racialised difficulties, aims to avoid stereotyping and essentialism and is therefore not

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straightforward (Constantine-Simms, 1995; Hall, 1996b).   Research about race concerns the "analytic attention given to the specific relations of power that research is located in and can deploy" (Gunaratnam, 2003, p.13). In ITE, knowledge-generation about BME student teachers needs to be seen and theorised as nuanced, both exposing their compromised and side-lined position, but also allowing them to be seen valuable contributors in education (Bhopal, 2015).

Qualitative research also demands that researchers are reflexive and understand how their world view positions them to see and analyse in particular ways, noting how their research is socially contextualised (Delanty & Strydom, 2003).   How we see the world is determined by who we are because we are complex beings, characterized by thought, action and experience (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). As a qualitative and critical researcher I need to ask questions such as, 'what is?' and 'what are the variations of reality?' and to challenge my own philosophical assumptions (Somekh & Lewin, 2011).   In addition, as a critical race researcher, I examine insider-outsider tensions that will impact analyses of the data (Johnson-Bailey, 1999). This is discussed later in this chapter. As my study is concerned with people, my view of reality arises out of what can be known about a topic by observing, listening to the research participants, making links between the data and understanding the way anomalies in data can enable deeper analysis (Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2013; Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). This study is based on my understanding that pursuing knowledge involves moral and purposeful dimensions and outcomes (Gray, 2009).   The meaning of that knowledge, the extent to which it represents 'reality' and its inter-subjectivity with other theories of knowledge, are also important considerations because they are dependent on the context of the research and the experiences shared by the participants (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Somekh & Lewin, 2011). This means that

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I take the position of the BME student teacher participants seriously, by using my research to uphold and project their contributions as valid and important.

The choice of research approach can free boundaries of knowing (Delanty & Strydom, 2003; Somekh & Lewin, 2011) while still providing contextual, cultural and social 'rules and resources' to create 'frames of knowing' and help deeper analysis of issues (Strydom, 2009, p.4). These 'frames' may act as a tool of achieving depth but still enable a good level of transparency and questioning of assumptions by the researcher. In this study I use Critical Race Theory to give prominence to social forces affecting the research participants, that is race and racism in ITE in England. First however I will discuss Critical Theory to provide a framework of social and critical understandings.

3.2 Critical Theory

Critical Theory (CT) in research investigates power relationships and premises the idea that knowledge is not value-free but has hidden value-systems and self-interests of dominant groups (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003; Gage, 1989). It argues that such value-systems preclude change and change mechanisms such as social justice and equality, thus ensuring the status quo is not destabilised (Gray, 2009: Ledwith, 2011). CT recognises how the powerless are silenced and subjugated while others are privileged and protected (Morrow & Brown, 1994) and therefore aims to project the voices of the powerless into the public domain to achieve change (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003; Ledwith, 2011). Kincheloe and McLaren (2003) propose this definition:

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> [Critical] *Research becomes a transformative endeavor (sic),*
> *unembarrassed by the label 'political' and unafraid to consummate*
> *a relationship with emancipatory consciousness.* (p.453).

Critical researchers bring their epistemological and subjective "baggage" into the space of inquiry to be transparent and to reduce hierarchy, power and ideological barriers and differentials; thus enabling more direct confrontation of issues (Somekh & Lewin, 2011; Kress, 2011). This is an important consideration in race research because researchers need to acknowledge and state their position as, not only anti-racist but also committed to change which re-balances privilege and power. Race researchers also need to openly discuss the contradictions and ironies they face which can sometimes lead to taking part in racial hierarchies created by the white-majority, whatever their own racial heritage (Hall, 1996). These positions are needed to face and resist the concept of hegemony that recognises how society builds and maintains its power by continually adopting and adapting processes to avert social change and maintain political and economic advantage within certain sections (Gramsci, 1992; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003). This has implications for BME student teachers who, research has shown, may be aware of their marginalised position but have limited social resources to resist the controlling stereotypes. These curtail their progress and success (Pole, 1999; Wilkins & Lall, 2011; Bhopal, 2015). Hall (1996a) suggests that Gramsci's ideas provide theoretical lines of connection to anti-racism because Gramsci observed that all social classes are complicit in hegemonic structures through the need to survive and succeed. From this Hall argues that racism as a hegemonic entity operates on many fronts and should be seen therefore as not one racism, but many racisms that change according to contexts and peoples. Hall understands that reducing race to a single dimension, defined and controlled by white power systems,

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promotes division and hierarchy among BME groups that impairs their power of organising against injustices.

3.2.1 Some criticisms of Critical Theory

Critical Theory is not an unproblematic research dimension.   Hammersley (1995 & 2008) warns that it can become an unstructured fusion of selective, post-structural concepts that are poorly discussed, under-theorised and lacking a firm philosophical structure. It can present as a 'free-for-all' but stand for very little theoretically. He believes that CT researchers are in danger of being more concerned with protest and making their voice heard than achieving a deep understanding of the nature of their cause; with critique replaced by will. Gillborn (2013) warns that critique can become hollow and lose its power, by over-use so that its message is lost. It also, he suggests, can be appropriated by those in power, such as neo-Liberal Conservatives, to appear supportive to the dispossessed, but in reality only making surface concessions, while actually strengthening their power. Gillborn exemplifies this with how anti-racism is advocated and used in education. He argues that education policy-makers dismantle the problems of black underachievement in education, by presenting achievement as an individual, meritocratic endeavour, rather than emerging from unequal structures that favour white-majority students for whom it was designed.   This gives the message that BME students do not achieve because it is their own fault. As a counter argument Kincheloe & McLaren (2003) suggest that Critical Theory plays a role in addressing multiple and complex forms of power because it involves 'enlightenment' and critique to reveal subordination and dominance; and emancipation, leading to self-determination and democracy (p.437). Critical Theory is also understood as a

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route from ideology to transformative action, centralising democratic endeavour and human resourcefulness, emanating as it does from the notion of 'critique', or a questioning of assumptions and reasoning (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2003). Ledwith (2011) concurs, arguing that CT is not just a theory of ideas and possibilities but is praxis-orientated and transformative. Ledwith (2011) appropriates the role of story as a transformative approach for marginalised people because it engenders reflection, creation and action. Stories, she asserts encompass the dual dimensions of the personal, where self-esteem and knowledge is raised; and the political, where self-awareness raises a consciousness of the world and ourselves "in relation to the structural forces that shape us" (Ledwith, 2011, p.66). The power of story is harnessed in my research with the BME student teachers, who may be deemed to have less voice than many in ITE and who are therefore susceptible to the structural forces surrounding and shaping them. The use of counter-story, as a tool of exposing BME experiences, is a major part of Critical Race Theory and the basis for my study.

3.3 Critical Race Theory and its importance as a race-conscious and challenging tool

The foundations of Critical Race Theory (CRT) began in legal studies and is defined by Matsuda (1991) as working "towards the elimination of racism as part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination" (p.1331). Its extension into educational research, theory and practice is now established, including in the UK (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Zamudio et al, 2011; Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012). This transition is important because like law, education, as a basis

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upon which societies depend for the maintenance of civilised society, is often based upon unequal structural systems which locate power in certain areas (Taylor, 2016). In the UK for example, private schools and Oxbridge, which have nearly all white students, exist at one end of the spectrum, while there are schools and colleges with majority BME students, at the other end. These latter schools are often characterised by family poverty and social problems. CRT, as a critical tool, seeks to expose how systems of power can suppress, ignore and even erase BME discourses and contributions (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Lynn & Dixson, 2013). CRT also diverts away from the idea of racism as individual acts, to highlight it as systemic and structural, and terms such as 'white' and 'black' are understood as denoting locations of power and oppression (Hall, 1996b, Taylor, 2016).

CRT is based on the following tenets as explained by Delgado (1995) and Delgado and Stefancic (2001). First, is the point that racism is endemic in society and impacts negatively on BME people, ranging from daily microaggressions to embedded and hidden structural policies and practices in institutions. Second it offers a 'critique of liberalism' that exposes how accepted modes of social change can harbour discrimantory practices if left unexamined (Crenshaw et al, 1995; Bell, 1995). CRT rejects the neutrality and colour-blindness that purport to offer equality to all but from which white people gain much of the advantage, while BME people gain little. Third, race is seen as a social construct, created by powerful white groups to create divisive hierarchies. BME peoples are relegated to lower social positions or allowed entry into the middle-class in small numbers, to benefit and maintain white hegemonic structures. This reflects the idea of 'differential racialization' in which society raises or lowers different racial groups according to social and economic needs (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). In ITE in England differential racialization might be construed

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as training teachers from certain BME groups to meet the needs of corresponding BME pupil populations in geographical areas. This may be seen for example, as training more BME students in inner-city institutions, situated in BME communities areas; while ITE institutions in white, more affluent suburbs and areas, train less BME student teachers because they are not deemed as necessary or desirable.   A fourth CRT tenet is the acknowledgement and celebration of intersectionality. This understands that everyone has a number of identities that are fluid and responsive to relationships and environments. The single identity notion, whereby a person is categorised as white, black, married, single, hetero/homosexual and so forth, is seen as a form of categorisation and control by majority structures. CRT understands that intersectionality is part of BME people's lives and rejects the multiple oppressions linked to gender, social class, immigration status and language, to name a few of them. It advocates an anti-essentialist approach to promote BME people as important in their variety and ability to contribute fully to life at all levels. A fifth tenet of CRT is that BME people have a unique authority to speak about their experiences of racism in their own way. This is important as an act of reclaiming identity and purchase in society. It understands that only they can speak for themselves and recount their experiences to counter majority narratives. Counter-narrative is fully discussed later in this chapter.

Zamudio et al (2011) further comment on the tenets and principles of CRT by highlighting them as reflecting the connected categories of: race, history, voice, interpretation and praxis. They understand that race hides its subtle and different forms, often by being invisibly embedded in institutions. Continued racism, they assert, emanates from a resistance by white people to recognise how oppression of black people in history continues to shape inequalities. Privileging the voices of

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marginalised peoples and allowing them to engage in counter-storytelling is necessary

for the telling of truths that are otherwise suppressed. It create cultures of listening

and exchange to achieve changes and thus to build hope of re-balancing power

relationships (Delgado, 1989). Critical Race theorists argue that the complexity of

race demands multiple, shared and inter-linked knowledges to interpret, resist,

propose and move forward (Delgado, 1989; Hylton et al, 2011).   Indeed Hylton

(2012) asserts that CRT is double-edged because it acts as both a theoretical

framework and praxis, reflecting peoples' *"lived experiences of 'race'"* (p.2). It

rejects apolitical or ahistorical approaches, understanding race as a constructed entity

for social and political gain by majority cultural groups (Omi & Winant, 1993; Banks,

2003) and draws on critical theory to understand implicit and discriminatory practices

and demonstrate a commitment to social change. Hylton (2012) argues that CRT

challenges society to take responsibility and work for erasure of discriminatory and

oppressive practices, without motives of advantage and gain. This will challenge and

replace "negative racialised relations" (Hylton, 2012, p.4).

3.3.1 Using Critical Race Theory to name, challenge and transform racisms in education

CRT can be used as an analytical tool when considering the position of BME student

teachers within English ITE because its focus is to define, challenge and remove

racial inequalities (Zamudio et al, 2011).   CRT in education, working from the tenets

presented in the previous section, as outlined by Delgado (1995) and Delgado and

Stefancic (2001), works from a premise that racism is widespread and ingrained in

education systems which should be exposed and replaced with more equitable routes.

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It resists and troubles structures that maintain subordination of minority students and develops racialised discourses, to promote complex, anti-essentialist stances and to map reforms (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). In addition CRT theorists maintain that the focus on discrimination and injustices in education is with the intention of dismantling and replacing them with equitable practices (Parker and Roberts, 2011). It can also be understood as a kind of 'transformative resistance strategy' that Solórzano & Delgado Bernal (2001) argue is a strong counteracting force within BME students in white majoritarian settings. By positively focusing on their intersected characteristics of race, gender, class and language BME students bring the complexity of their situation to the fore. They understand that they are multiply-constructed beings who are unable to adequately thrive in systems of education which project them as deficit beings. Solórzano & Delgado Bernal (2001) believe that the most potent, transforming type of student resistance occurs when there is a developed consciousness of social oppression and justice to counteract how marginalisation and oppression, as value-based constructions, can be deconstructed and replaced.

In education CRT challenges the dominant narrative of meritocracy which advocates individual endeavour within systems of equal opportunity. CRT turns a critical lens on central funding, bureaucracy, the structure of schools and institutions that categorise by ability, attitude, attainment, attendance that create probabilities of sustained under-achievement and failure of BME students, including student teachers (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Gillborn, 2005, 2013; Tomlinson, 2008).   These inequities, based on the pervasiveness of white, hegemonic structures, reward white students already familiar with the system, but which systematically disadvantage

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black students, who are less knowledgeable about how white education systems work (Ladson-Billings, 2004 & 2005; Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2004, Anderson & Cross, 2013).   Gillborn (2005) offers a UK example which shows how the under-achievement of black students is sustained. He states they are systematically entered for levels of GCSE examinations which have the top grade as a bare pass, so the higher grades of pass are not available to them. In recent years changes have been made to the top grades, thereby making lower grades even less creditable. In addition choice of examination boards, to which black students are entered, may mean these qualifications are not acceptable to the top universities. This affects motivation, attainment and is linked to the higher school exclusion rates, attendance and consequently on the learning of black students.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) propose CRT as deliberate and transparent in its actions against inequity in education and are cautious about models of change they deem as assimilationist, such as multiculturalism. Assimilationist models, they argue, are inadequate because they embody and promote the integration of minority cultures within the majority culture thereby, accepting the status quo. Multiculturalism, for example, has been described as "cultural interaction, interchange and harmony" characterised by an emphasis on equality of cultures (May, 2005, p.12). But this position, CRT researchers contend, renders the need to recognise the endemic and destructive nature of and the processes of racism as less urgent; offering, instead, a compliant approach of integration and inclusion into existing structures (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).   Ladson-Billings and Tate's stance is supported by anti-racists, who criticise multiculturalism as ineffective, rendering minority ethnic

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peoples as benign sub-cultures, acting as satellites orbiting the majority culture (Troyna, 1993; Griffiths & Troyna, 1995).

This picture of Multiculturalism however is balanced by the later development of a more critical, contemporary dimension which offers a more strident and activist concept of Multiculturalism (Modood, 2013; Parekh, 2004 & 2005). 'Critical multiculturalism' replaces more liberal overtures of integration and harmony with concepts and praxis promoting citizenship and equality rights to challenge the subjugating effects of powerful structures in education (May, 2005; May & Sleeter, 2010; Modood, 2010). It involves teaching students to understand difference, to recognise the damaging effect of power hierarchies and work for cohesion. Understanding and working for equality in education involves examining the multiple identities and practices in social life and in the classroom, (Modood, 2013).   Critical Race Theory however premises the primacy of race as a debilitating obstacle to progression and seeks to deconstruct its hidden power (Zamudio et al, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 2016)

Solórzano (1997), Solórzano & Delgado Bernal (2001) and Solórzano & Yosso, (2016) propose a challenging CRT framework that foregrounds inequalities of race and racism in education and which enables suitable examination of assumptions in research. Its categories are to: name the subordinations or racisms, such as inadequacies in curriculum content and colour-blind pedagogy; develop, through research, lenses to examine minoritised and alternative experiences in the classroom and in practice-based education; and support the self-knowledge and understanding of racism among all students but particularly among BME students, to reveal how institutional racism disempowers and immobilises them.   These areas provide

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important signifiers for the context of my study therefore I have created a table to illuminate how CRT is a suitable tool of analysis for qualitative race research in ITE. In my table I have juxtaposed these categories alongside an English ITE setting to demonstrate its application to the way race frames experiences for BME student teachers who often face other subordinations, such as the low-income, poor housing, limited employment prospects alongside problems of understanding and engaging in ITE with its academic language and cultural barriers (Table 3.1). The table shows how BME student teachers are expected to operate by adopting a white-centric ITE outlook which is made invisible through educational policy that does not recognise their value as student teachers, and educational research that, although purporting liberal approaches, often raises neutralised and generic topics over race and minority issues.

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Table 3.1

Critical Race Theory applied to ITE in England

	Solórzano (1997); Solórzano & Delgado Bernal (2001); Solórzano & Yosso (2016)	An application and interpretation to ITE in England
1. The intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination.	*A critical race theory in education starts from the premise that race and racism are endemic, permanent, and central rather than marginal factor in defining and explaining individual experiences. Although race and racism are at the center (sic) of a critical race analysis, ... also acknowledges the intercentricity of racialized oppression. The layers of subordination based on race, gender, class, immigration status, surname, phenotype, accent, and sexuality can use critical race methodology to search for some answers to the theoretical, conceptual, methodological, and pedagogical questions related to the experiences of people of color (sic).*	ITE in England, particularly in the Early Years' and Primary sectors, are dominated by white, British females, who are often young, A' level-educated students. They typically move away from home to study and are single with no children. (Smith, & Lander, 2012). BME student teachers are more likely to come from poorer backgrounds, are mature with children and have A'level-equivalent qualifications. For ITE they attend their local university and are less familiar with the social and academic mores of university (Stevenson, 2012). BME students from more economically-stable and middle-class backgrounds, may still face issues of language, accent and non-English names (Connor et al, 2004). These issues, intersected with other forms of subordination, such as gender and single-parenthood, may also impact on the journey of BME student teachers through ITE. Critical Race Theory acknowledges race and racism as a unique form of oppression

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		for these students' confidence and resilience and recognises that when different forms of social subordination exist together, problems are exacerbated.
2. The challenge to dominant ideology.	*A critical race theory challenges the traditional claims that educational institutions make toward objectivity, meritocracy, colorblindness (sic), race neutrality, and equal opportunity. Critical race scholars argue that these traditional claims act as a camouflage for the self-interest, power, and privilege of dominant groups. [Critical Race Theory] challenges white privilege, rejects notions of "neutral" research or "objective" researchers, and exposes deficit-informed research that silences and distorts epistemologies of people of color (sic).*	ITE in England may show good numbers of BME student numbers, but it remains white-centric and is characterised by hidden racist practices (Pilkington, 2011, Mirza, 2015). This is ironic because HE is a context where beliefs and values that promote openness, inclusivity and internationalism are recognised (Alexander & Arday, 2015). However in ITE research is often about race-neutral and objective topics such as assessment, the curriculum, behaviour, learning and thinking skills, creativity, literacy and mathematical skills and so forth (Hylton, 2012). These topics suggest a 'universality' of assumptions, colour-blindness and uncritically accepted as valid and more desirable knowledge (Hylton, 2012; Bhopal and Preston, 2012). This understanding of what is acceptable in research ignores minoritised positions, proposing instead notions of meritocracy and equal opportunities (Ball, 2017; Gillborn, 2005 and 2008, Tomlinson, 2008). CRT seeks to challenge research presented as 'objective' or 'universal' in

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		order to expose hidden beliefs, practices and expectations which uphold the status-quo and disadvantage students from minority groups (Ladson-Billings, 2016). It also recognises BME students as valuable holders and creators of knowledge (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Bhopal, 2015).
3. The commitment to social justice.	*A critical race theory is committed to social justice and offers a liberatory or transformative response to racial, gender, and class oppression. We envision a social justice research agenda that leads toward the following:* *• the elimination of racism, sexism, and poverty* *• the empowering of subordinated minority groups.* *Critical race researchers acknowledge that educational institutions operate in contradictory ways, with their potential to oppress and marginalize co-existing with their potential to emancipate and empower. Likewise, [Critical Race Theory] recognizes that multiple layers of oppression and discrimination are met with multiple forms of resistance.*	ITE in England can be identified as having privileged and majoritarian underpinnings often determined by policy and political will (Hoodless, 2004; Jessop & Williams, 2009; Gillborn, 2013). This impacts on the number of available student places and requirements for entry onto ITE courses; diversity of staff; breadth of curriculum; and where research funding is deployed (Ball, 2017; Gillborn, 2005 and 2008, Tomlinson, 2008). Such outcomes create oppressions for BME student teahers because they are required to fit white-majority patterns of behaviours, beliefs and assumptions and ways of expressing their opinions and research interests (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Warmington, 2009). CRT examines such contradictions by giving prominence to BME experiences and ideas to promote confidence in research and professional practice. This allows issues of subordination and

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		inequality the potential to be addressed in order to bring about empowerment and positive change (Hick et al, 2011).
4. The centrality of experiential knowledge.	*Critical race theory recognizes that the experiential knowledge of people of color (sic) is legitimate, appropriate and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial subordination. In fact, critical race theorists view this knowledge as a strength and draw explicitly on the lived experiences of people of color (sic) by including such methods as storytelling, family histories, biographies, scenarios, parables, cuentos* [stories]*, testimonies, chronicles, and narratives. [Critical Race Theory] challenges traditional research paradigms, texts and theories used to explain the experiences of people of color (sic). It exposes deficit-informed research and methods that silence and distort the experiences of people of color and instead focuses on their racialized, gendered, and classed experiences as sources of strength.*	Research in ITE does not adequately harness BME student teachers' experiences and understandings, nor see them as equal to white students (Delgado Bernal, 2002). Research that listens to and re-presents BME students, is important in creating frameworks of understanding, including for white audiences, which provide critical analyses of racisms (Adams, 2005; Roberts, 2007). These approaches provide space for and interpret and present under-valued BME perspectives. In ITE, research paradigms which seemingly offer objectivity, can misrepresent or deny the depth of negative and oppressive issues faced by BME student teachers (Villenhas & Deyhle (1999).

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| 5.   The transdisciplinary perspective. | *A critical race theory challenges ahistoricism and the unidisciplinary focus of most analyses and insists on analysing race and racism by placing them in both historical and contemporary contexts. [Critical race Theory] uses the transdisciplinary knowledge and methodological base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, law and other fields to guide research that better understands the effects of racism, sexism, and classism on people of color.* | Race and racism in ITE in England needs to be seen through the lens of historical and contemporary analyses to resist a 'one-size fits all' approach (Tomlinson, 2011). This involves recognising the factors surrounding the difficulties of BME applicants in accessing courses, and student teachers in navigating through and completing their courses (Connor et al, 2004). ITE needs to understand how colour, language, religion and culture affect BME students' applications to, progression in and attainment of a teacher training course (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). |

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Table 3.1 shows how BME student teachers are expected to adapt to a white-centric ITE approach. Their race and culture are made invisible through policy that does not recognise their value as student teachers, and educational research that, although purporting liberal approaches, often raises neutralised and generic topics over race and minority issues. By setting out the main tenets and principles of CRT and presenting my interpretation in Table 3.1, I am able to situate and justify my study more securely.

3.3.2 The problem of Whiteness in ITE

Whiteness is seen by CRT as a problematic concept. It is understood as a socially-constructed part of a racial hierarchy that dominates and demeans BME people (Leonardo, 2002). It is seen as a discourse in which white, and some black people, take part and play out constructed identities (Leonardo, 2002). When examining the effects of race in ITE, an understanding of 'conceptual whiteness' and 'conceptual blackness' enables a deeper understanding of how student teachers can be fairly and unfairly categorised (Ladson-Billings, 2005). If for example student teachers speak the language of and enact what they see and hear from their white tutors and peers, they are deemed conceptually 'white'. Conversely if they speak against or do not carry out perceived normal actions in university sessions and on school placement, they are deemed 'conceptually black' and may be seen as difficult and non-compliant. 'Conceptually black' BME student teachers feel unable to engage in 'race talk' and enact raced identities because they are muted by white cultural expectations; a condition that their white peers and tutors cannot conceive (Adams, 2005; Zamudio et al, 2011). This non-understanding or denial of their race and ethnicity means there is an absence in the discourse of ITE that protects existing privileges and does not engage in potentially transformative dialogue (Delgado, 1989; Manglitz, Talmadge &

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Merriweather Hunn, 2006).   Leonardo (2016) locates white supremacy at the heart of white privilege. The latter concerns the obliviousness of being white, such as outlined for example, in McIntosh's 39 unseen and expected privileges of white people (McIntosh, 1988) and is part of the process of maintaining supremacy. White supremacy, Leonardo argues, is a 'state of being' and concerns the deep, sub-strata of thought that places whites at the top of the hierarchy. These layers of hierarchy are based on powerful white, usually men, though sometimes women, assuming to speak for everyone and ensuring everyone complies. White supremacy is not about individual or random acts of racism which lead to white guilt and even atonement, Leonardo argues, but about 'patterned and enduring' ways of sustaining dominance that appear universal and normative. In ITE BME student teachers face white supremacy in varying ways. First they have to jump through more hoops than white applicants to get onto a course, such as understanding the white-majority language and expectations of higher education (Boliver, 2015; Reay, 2015). Then they have to navigate through a course choosing to what degree they adopt white behaviours in order to get on, and later, when qualified, make decisions about risking the continuation of subjugation in a white school or choosing to teach mainly BME children in the hope of retaining and passing on knowledge and pride in their race and culture.   There are testimonies of discomfort and rejection in white ITE environments (Wilkins & Lall, 2011; Vaught & Castagno, 2008; Picower, 2009) but also demonstrations of how it can support self-examination and reflection (Housee, 2008; Warmington, 2009).   Understanding their realities in white-centric ITE, concern recognising how their identities are affected and how they operate in the absence of safe, raced spaces (Warmington, 2009).

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3.3.3 Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality

Attention to intersectionality is important in a study using a CRT methodology because it conceives how race, gender and class, are subordinated by societal hierarchies and discriminations (Bhopal, 2009; Bhopal & Preston, 2012). Despite criticism that CRT is over-focused on race as the main subjugating factor for BME people (Cole, 2009; Hill, 2009; Pitcher, 2011) which is discussed later in this chapter, it firmly embeds intersectionality in its tenets to show an intersected web of oppressions which BME people suffer (Parker & Roberts, 2011). CRT argues that liberal practices tend to have a 'single axis' outlook which does not recognise the multiple and overlapping experiences and concomitant oppressions of black people, particularly women (Zamudio et al, 2011). Many of the BME student teachers in my study, most of them women, faced issues associated with gender, low socio-economic status and single-parenthood. Research shows that such intersected oppressions can lead to racial microaggressions, depression and lower motivation in BME people, in turn affecting achievement in education, health and social outcomes (Powney et al, 2003; Huber & Solórzano, 2015). These intersecting oppressions are exacerbated by racial stereotyping that depict BME people as of lower intelligence, lazy, unreliable and scary (Solórzano, 1997). Such stereotyping reflects a social-deficit model which blames individuals and their families and communities for not integrating, grasping social opportunity and for creating alternative sub-cultures which society deems disruptive to the social order.   In education these stereotypes can turn into assumptions which justify lower attainment expectations, thus providing less access to high-quality curricula and higher education courses (Solórzano, 1997).   Understanding the effects of how intersecting social factors are used in society to oppress, can promote self-understanding and self-determination in BME students (Delgado Bernal, 2002). In turn this enables recognition of the causes and persistence of inequality and reflection on ways to resist and change systems (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001); Ali et

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al, 2010). Delgado Bernal's research (2002) saw how 'pedagogies' of home and culture furnished students with the stories of their parents' and grandparents' struggles and empowered them to name and oppose aspects of their schooling which stereotyped and limited them. By doing so they were enabled, not disabled, in a politically-conscientized way to speak out and take action. Conversely Carbado and Gulati's work (2001) observed the opposite effects of black people in white environments. They did not feel able to express their racial and cultural selves and felt forced to perform to white-majority expectations and norms, including conforming to requirements of dress, language use, social codes and attitudes. Their alternative was to face social exclusion or experience unease in their place of employment. Demonstrations of resistance, resilience and even resignation, are examples of ways BME students negotiate or flourish, despite disadvantage (Villenhas and Deyhle, 1999; Delgado Bernal, 2002).   Student teachers who may struggle to conform to white-centric ITE norms, can still create spaces to challenge racial stereotypes and assert their race through their language, communications with and expectations from white peers and university and school tutors (Achinstein and Aguirre, 2008; Dixson & Dingus, 2008). CRT has the capability to reveal how BME student teachers can be empowered, not just seen as victims, and be made capable of asserting their race which then creates deeper anti-essentialist and complex dimensions within race research (Bhopal, 2015).

3.3.4 Arguments against Critical Race Theory

CRT as a framework poses certain problems and as race and racism in teacher education is considered to be under-theorised, both in England and in the US, critical reflection on the use and value of CRT as a theoretical framework is necessary (Milner & Howard, 2013). This section will consider some arguments against CRT and respond to them in turn. I will mainly

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draw on UK race theorists because while I have drawn on both US and UK perspectives until now, to justify using CRT, it is important to confirm and situate my study, on English student teachers, in a firm CRT UK theoretical base. At the end of this section I will draw together these contentions in my justification for using CRT as the methodological framework for my study.

Carbado (2011) warns that CRT is in danger of being an idea which is indefinable and vague in its outcomes.   He notes the initiating vision of Kimberle Crenshaw was to describe it as, "…a series of contestations and convergences, pertaining to the ways that racial power is understood and articulated" (Crenshaw, 1995 cited in Carbado, p.160), but believes this places it in danger of being a theory without boundaries or sufficient rigour to prevent its becoming overly self-referential at the expense of the development of praxis. As a UK race theorist, Warmington (2012) recognises Carbado's fears but in response believes that a lack of boundaries and rigour frame, rather than constrain, analyses of complex, diverse and shifting black spaces in 21st century Britain. In this way the flexibility of CRT allows it to respond with authenticity, listening to experiences and issues and representing them to and alongside the majoritarian narrative, as valid and equal.   Hylton (2012) too argues that it is the breadth of CRT's epistemology that is a strength, freeing it from pedantic methodological rules. This breadth, Hylton contends, encompasses a transdisciplinary approach of social and racial research approaches and critical race perspectives into a more coherent body. Such flexibility is also crucial in resisting the changing faces of racism (Gillborn, 2011).

Pitcher (2011) questions the validity of CRT and proposes two main problems. First he suggests that CRT's focus on the centrality of race is problematic because by isolating race, continual objections are raised from the research community who believe it cannot be separated from other social intersections that form part of life for BME peoples. This

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argument is supported by Cole (2009) and Hill (2009), discussed later in this section, who believe CRT gives race an unnecessary privilege at the expense of other forms of oppression. Pitcher (2011) contends that centralising race increases the danger of objectifying it which may reinforce, rather than negate racial hierarchies. Pitcher believes that even its name, critical *race* theory, narrows its scope and raises questions of its validity in being able to address the complexity of race and confronting the abstruseness of racism. Pitcher's second worry is that CRT is in danger of adopting a cultural imperialistic stand where its framework, and again the use of 'race' in its title, means that it, perhaps unwittingly, takes on the role of speaking for and acting as the legitimizing voice in race research on a global level. As it gains interest and footing internationally, imperialist tendencies could emerge affecting its ability to see or challenge its own practices effectively. Pitcher asserts that CRT needs to continually undergo rigorous critique as it establishes outside of the US because the UK, for example, does not share the same political, economic and social history as the US and it therefore needs to be suitably and constantly adapted. He argues that the UK operates on European ideals of open borders and co-understandings and have experienced different patterns of migration therefore our development of understanding race must reflect a "transnational, transsocial, transcultural complexity" (Pitcher, 2011, p.205).

In response to Pitcher's argument of CRT centralising of race, Hylton (2012) argues that CRT recognises society is organised on racial hierachical lines where power is unevenly distributed to constantly advantage white people. The danger of the accepted social order is, Hylton asserts, also true in research where race is pushed to the margins and praxis, particularly in exposing and challenging racism, espoused by CRT, is flawed because the aim of academia is to keep power in certain places. By fore-fronting, naming and challenging race's damaging outcomes, CRT aims to expose racialised power relations and reduce race's

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objectivity by exposing and raising the status of the lived reality of BME people (Gillborn, 2011; Hylton et al 2011). By strategically including 'critical' and 'race' in its name it both emphasises its epistemological base and reflects its focus on activism and social justice (Hylton, 2012; Hylton et al 2011). Pitcher's (2011) charge of CRT being in danger of becoming culturally imperialistic in race research and blind to its shortcomings is counteracted by those who argue that while it is still a relatively young theory, globally and in the UK, it has to establish a distinctive and self-conscious approach, while simultaneously drawing on existing anti-racist thought and practice (Warmington, 2012; Gillborn et al, 2016).

Cole (2009) and Hill (2009) raise further questions about the ability of CRT to impact upon race inequality and achieve change.   Cole argues against the CRT premise of the primacy of race over social class, the latter of which he considers to be major subjugating factor of inequality because it creates and establishes poverty. The primacy of race, he contends, could be limited by CRT to black and brown peoples, rather than encompassing "non-colour-coded" racism (Cole, 2009, p.5) that includes deprived, white minoritised peoples, such as those from other European countries, who suffer similar inequalities as a result of low-skilled work and low social status. It is their cheap labour potential, he argues, that allows racism and pathologization by those who control the economic and political stage. Similarly Hill (2009) states that Gillborn, as one of the prime UK advocates of CRT, over-focuses on white supremacy. Gillborn's analyses of the way the educational system works against black children, is too simplistic Hill argues and fails to see how marginalised groups, including the white working-class, are racialised and categorised in different ways in a xeno-racist approach, in order to maintain inequality. Gillborn's (2009) response to Cole and Hill outlines that CRT's focus on 'white supremacy' understands it as complex and nuanced

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position which needs constant vigilance. Gillborn clarifies CRT's theorising of the race-class intersection, stating that in their moves to maintain privileges, elite white people will use those they deem as lower class to act as "buffer zones" between themselves and racial and ethnic protest. They achieve these zones by affording small social and economic privileges to white working class people to secure their tacit agreement.   In ITE issues of whiteness are real and affect the recruitment and retention of and shapes the journey of BME student teachers at university and on school placement (Housee, 2008; Smith & Lander, 2012).

Litowitz (1997) provides another critique of CRT that focuses on its key form of expression, that is the use of counter story. He argues that the use of narratives, which he deems questionable and emotive, avoids the construction of real arguments as responses to issues that CRT challenges, such as Liberalism. Liberalism he contends is concerned with equal rights and works towards a fairer society. It is other factors, not Liberalism he argues, which are at fault, such as greed and corruption, that lead to inequalities. Litowitz points out that CRT replaces objective arguments with narrative, to convince and persuade thereby creating a simplistic and dualistic picture of oppressor and oppressed. Litowitz states that narratives do not possess the liberating factors claimed by CRT, but are neutral in their effect on BME individuals or communities. That is, they neither bring liberation or condemnation. Litowitz further argues that story telling can be dangerous in other ways because they can make us more or less sensitive to people and issues by either over-compensating for or negatively reacting to them. This makes BME people appear less normalised.   In response to Litowitz's argument counter story aims to respond by giving authority to and providing insight from people who actually experience the negative effects of racism and ideas such as Liberalism (Delgado Bernal, 2002).   ITE in England, for example expounds liberal and anti-racist policies and practices, and is seen as recruiting and supporting a diverse student body, but BME student teachers, through counter story, present an alternative picture of

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microagressions and difficulty as they journey through ITE (Basit et al, 2006 and 2007).   So

CRT, in this instance, raises questions about equitable practice in ITE and is instrumental in

giving voice and agency to to those affected by the reality (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).   BME

stories have the capacity to bring liberation to individuals and communities because it gives

them empowerment and agency (Delgado Bernal, 2002).

Through discussion of and responding to the critiques of CRT it can be seen that the

establishment of CRT in the UK and in ITE involves the interpretation of race and anti-

racism, reflection on the workings of national social issues and systems and research on how

best CRT can be used to create discourses of challenge, dialogue, action and reflection

(Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston, 2012). While there are similarities between the US and

UK, mainly involving the structural racism and white supremacy underpinning both nations,

there are separating strands between the two. Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston (2012) assert

that a UK viewpoint emerges from observations on how best to explain our particular and

different history, inter-cultural relations as a former colonial nation and now a European

Community member, and an education system which has a multicultural, not segregationist

base. We also have, Chakrabarty, Roberts and Preston note, wrestled with distant and recent

division and unity within the four nations of the UK, European dissatisfaction and more

contemporary issues of Islamophobia. That CRT can be interpreted for the UK depends on

the establishment of a critical mass of intellectual production, including building on the black

British intellectual tradition that has provided strong critiques of anti-racism (Hylton et al,

2011; Warmington; 2012).   It is a tradition, Warmington (2012) argues that has crafted

thought and activism towards deeper conceptual understandings and in the field of education,

recognised and worked against the marginalisation and systematic depression of the

educational motivation and attainment of BME students. This has provided a strong base for

intellectual adaptation and production of CRT in the UK but it is a base that Warmington

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understands to be in constant motion in order to develop self-realisation and avoid problems associated with CRT becoming self-referential (Carbado, 2011), narrow-minded (Cole, 2009; Hill, 2009), ineffective in conceptual and academic debate (Litowitz, 1997) and culturally imperialistic, lacking a UK focus (Pitcher, 2011).

Through these counter arguments I am able to more securely justify and situate my study and the later analysis of the data using CRT to listen to and represent the stories of some BME student teachers in England.   In the next section I will further examine the role and use of stories in providing the countering voice to the majoritarian narrative through Delgado's (1989) work.

3.3.5 The case for narrative and Delgado's (1989) philosophy

Storytelling, through poetry, fiction, autobiography, parables and other forms, is a key principle of CRT and is seen as providing narratives to counter dominant narratives in society (Delgado & Stefancic in Lynn & Dixson, 2013). Taylor (2016) suggests that such counter narratives redirect the dominant gaze to reveal what was always there and as Banks (2003) asserts, our sense of who we are depends on our experiences and interpretations within our own worlds and structures and this influences the way we tell our stories. Narrative offers the norms of the tellers; their culture, perspectives and values, bridging gaps to promote understanding (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge and Manglitz, 2006). The case for narrative in a CRT study, such as this one, is compelling because the focus is on people in minority groups, in my case BME student teachers in English ITE.

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Delgado (1989) argues that stories achieve different outcomes in racist hierarchies. Those within 'ingroups', who are powerful majority, create stories to remind and confirm them of their status; where the world order is justified with white people at the top, thus creating subordination of those with darker skins. These hierarchies signify superiority and normality for those in the upper levels. Their narratives become myths, structured on seemingly objective and fair criteria but which conceal not only institutional power but the coercion involved in achieving that power. On the surface the majority narrative appears benign and beyond examination but is an immovable weight for those on the outside. Delgado explains that the stories of the ingroup intentionally appear as hard facts to show clear judgement and due process, as opposed to the emotional reactions and opinions of those who are presented as not having the capacity to think logically or express themselves coherently. Delgado adds that those on the outside, afforded lower levels of cultural capital, suffer the effects of being silenced and demeaned.

The narratives of what Delgado calls the 'outgroups' provide alternative perspectives which convey what life looks like 'from below' to use the Solórzano and Yosso term (2016). Ladson-Billings (2005, p.53) adds that counter storytelling provides "necessary, contextual contours to the seeming 'objectivity' of positivist perspectives".   Delgado's description of outgroups largely understands them to have little or no influence and where their voices have been devalued or dismissed. They operate on the margins and have been abnormalised.   But it is also worth recalling Carbado and Gulati's (2001) and Zamudio et al's (2011) points, discussed earlier, that some black people, who are in positions of power according to the dominant narrative, are faced with adopting levels of compromise and the pressure to perform to white ideals. They are somewhere between the margins and the majoritarian narrative and face choices of how much to disavow their race and ethnicity or accept and use their position to expose racism. Delgado's (1989) contention however relates to the majority of black

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people's lives and experiences that are seen as aberrations. He conceives that their stories create a counter reality to the accepted philosophies and practices of the majority by "shattering complacency and challenging the status quo" (Delgado, 1989, p.2414).   Counter stories bring to the fore unseen and unheard viewpoints, telling of unacknowledged incidents and realities and the effect these have on individuals and communities. They can expose real hurt and degradations. Delgado also surmises that bonds of shared understandings and cohesion can emerge across different black experiences and move subordinated peoples from hopelessness to self-knowledge, healing and a solidarity with others that brings confidence and power to tell their stories. They embrace new and positive understandings of themselves as valued and realise that along with others, have relevant contributions to make and a place in society.   He also theorises that the telling of BME stories opens up dialogue with the white majority reducing a resistant, siege mentality from and inviting a greater receptive, listening response. This is due to the characteristic of narrative where unfolding events draw people in and compel listening. In Delgado's view counter story then becomes creatively constructive because it reveals how and why racist hierarchies are constructed, lays foundations for understanding and proposes actions for how they can be dismantled.

However CRT theorists themselves advocate some caution and warn that storytelling raises questions surrounding the merit, truth and objectivity of the stories told (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The position of the BME participant, as storyteller, may be uncritically privileged because they are portrayed as the perpetually minoritised and victimised other, who is finally given a voice and appear as outside of the norm, to be treated with suspicion (Maylor, 2009a). Analytical rigour, debate and interpretation can be potentially suspended because sympathy with the teller and their issues are raised above any wider, contextual considerations (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Zamudio et al, 2011). Counter storytelling can

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be criticised as one-sided and unbalanced, making it difficult to grasp a whole situation and CRT can be criticised by white researchers as presenting a biased view and by BME people for not representing them as diverse, empowered or multi-dimensional (Duncan, 2005). In addition Hylton (2012) cautions that counter stories could be only words, achieving little change.

> *Even with their cloaks of validity and reliability, stories are socially-*
> *constructed and can represent limited versions of reality for*
> *subjugated people and their everyday experiences, especially where*
> *oppressive social arrangements remain unchallenged* (Hylton, 2012, p.26).

Delgado (1989) too recognises the imbalances of counterstories, noting exaggerations and personal emphases and that they can be over-condemnatory to the majority group. Those in outgroups may only see things from their subordinated, rejected positions and present devastating accounts but ironically they can also use this to be self-serving if they see it as a way in to the dominant group. Delgado suggests those in outgroups can teeter on the margins once the benefits of the dominant group are within their grasp. Such 'oscillation between the poles' can rob counter story of its impact and can actually validate and give currency to the dominant narrative. It is also true, he asserts, that dominant narratives react negatively to the thrust and accusation of counter story that holds them to account and demand reforms. However Delgado believes that the nature of stories as "primordial meeting grounds of human existence" (p.2437) where, through dialogue, the resistance of the dominant group can be addressed, the 'otherness' of subordinated groups can be reduced to create new shared experiences and stereotypes replaced by realities. It is this ability of the people-centred nature of counter stories that has the capacity to shift the focus from power and dominance, inherent in the majority narrative, to the construction of more pluralistic understandings at an institutional and societal level (Delgado, 1989; Manglitz, Talmadge & Merriweather Hunn, 2006).

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3.3.6 The relevance of counter stories and CRT to my study

Counter storytelling can be further linked to two areas which have resonance in my study. The first is the capacity of the researcher to interpret and give meaning to data. This recognises the special insight offered by the researcher in his/her enquiries and insider-outsider tensions (Islam, 2000; Johnson-Bailey, 1999). Such positioning draws on Gunaratnam's (2003) concept of 'relationality' in research. The effect of the researcher will be discussed later in this chapter. The second area is the role of counter stories to enable individuals to see their position within larger bodies, such as institutions. The telling of their stories acts to unveil and transform their thinking and actions and those around them which will involve the telling of unwelcome and uncomfortable truths (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge & Manglitz (2006) concur, believing that the stories of BME peoples need to be managed so they are presented with insight, authority and an expectation of action to avoid them being seen as aberrations, within a white hegemonic social order. In this way counter stories have a capability to present difference and difficulty, may lead to a more grounded way to discuss racial issues and tensions and offer a way to understand how individual experiences reflect broader social patterns (Bell, 1995). For BME students, who suffer from racism and microagressions, counter stories construct frames of clarity and reference about their lives, help them to realise they are not alone in their marginality and along with others build collaboration and arguments to defend and assert themselves (Manglitz, Talmadge & Merriweather Hunn, 2006).

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The majority story in ITE focuses on becoming the skilled, caring and charismatic teacher (DfE, 2012; Gove, 2013). The effect of this can render BME student teachers' stories and experiences irrelevant or invisible at one level, but also unnatural and undesirable at a more detrimental level (Troyna, 1994; Warmington, 2008; Rollock, 2011). Majoritarian stories 'distort and silence' and even destroy the cultural fabric of these student teachers, so that their beliefs and values are questioned and denounced (Villenhas & Deyhle, 1999). Solórzano & Yosso, (2016) argue that majoritarian narratives see BME issues as problems, and therefore proffer culturally-deficit 'solutions'. These include assimilation into the majority culture of education which can mean loosening or cutting ties with family, community and language and to down-pay racialized difficulties to be more acceptable to white peers and tutors. Solórzano & Yosso (2016) believe that this omits a significant aspect of a person's being and sends the message that racism and oppression are not real or to be challenged. Majoritarian stories, they content are intended to present the voice of authority and any sub-plots and minor characters, may not even be considered in the whole picture.

Through the tenets of CRT, discussed so far in this chapter, with reference to its viability in the UK and as a tool of analysis in ITE, I argue that CRT has the capability to provide a supporting framework and methodology, to examine the varied experiences of BME students in England whose families are touched by British colonial history, immigration and education systems that have struggled to support racial minority students. Through its existing and potential development of conceptual understandings, CRT offers a body of knowledge on exposing how unjust processes in ITE can damage and oppress BME student teachers (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2005).   Through centralising race and recognising it as a constructed entity CRT allows my study to examine how the effects of racial hierarchies and racism assign BME student teachers to difficult and compromised positions (Zamudio et al, 2011). CRT challenges liberal and meritocratic notions professed

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by institutions such as ITE which enables me to question how far the actual lived experiences of BME student teachers match this picture (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).   By recognising the multiple and interconnected identities, as theorised in CRT's view of intersectionality, I am able to look at BME student teachers' stories with a greater understanding of complexity and depth (Delgado Bernal, 2002).   Through the advocacy of counter story, I am able to gain understanding of how the processes of race and racism are shown in the training of BME student teachers and how it affects them.

3.4 Methods used in the Study

The following sections will explain and defend why and how I collected participants' stories as data through the use of focus groups and individual interviews**.** In my study I used one-to-one interviews and focus groups which I found to be potent sites for disclosure (Barbour, 2007; Barbour & Schostak, 2011; Parker & Roberts, 2011).   I will also raise issues of researcher bias in analysis and discuss complexities arising from the relationship between the BME researcher and BME participants, so that my position is made as transparent as possible and shows self-examination. This will be followed by the further ethical considerations of anonymity, confidentiality, data-protection, safety and risk management to demonstrate that I have followed national and international guidelines on researching with people.

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3.5 Focus Groups

There is some suggestion that focus groups are unsuitable for in-depth qualitative research for a number of reasons.   They can be seen as a shallow or quick method of data-collection due to their use in market research and its surrounding connotations of trite subject matter (Robson, 2011).   Issues such as a 'group-think' mentality and dominance by some members may occur (Barbour, 2007; Phoenix, 2013).   This is intensified according to the size of the group because it may be easier for one person to dominate in a small group, while a few like-minded individuals can dominate in a larger group (Finch & Lewis, 2003).   Some members will have difficulty coping with different views to their own and may form stereotypes and grudges which may affect their responses (Bold, 2012).   However the interaction between group members, resistance to conforming, possible conflicts and how this could impact on the data, is under-researched (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014).   Robson (2011) also suggests that focus groups are limited because they may only be able to explore collective, not individual, phenomena; cannot adequately reveal a consensus in attitude, only the recurrence of attitudes across groups; or show a range of views, but not necessarily the strength of those views.

I chose to use focus groups because I value the power and role of groups in my own teaching. I have observed, in 17 years of school and university teaching, that learners appear more lively and interested when working with each other and through listening to different ideas (Mercer, 2000). As a teacher I also enjoy managing different views by appropriately quietening the over-talkative and allowing the less vocal to speak. I also believe individuals within groups gain much from the sociocultural outcomes of talking together because they can build on what they hear and are able to diversify, onto related topics, prompted by purposeful talk (Mercer, 2000; Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

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My role in each focus group began first as the researcher, because I outlined the ethical requirements and suggested plan for the time; then I adopted the facilitator role which is useful when using groups in research (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). Robson (2011) suggests that focus groups can be limited in the depth of data they provide because of the numbers of people involved, working within a time limit. As facilitator, in my focus groups, I was aware of managing time carefully because each group had between three to six participants and I wanted to avoid boredom and tiredness. To avoid this in the larger groups of six I sometimes limited individual speakers if they had responded to the question, to allow enough time for all to speak. Conversely in smaller groups I let the talk carry on if the participants were all taking part more or less equally. If an individual did not appear to want to speak much, neither I nor other group members pushed them further. Generally I provided space and prompts for quieter members to contribute but also enabled story-rich participants to contribute fully so that their descriptions encouraged others to add depth to their own stories (Sarantkos, 2005). I defend this type of researcher management of the research space, as democratic because it allowed all to speak in fairly equal time-frames (Barbour, 2007). The researcher as facilitator has the capacity to draw and construct meaning from the breadth and variation in the discussion because they place the emphasis onto different people at different times but still enable the group to feel cohesive (Sarantkos, 2005).

3.5.1 Focus groups as empowering

Focus Groups can be seen as providing a potentially empowering, even democratic, position for participants because it has the capacity to give confidence and voice to its members in a supportive and safe space and make it possible for all to become equal in status, voice and ownership (Barbour, 2007; Barbour & Schostak, 2011). In addition, in qualitative research,

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there is the capacity for focus group data to reflect its chosen philosophies and methodologies as much as in individual interviews (Vaughn, Schum & Sinagub, 1996).   In an extract from my research diary (Appendix A) I give details of carrying out my first focus group when collecting pilot data which include basic considerations of venue and recording equipment to my reflections on the content and my role.   It shows my development in thought and determination to use focus groups as a result of pilot activity and shows planning for forthcoming groups.   I note the necessities of allowing time at the beginning of a session for the ethics forms to be completed and adequate space for allowing talk throughout. Also, through discussion with participants in subsequent focus groups, I decided to dispense with the warm-up activities to give them more time to respond to the questions.

Focus Groups also recognise the power of the group as a forum, for stories to emerge; where participants' ideas and memories are prompted by others' responses, (Barbour, 2007; Barbour & Schostak, 2011).   Participants can be empowered because they sense its supportive setting, allowing new lines of discussion and the emergence of perceptions, not envisaged by the researcher (Finch & Lewis, 2003).   In my focus groups I acknowledge that I possessed ultimate responsibility as the person who conceived, planned and enabled the focus groups.   I also assumed further power in making a decision to use a semi-structured interview approach, the reason for which is explained later in this chapter, but I was also motivated to draw participants into more power-sharing in the focus groups.   This reflects CRT ideals of empowering minoritised students and my philosophy of pursuing research based on critical, more liberatory approaches (Freire, 1970; Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ledwith, 2011).   My research diary extract (Appendix A) is an exemplification of this.   Freedom and empowerment between group participants can lead to greater interaction and the creation of a more reflective environment within the group, allowing illumination of shared narratives and leading to further exploration by peer participants and the researcher facilitator (Barbour,

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2007). Participants become active in listening, commenting and even prompting, moving the sharing and telling to a deeper and more considered level of thought (Finch & Lewis, 2003).

Out of this deeper level Finch and Lewis (2003) suggest, arises a synergy which offers a shared framework of understanding and in which shared meanings emerge. This contributes towards a growing collective identity in which individual stories are brought into the whole-group discussion. There is capacity therefore for individual data to emerge alongside a collective outlook which is not be achievable from one-to-one interviews (Vaughn, Schum, Sinagub, 1996). A pattern of BME experiences within ITE, which arises from linking individual stories, is then made possible and acknowledges a recurrence of attitudes, rather than a consensus. This depth and dimension is important in critical race research because it avoids a simplified and essentialised picture, honours the credibility of participants and respects their responses (Delgado, 1989).

3.5.2 Bullying and dominance

There are dangers to consider of using focus groups to gather data that researchers must recognise and seek to reduce. The diversity in participant background can mean individual offerings and identities are lost or are seen as a 'threat' by other group members, so that difference, instead of being accepted and even celebrated, becomes implicitly or explicitly unacceptable (Bold, 2012: Finch & Lewis, 2003). Such a situation can be exacerbated or diminished by the size and similarity of the group (Finch and Lewis, 2003). In my focus groups participants were all BME student teachers in the same cohort of their ITE course and in the post-graduate groups they were also of a similar age range, between mid-20 years and mid-30 years. Their differences were that in some groups there were different ethnicities,

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some were parents and in the undergraduate groups, there were some mature students, so the ages varied between 20 and 44 years. To deal with this disparity the use of semi-structured interview questions, discussed later, enabled participants to be focused on the research topic, yet gave them opportunity to expand as an individual (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). In larger groups, the researcher may have less control and the quality of data may be on the surface-level more; while in smaller groups, the researcher may enable all participants to be heard, but the group might need more managing in terms of reducing emotional threat between participants and between participants and the researcher (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). A small focus group may elicit more personalised stories which may also elicit sympathy from other members and encourage more talk. Conversely small groups can elicit suspicion and cliques which can bully or herd members, whose contributions they deem to be unacceptable, into certain ways of responding (Barbour & Schostak, 2011; Bolton, 2006). This type of environment can breed an uncertainty about expressing personal views, for fear of rejection and admonition from the others, both in comments and gestures, made inside the group, or afterwards (Barbour, 2007).

The nature of a group can affect the quality of experiences offered because there is the danger of trite contrivances being offered, that avoid deep or contentious issues (Phoenix 2013). Barbour and Schostak (2011) and Phoenix (2013) also warn of groups that have pecking orders, sometimes led by dominant individuals; and those that have negative shared histories and problems, all of which can dictate or mute what people say. The raising of emotions is hard to address and may lead the researcher to modify future questions and be diverted from the original purpose (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). However, focus groups can provide a very suitable method for collecting meaningful and purposeful data, harness deep understandings, constructed with and by people in a thoughtful way and are reflexive to participants (Phoenix 2013).

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3.5.3 Managing the research

To counteract issues of muting and bullying, leading to reduced quality of data and managing the data-collection, I limited my focus groups to between three and six participants. I introduced myself and explained the research, including the participant consent forms, discussed later in this chapter, then asked each participant to briefly introduce themselves by telling the group their name, favourite part of the course, family 's racial and ethnic heritage and some other ice-breaker statements. This was done to establish the seriousness and focus of the research, my position as interested and supportive researcher and the participants as equals.   Semi-structured interview questions were then used in a scale to move them from more conversational to a conceptual level of response (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014) (Appendix B). I did this to aim for credible and grounded data which Barbour and Schostak (2011) argue is necessary for researchers to construct problematizing discussions, taking into account concepts such as power, values, truths and realities, and understand that the stories offered by the participants are both "partial and partisan" (p.46). This understands that within focus group discussions the researcher's task is not in finding truth, but in seeking truths (Savin-Baden & Major 2013).

3.6 Interviewing

As part of my data-collection I used one-to-one interviews with 11 student teachers (see Table 4.1 in Chapter Four). As a method of data-collection interviews can reflect an ontological position which values people's views and understandings as part of social realities and truths and epistemologically can be seen as a mutual and reciprocal way to find

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out views and perceptions (Mason, 2002). I chose to conduct one-to-one interviews to complement the focus groups. In moving from group to individual interactions, I developed skills in probing individuals further and in allowing participants to expand a little further on points. In focus groups individuals would have approximately 30 minutes individual talk time, or less for quieter members, but individual interviews they had between 45 to 60 minutes' talk time. I used both focus groups and individual interviews because I wanted to ensure opportunity for quality data to emerge across the data-collection process (Kvale, 2008). This understanding and use of individual interviews for me, also involved a degree of reflexivity (Kvale, 2008) which I discuss in further detail below, when I consider the relationship between researcher and participant. The validity and reliability of the data produced from my interviews therefore, is a result of purposeful and committed interactions (Mears, 2012)

Kvale's (2008) metaphors of interviewer as 'miner' or 'traveller' throw some light on how knowledge can be gained from interviews. As a miner I could choose to see BME student teachers as artefacts, possessing secrets of life within ITE from a minoritised position. My job would then be to unearth and reveal their stories. As a traveller, which I chose as the preferred and more credible option for my type of study, I saw the interviews as a journey; whereby I walked with the student teachers for a while, gathering their stories and re-presenting them as part of an on-going landscape of searching and re-producing. As a critical race researcher I find Kvale's suggestion that "the potentialities of meanings are unfolded in the traveller's interpretations" (2008, p.19) to be useful in moving forward from data collection to the construction of knowledge. Kvale (2008) believed in the generative inter-play between participants and researcher whereby participants' stories are not really unearthed by the researcher, as if they had always lain there, but they emerge, are shaped and

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adopt living dimensions, as the researcher asks, prompts, probes and interacts. It is the potential of this environment that gives shape to the data (Yeo et al, 2014).

3.6.1 Interview structure

Knowledge gained from interviews depends on the level and type of questioning and the relationship offered by the researcher, however Hobson and Townsend (2010) assert that the distinction between structured and unstructured interviewing is unsatisfactory and suggest using the notion of degrees of structure in order to achieve the depth required. I used the same questions for my one-to-one interviews, as I did for the focus groups because of their comprehensiveness, focus and depth. But as they were intended to be used in a semi-structured way, it allowed participants to expand on their story, from which I could probe them further. The semi-structured interview questions (Appendix B) enabled the focus to remain on race and ethnicity in ITE in a supportive way by ensuring the researcher's agenda is covered but providing space for the participant to take some control (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). Barbour and Schostak (2011) state that interviews need to be grounded in the context and views of the participants and where the researcher is seen as an underwriter of the reality offered.   In semi-structured interviews the boundaries between researcher and participant are more defined and the information elicited is less ambiguous than in unstructured interviews (Elliott, 2005).

However semi-structured interviews pose problems. As a researcher, using this approach I wrestled with knowing how to appear, supportive and reasonably informal, without appearing as though I had no agenda and just wanted to chat. I wanted the individual participants to

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feel they had provided their time and ideas for a good purpose because all of them had either come onto campus especially for the interviews or given up lunch or study time. Alternatively I did not want them to feel as if they were in a formal university interview, as a structured interview might have indicated, and then feel unsure about sharing their life details and views about being a BME student teacher. Semi-structured interviews demand greater responsiveness by researchers to know when and how to rein in or allow digression as participants take the topic into their own realms (Wengraf, 2001). To do this I was aware of my tone of voice, facial expression and physical gestures to allow a sense of ease and acceptance to enable them to talk as freely as possible. I was also aware that a larger degree of self-reflexivity was needed so that my own experiences as a BME person and former student teacher, were genuinely and appropriately shared, not spuriously given in a false manner (Schostak, 2006). Semi-structured interviews also involve decisions about when to interrupt flow and intervene with another question without appearing to be curt and unsympathetic (Robson & McCartan, 2016; Yeo et al, 2014). This is also important because of working in a time frame, where a researcher has to be aware of participant tiredness and interest level. I found that semi-structured interviews suit the way I work because I like to have a framework of questions from which to work and from which the participants can expand and in doing so help them develop a greater understanding for the topic. In the case of my study the topic is vital and important for them and their future (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). Further details of the ethics of interviewing is found towards the end of the chapter.

Interviews have the capacity to explore feelings and beliefs at a deeper level, to follow the participant's lead and allow her/him to work through issues by constructing, explaining and then reconstructing (Mears, 2012). If knowledge is seen as bearing weight and meaning then the value that the researcher places on the words of the participants' may enable or impair the generation of knowledge (Yeo et al, 2014). While allowing participants to take the lead to

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aim for greater depth in interviews, it may not necessarily result in better knowledge-generation and there may be doubt concerning the possible instability of such data, because they arise from an intense episode of questioning (Elliott, 2005; Wengraf, 2001). Hammersly (2008) questions whether interviews can reproduce and represent a reality for participants because they are a contrived and constructed reality, only achieved in the telling and are quickly forgotten.   But because it is the participants' understanding of events or situations, in which the researcher must engage, what is said can be seen to hold value beyond and outside of the interview (Kvale, 1992; Kvale, 2008).

3.6.2 Interview questions used in my study

The questions asked of participants in this study are split into sections to provide a broad and balanced inquiry (Appendix B). They are intended to cover different aspects of the lives of these BME student teachers and show understanding that they do not operate as individuals only but are also directly and indirectly influenced by their families and the community in which they live. The different sections provide a framework of lines of inquiry, moving from the conversational towards conceptualised responses (Barbour & Schostak, 2011.   During the process I left some space for participants to expand and lead, being mindful of facilitating in focus groups and of time constraints (Barbour, 2007).   The language of the questions is in an everyday register, rather than using technical terms and shows an interest in them, rather than on the research (Elliott, 2005).   The questions are mainly open to provide space for the participants to engage deeply, with a number of them beginning with 'Describe'.   The 'openness' of the questions provides an opportunity for participants to expand on events or people which they have raised as important (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014).   Closed or

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leading questions may make the narrative reflect the researcher's, rather than participant's, interests (Mason, 2002, Bryman, 2012). The final set of questions called 'Personal Thoughts' extends the potential for ownership by participants, which can reduce problems of researcher power and the creation of a culture in which participants aim to provide what they consider to be acceptable answers (Barbour, 2007). Also involved in redressing the power balance in interviews, is good listening and not interrupting unnecessarily, unless to prompt further talk (Elliott, 2005). To engage in this type of process researchers using a narrative approach, need to engage in a significant level of self-awareness of the part they play in the interview, including how they might share their own stories and the impact they exert on participants by force of personality (Bold, 2012). As the researcher, using a critical race approach, I was challenged to be aware of personal and obstructing constructs, such as personal assumptions, handling of the power differential between myself and the participants and the ability to be reflexive to changing factors during the interviews (Savin-Baden and Major, 2013). Rebalancing power imbalances and empowering participants as co-creators, is necessary (Phoenix 2004; Phoenix, 2013).

3.6.3 Questioning assumptions and recognising power differentials

Using interviews as a method to collect data involves significant ethical concerns because the researcher is asking for and about information, which has emotional value for the participant and it may be an unmasking of their inner selves (Schostak, 2006). It is necessary for researchers to challenge their own assumptions and bias as they conduct interviews and later analyse and present the data, (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Hammersely (2008) concurs, asserting that interviewer bias will capture a participant's world through that lens so the way

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the researcher sets up and uses interviews, can determine what is offered by the participant. Interviews he contends are, "public displays through which subjectivities are actively constituted and displayed" (p.93), but what is said depends on the topic, the way the questions are framed, participants' characters, interviewer character and manner and even the timing and location.   Barbour and Schostak (2011) theorise that trust between researcher and participant is crucial in enabling information to be shared.   If a participant is suspicious of the research motives or senses any negative impact on themselves, they may feel unable to give their trust. The reduction of the power differential, between researcher and participant, benefits from positive non-verbal cues and careful researcher listening (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Barbour and Schostak (2011) draw on the idea of 'symbolic violence' to indicate researcher imposition, which they advocate can be addressed by "vigilant, self-reflexivity" (p.63). Kvale's (2006) concept of 'asymmetric interviews' supports Barbour and Schostak's view.   Kvale warns against uncritical belief in the interview as inherently good and advocates that continual self-examination by the researcher is necessary:

> *...a fantasy of democratic relations masks the basic issue of who gains*
> *materially and symbolically from the research and where claims of*
> *participation disguise the exertion of power (p.482).*

He is however clear that the researcher is the "primary methodological tool" (Kvale, 1992, p.22) who is constantly checking validity through questioning and interpreting in a context-sensitive way.   Interviews embody a constant tension between knowledge and ethics which supported by an understanding that they are uncertain and unstable places (Barbour & Schostak, (2011).

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3.7 The relationship between the researcher and participants in qualitative research

Critical Race Theory premises the dismantling of racism through listening and representing subordinated experiences through counter stories as one of its main tenets. The processes of achieving this are predicated on researcher attention to ontological and epistemological considerations of knowing the power of subjectivity to be a truthful inhabitant of the research arena (Parker & Lynn, 2002).   Grappling with how power, representation and positionality surround the researcher and the research itself, claims prime place because they are the tools of seeing and challenging hegemonic structures. CRT research, as part of the critical qualitative research endeavour, is for and with participants thus potentially reducing researcher power (Hylton, 2012).   Researcher position requires high reflexivity, of continually looking towards oneself as well as towards the participants so personal experiences are analysed in relation to knowledge about the influence of hegemonic power (Bhopal 2009).   Re-balancing power differentials between researcher and participants is based on trust and goodwill and depends on the relationship between the researcher and participant (Gunaratnam, 2003; Andrews, Squire & Tamboukou, 2013). The telling of a personal story initially lies in the hands of the teller, who make choices about which experiences and feelings and how much detail to relate (Elliott, 2005). The representation of their stories, by the researcher, comes from knowing the participants, reflecting on the experiences and deliberating on ways of creating new ways of thinking for the dominant mind-set as a result (Phoenix, 2013).

Participants' stories can be seen as reflecting real life with its questionable memories and incomplete pictures, representing the relationship between narrative and life (Elliot, 2005). However Phoenix (2004) argues that while narrative-based research, can capture the nuances

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and subtleties of the effect of issues like race, in everyday life, she warns that, "some things are too terrible to be recalled" (p.45), through a recollection of shame, hurt or lack of self-worth. She suggests this can be the case for BME peoples who have suffered racisms and indignities from daily microaggressions to macro-scale events, such as refugees or asylum seekers who have fled from violence. Critical Race Theory research understands that the representation of counter story, as the voice of subordinated peoples, depends on careful attention to the methodological processes. Researcher self-examination is an important part of the process and Milner (2007) suggests researchers ask how they know their own racial heritage, its impact in society and on research, and their beliefs about race in society. These are necessary for researchers to realise the evolving nature of self and raises questions about who can speak for whom and whose voice is actually being represented (Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge & Manglitz, 2006). This is a crucial consideration in CRT research with its emphasis on voice and story in order to break down hegemony and builds a discourse which values difference (Delgado, 1989; Matsuda, 1991).

3.7.1 The position of the BME Researcher working with BME participants and insider-outsider tensions

In research involving BME participants and that is about race and ethnicity, researcher self-examination and reflection upon their own ethnic background, as previously stated, is necessary because of the effect on the collection, analysis and representation of the data (Stanfield & Rutledge, 1993; Gunaratnam, 2003; Solomos & Bulmer, 2004). An understanding of their 'situatedness' within the research means, not only that the researcher is ever-present because of racial commonalities with participants, but that they bring a unique perspective that often makes a difference to the research (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009;

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Costley, Elliott & Gibbs, 2010). Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009) suggest that the benefit to being a member of the group one is studying is acceptance, afforded by an automatic level of trust and openness in your participants.   Initial suspicions and access into thoughts and feelings that might otherwise be closed to 'outsiders', are made easier. This is part of qualitative subjective research which acknowledges the impossibility of separating shared backgrounds and assumptions from impacting on the research, and recognises the value it can have on the process of data collection and analysis (Housee, 2008; Denscombe, 2010). We can also draw on 'grounded theory' notions of 'sensitivity' which has particular resonance for BME researchers working with BME participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Sensitivity is nurtured through researchers' professional experience in their field and their personal experience which may have similarities to those of the participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Such deeper interaction with the data, involving questioning and re-visiting it, allows new meanings and theory to emerge (Parker & Roberts, 2011).

The race of the researcher is argued by Gunaratnam (2003) as a catalyst in drawing out truths. She explores the concept of the 'Race of Interviewer-Effects' (RIE) by contending that participants can either 'fake' race where they are less willing to talk of their experiences and views on racial topics, particularly if the researcher is from the majority culture; or 'make' race where the researcher's closeness to their minoritised culture encourages them to more openly state what they think and feel. 'Making race' however is still problematic because the researcher cannot assume the position of the rational knower while the participant plays the racialised 'other'. There has to be a more careful consideration of each other which disallows stereotypes and careless suppositions. Gunaratnam also warns against assumptions of harmony between the black researcher and black participants because it may leave issues uncriticised because of the urge to present positive images of the BME participants and may

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raise questions about researcher motives in pursuing personal politico-racial outcomes where the line between the participants' narratives and the researcher's becomes eroded. It then becomes difficult for the researcher to represent as honestly as they wish, a problem realised by Islam (2000) who explored the 'race traitor' idea, discussed later in this chapter. While RIE works against the notion of a single and stable 'truth', as celebrated in CRT methodology, it could be seen as too subjective and responsive to the BME participants's offerings and provide an overly one-sided view (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Zamudio et al, 2011).   However exaggerations and imbalances however are seen as part of the data when using participants' stories (Delgado, 1989) .   Furthermore, RIE may be criticised as failing to address irrational, unconscious and emotional dimensions of participants' responses (Litowitz, 1997).   Gunaratnam suggests that this may actually position RIE as a form of resistance by participants who wish to define, control and limit what is knowable about them and to whom.

The BME researcher, working with BME participants also faces issues of how to balance the objective-subjective position in order to fairly represent difference and complexity within race and ethnicity (Maylor 2009a). Maylor, (2009b) suggests for example that "ethnic categorisations should be used with consent, care and sensitivity" (p.237) so that participants choose their own ethnicity and feel in control. This is important in race research which aims to liberate and empower (Solomos & Bulmer, 2004).   BME researchers working with BME experiences, face other challenges. These include: knowing how to respond to the bemusement or indifference of those in higher education (Alexander & Arday, 2015; Mirza, 2015), knowing how to keep the status of race high in the research field and not allow it to become side-lined (Maylor, 2009a); ensuring that race research is sustained, in order to provide a strong theoretical base for understanding racialised experiences (Stanfield & Rutledge, 1993); and finally understanding the danger of research compounding, rather than

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dismantling, racial stereotyping (Constantine-Simms, 1995; Phoenix, 2004; Ali et al, 2010).

Through their work, BME researchers are participating in and contributing to racialised

knowledge and practices which involves presenting research as for and with, not on

participants, modelling anti-essentialist thinking, language and practices and challenging

hidden, oppressive structures (Duncan 2005; Leonardo, 2005; Hylton, 2012).

BME researchers face further contradictions and responsibilities, both in self-learning about

their position within a white-centric higher education system (Maylor, 2009a) as they

negotiate the space in which they operate as a consciously BME educator and researcher

(Housee, 2008); and from examination of their own life experiences, in relation to and

surrounding their work with BME participants (Gunaratnam, 2003; Constantine-Simms,

1995; Phoenix, 2004).   Roberts (2013) believes location and context, real and political can

silence and erase a sense of self for the BME researcher, but it can also be affirmative in

building self-identity and resisting the process of 'othering'. She states:

> *It is in experiencing and negotiating blackness within the contradictions*
> *of visibility/invisibility, erasure/presence, individuality/collectivity*
> *that this 'in between'/liminal space becomes one of possibility,*
> *engendering alternative ways of seeing, thinking, and doing,*(p.339)

'Be-coming' a black researcher, Roberts (2013) premises, is unsettling because of the need

to continually question motives and ethics surrounding requirements of funders and the

impact on BME participants. She warns of the perils of 'delusion' where research about

BME issues repeatedly comprises rhetoric, rather than meaningful action and advocates

research from the 'bottom up' as more ethical and impactful for BME people. However

Islam (2000) suggests that enabling bottom-up research as a difficult burden. Her work

among Bangladeshi immigrants to Los Angeles involved 'negotiating' between white

academic discourse and funding that supported her research, and participants who lay

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between being racist themselves, against black and Latino peoples in their neighbourhoods, and struggling against racism directed at them from white people. She documented her role as swinging between the insider status of being translator and social guide to the participants, many of them immigrants seeking citizenship, to an outsider status of being a 'race traitor' because of writing about all aspects of their position, including their blatant racism, ironies and idiosyncracies of their culture as they adjusted to America.

As BME researchers establish relationships with BME participants insider-outsider tensions can emerge (Constantine-Simms, 1995; Serrant-Green, 2002; Serrant-Green, 2004).   Issues of who speaks for whom and (im)balances of power arise alongside understanding of working within a racialised space and in recognising commonalities and dissimilarities. These raise necessary considerations of positionality and self-critique for BME researchers (Parker & Lynn, 2002; Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge & Manglitz, 2006). Even though researchers and participants might share commonalities of ethnicity, there are many other 'axes' of difference, such as gender, class and status that may intersect and affect communication and interpretation of the data (Islam, 2000; Bhopal, 2009; Bhopal & Preston, 2012). Johnson-Bailey (1999) suggests that being of the same racial position as participants, means there are silent understandings, cultural phrases, expressions and gestures that are used without explanation but any cultural bonds are also scarred by societal barriers which can emerge in research. In her work with other black women, she talks of added 'forces' which made the interviewing unpleasant at times. She felt accused of not being black due to her lighter skin colour and having straighter hair texture than the participants, which she asserts, arose from their acceptance of historical white, hierarchical systems which deemed blacker skins as unacceptable. They therefore felt inadequate in relation to her who they saw as aligning with white people. She explained:

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"long awkward silences, averted glances, raised and lowered voices, tears shed… issues of color were most certainly occasional landmines in our mutual process of discovery" (p.668)

Ill consideration of the depth and complexity of one's raced position, including intersecting social factors, augurs an over-simplistic understanding, by researcher or participant wrongly assuming shared experiences (Johnson-Bailey, 1999). Over-simplicity has the potential to impede the research process where participants make assumptions of shared understandings and omit details of their experiences and where the researcher leaps to conclusions from assumed commonalities and personal experiences (Maylor, 2009a). This can lead to race becoming problematic, even obstructive in the research process (Maylor, 2009a), although Gunaratnam (2003) argues that race research, with all its tensions and rocky ground, is necessary for the production of knowledge about racial inequity. It is the divergent and non-uniform experience of minoritised peoples which creates "an emergent property of the interactions between differently constituted and located individuals, who [also] include the researcher" (Gunaratnam, 2003, pp.7-8). Gunaratnam (2003) argues for 'relationality' in qualitative research of race and ethnicity. Relationality, she contends, produces language and thought which militates against reductionism and essentialism which she defines as "unchanging 'essences' cordoned off from social, material and emotional relations" (p.6). Essentialism, she asserts, is fixed, tied to societies' norms, whereas relationality is fluid and responsive to change.

Corbin Dwyer & Buckle (2009) discuss the notion of the 'space between' which challenges the dichotomy of insider versus outsider status and explores what it means to work alongside participants who may look similar, have shared ethnic histories and have had some similar life experiences. They argue, that it is restrictive to 'lock' into an either/or perspective that states whether you are in or out. Exploring the space between demands greater sensitivity

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and a strength of insight to go outside methodological norms which draws on the idea of the liminal, in-between space as producing contradictions of 'visibility/invisibility, erasure/presence, individuality/collectivity' (Roberts, 2013). This complexity of space, Corbin Dwyer and Buckle argue, is indicated by the hyphen between insider-outsider that is not a path but a 'third' space to be inhabited and celebrated by qualitative researchers because it is a meeting place of paradox and dialectic. Acker (2000) replaces the hyphen with slashes ''in/out/side' further denoting the instability of and fluidity of the space. This raises considerations for the researcher of locating their position and why and how it is achieved and conceived? It is a creative tension involving questioning and an acute consciousness of self in the process. This notion is supported by Milligan (2016) who draws on shifting identities of researchers, depending on different situations. They are 'inbetweeners', neither inside or outside but are sensitive to the data collection. She suggests this way of participating in the research space enables a re-envisioning of ontological and epistemological boundaries that challenges power imbalances and reduces 'othering' of participants. This can produce more authentic knowledge formulation. Pillow (2003) emphasises that understanding of self and reflexivity enables researchers to alter their perspective. Reflexivity, particularly in research with marginalised and subjugated participants, understands the strong hegemonic implications that research is part of the powerful, white academia. Academia, she asserts, sets regulations and funding restrictions which demand a toeing of the line to produce acceptable data, albeit with an 'edge' expected from research into marginalised peoples, but in doing so it enacts power games which protect its self-interests. Knowing participants, Pillow argues, moves the research away from hegemonic expectations and dominations to being more accountable to them.

Race researchers, working with insider-outsider tensions, are tasked to handle this dichotomy with care and deliberation, providing new ways of seeing and not unquestioningly following

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the lead of dominant, white research discourses (Roberts, 2013). For race researchers certain issues are magnified or different from white researchers, such as they more often face accusations of bias when working with BME participants, than white researchers working with white participants (Serrant-Green, 2002); and they have to consider insider-outsider tensions which necessitates listening to participants, not projecting personal needs and assumptions (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Race research understands that the researcher will bring a wealth of knowledge about their personal story and racism and has a desire to change the status quo. Counter-storytelling specifically urges the researcher to listen and grow in awareness both of their own and their participants' minoritised position and frame their stories as positions of power (Delgado, 1989; Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge & Manglitz, 2006, Zamudio et al, 2011).

3.8 Anonymity, confidentiality and safety

The use of interviewing in focus groups and with individuals, as discussed earlier, is designed so that student teachers' stories emerge both with the support of others and in their personal spaces (Hobson & Townsend, 2010). In this way the research can benefit or even be a cathartic experience for the participants, enabling them to become more critically-conscious and knowledgeable about themselves (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). In this context, the process of ethics opens up realities as experienced by these students (Duncan, 2005). The researcher's role in adhering to issues of honesty, integrity and transparency and as guardian of ethical practices, contributes to greater dependable and rigorous knowledge production (BERA, 2011; University of XXXXX, 2017). I received formal clearance from the ethics committee of my university, which was also in my case the funding body (Appendix C). This

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section will discuss ethical issues surrounding: anonymity and confidentiality, data protection, risk management and safeguarding, to show how principles of 'ethical conscience' and practice undergird this study (Kvale, 2008; UUK, 2012, University of XXXXX, 2017).

Ethical guidance asserts that strong ethical practice depends on planning and preparation around participants' needs (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014; University of XXXXX, 2017). This reflects Piper & Simons (2011) notion of 'situated ethics' which interprets and practises approaches in tune with the socio-political context of the research and is primarily concerned with upholding human-ness and social justice. The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011, Item 20) outlines that research must recognise the people involved, do no emotional or mental harm and have strong and clear obligations to work with participants in a careful and respectful manner. Data-collection, analysis and presentation therefore should also aim 'to do good' by supporting and stimulating them during the process (Piper & Simons, 2011).

3.8.1 Consent and awareness of participants' needs

Informed and voluntary consent is a first step, involving making contact with both participants and seeking approval from 'gatekeepers' as necessary (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). As my study works with student teachers, I contacted various tutors from the universities from which I gathered the data.   These included faculty heads and course tutors to gain initial permission and to ask them to identify and draw together individuals for a focus group or individual interviews. This was followed by a personal e-mail invitation to the

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participants with the 'Participant Information Sheet' attached (Appendix D). At the beginning of the interviews I repeated this information and provided hard copies of the 'Consent Form' for participants to sign (Appendix E). The emotional distance of the e-mail invitation gave participants space to decline prior to the interview or focus group. These actions showed commitment to and respect for participants' access to the processes of data collection and allowed a share in the ownership and representation of the research (Gill & Goodson, 2011). However as Robson & McCartan (2016) point out, even with this level of information participants may only have a limited understanding of what is involved. With this in mind at the beginning of the interview and focus groups I gave them time to ask me about the research and understand that they had the right to withdraw before, during and after the interviews if they felt uncomfortable or felt they had been duped into entering something which was not what they expected or felt drawn into it through my persuasion or over-promotion of the topic (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). This happened in one focus group, where the participant, chose to withdraw after the interview had begun and gave her reasons as feeling uncomfortable as a mature student, in discussing her thoughts in a group of younger students. She had signed the consent forms and did not ask that they were withdrawn. She stated that she would return at an agreed time to speak to me individually. She also had not given any response to the first question, so I have related aspects of the episode in the following chapter because in that way I have not betrayed her confidence or behaved unethically. Informed consent also had to cover video recordings of the focus group interviews and audio recordings of the individual interviews. I did not mention this in the initial e-mail, only at the beginning of the interviews, giving a clear explanation that the recordings were necessary for transcriptional purposes only. I made this choice on the basis of how much information participants needed to know at different stages of setting up the research (Robson & McCartan, 2016; Bryman, 2012). As interviews involve emotions and

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relationships and are "constitutive of the self", understanding what is going to happen and the rights of consent and withdrawal are necessary inclusions in the process (Elliott, 2005, p.140). After the interviews I e-mailed the transcripts, to participants, for verification and permission to proceed. I stated that these were confidential and could not be used or shared with anyone outside of the interviews by them. I explained that I would have to share them with my research supervisors but they would be completely anonymised. My responses to the process of setting up the research, how I adapted the focus group process, my growing awareness of participants' needs and an effort to create the right sort of setting to elicit trust, ownership and participation in the research, is shown in an extract from my research diary (Appendix A).

3.8.2 Anonymity, confidentiality and data protection

Anonymity in this study involved the use of pseudonyms. Most of my participants chose their own but others left me to choose for which I chose names suitable for their ethnicity and culture. I also avoided what Elliott (2005) calls the "specific constellation" of identification (p.142) in which individuals can still be identified due to highly individual characteristics and the specific location of the research. I only described each university as the region of the country, rather than the town or area, in which it was located, apart from London because of its size. Wengraf (2001) suggests that the tightest form of anonymity is where even participants are not able to recognise themselves in the research. However Piper & Simons (2011) assert that while anonymity of individuals is necessary, hurt and betrayal may still be felt by readers of the study, who are similar types of individuals or organisations. Anonymity is a prerequisite for confidentiality which involves the building of relationships

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and trust so that participants feel able to speak freely, knowing the researcher will treat their contribution sensitively and fairly (Piper & Simons, 2011; Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014).

Giving participants information before interviews enables them to determine how much and when to divulge information (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014), although in-depth information means a high-level of responsibility of confidentiality by the researcher is necessary, in order to avoid deceit and damage both to the participant and to the research community (BERA, 2011). Bryman (2012) believes the "intrinsic wrongness of not keeping confidences" (p.138) affects research integrity. The issue of researcher responsibility and professional conduct is more poignant in this study because I played the dual role of tutor and researcher to some of the participants. BERA (2011) warns that researchers need to be particularly mindful of this because of the tensions that can arise in the tutor-student relationship, such as the participant students believing it will enhance their marks or performance on the course. I explained at the beginning and end of the focus groups and interviews that disclosure by participants, of any of the content, to anyone outside of the group, was prohibited (Barbour & Schostak, 2011). This was done to eliminate rumours of favouritism. I outlined that I too would be following this procedure, making it clear that while my supervisors for the research would read the content, they would not be told or be able to identify any participant. I was also mindful of ensuring against my own possible unintended disclosure through discussion with colleagues and presentation of data at future research symposia (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). The storage, use and confidentiality of personal data was outlined to participants before, during and after the interviews (Appendix D) which is in line with the *Data Protection Act* (1998)*, specified in the *BERA Ethical Guidelines* (Item 26, 2011) and the University of XXXXX *Code of Conduct* (2017).

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3.8.3 Safety and risk management

Issues of safety for participants involve how they are contacted and who else is involved, such as the university ethics committee, gatekeepers or research supervisors who need to be aware of and involved in the process (University of XXXXX, 2016). These considerations, which revolve around the professional conduct of the researcher, are important for participants to know that procedures are being conducted correctly. Codes of conduct require researchers to be knowledgeable and active about the care of participants, and in race research this involves being sensitive about diversity issues and promoting anti-discriminatory practices (UUK, 2012; University of XXXXX, 2016; ALLEA, 2017). The steps, outlined throughout this chapter concerning participant respect in all aspects of the data preparation and collection and in my own self-reflexivity, demonstrate a good level of anti-discriminatory practices. Codes of conduct also keep relationships in defined spaces, reducing emotional infiltration for both researcher and participant (Yow, 2006; BERA, 2011). This provides safe, accepting environments, a strong sense of interest in and acknowledgement of the importance of the topic, promotes confidence and raises the quality and impact of the study (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). These responsibilities have impact upon practical considerations such as the length of contact with participants, from initial invitations to post-interview checks; and the type of contact, in order to make participants feel unpressurised, safe and supported (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2012) notes that harm can be defined as a loss of self-esteem, stress or the perception of invasion of privacy during or as a result of interviews. The invasion of privacy can include too little preparation of participants to know the actual or type of questions that will be asked, if the questions are on sensitive or personal topics; as well as the manner in which they are asked if the researcher-participant relationship is insufficiently developed (Kvale, 2006).

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Focus groups and individual interviews raise potential issues of safety requiring the researcher to manage the process carefully, including awareness of the effect of the location and timing of interviews (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014; Appendix A). I held all of my focus groups in a room on campus either booked by the course tutor, if I was on a campus other than my own, or by myself on campuses belonging to my university. This provided an objective setting. One focus group asked if they could hold it in the home of one of the participants. I agreed to this, ensuring we had a clear starting and ending point and that I was always in the company of all of them for all of the time. As stated earlier all participants were also sent pre-interview information and the Consent Form to prepare and give them the option of not taking part (Appendix D). For the participants in my study, at the mid-point in their courses, they also needed to know that the surrounding confidentiality processes would keep them safe from being identified and that their tutors were given no access to interview transcripts or information, or that I as the tutor to some of them, would only be using the information strictly for the purposes of the study (BERA, 2011; Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014).

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has examined and defended Critical Race Theory within the context of my understanding of research as a critical endeavour (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). The critical base of CRT embedded in its tenets, deliberately promotes a focus on the hidden negative effects of race on students, and uses their stories as countering effects to the majoritarian narrative in education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). To support this stance I used focus groups and individual interviews, in a semi-structured manner, to construct an environment of inquiry into the topic and that also conveyed their importance as the key players (Yeo et al, 2014).

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The focus groups were designed to be supportive and informative, where participants could share and learn from one another and where the timing and clear boundaries, set by me, minimised issues of muting and bullying (Barbour, 2007; Barbour and Schostak, 2011). The individual interviews enabled me to operate at a greater personal level. On reflection I made contact with and harnessed more stories through the use of focus groups and enjoyed the facilitation and livelier discussion of focus groups.   However I ensured the participants' stories which I constructed from both focus group and individual interviews were of the same quality, to reduce researcher bias (Gill & Goodson, 2011).   I am inevitably intertwined with the topic and participants because of my racial and ethnic heritage mirroring those of the participants but the methods and ethics identified and discussed in this chapter, including consideration of insider-outsider tensions provide the basis for the production of racialised knowledge and understanding of the BME student teachers in my study (Phoenix, 2013). The analysis of the findings which emerged from the focus groups and individual interviews will be presented in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER FOUR
STUDENT TEACHERS' STORIES AND ANALYSIS

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is an important theory that challenges the idea of race as a construct but understands its debilitating effect, placing some people at the bottom and others at the top of a racial hierarchy. CRT exposes how these inequalities negatively impact on BME peoples in a sustained manner and seeks change (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The use of CRT as a methodological tool was discussed and justified in the previous chapter as appropriate for my study of BME student teachers in the English ITE system, alongside the defence of using focus groups and individual interviews as methods of collecting participants' stories. This chapter will now use CRT, with particular reference to counter storytelling as defined and discussed in Chapter Three (Delgado, 1989), to enable sensitive listening to the stories of the BME student teacher participants. To present the findings the chapter will explain and contextualise the data; describe the participants; discuss steps taken in the data-collection process; present then make observations on the participants' stories in relation to the key tenets of CRT.

4.1 Context of the study

I interviewed 32 BME student teachers from four Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in England, through five focus groups and 11 individual interviews (Table 4.1). All were studying on full-time, campus-based, Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses that were part of an educational faculty or school of education within an English HEI. Table 4.1 shows they came from a variety of BME backgrounds including three of them who were of white

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minority heritage: two from a Turkish heritage and one of Spanish-French heritage. Two participants were not born in the UK: the one of Spanish-French heritage, who had lived in France, until the age of 18 years; and one from a Caribbean island who came to the UK as an older teenager.   There was one male student and 18 mature students, who began their course after the age of 21 years. There were 15 undergraduate and 17 postgraduate students.

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Table 4.1

Educational and ethnic background of the BME student teachers in this study

~~Location of~~ HEI	Total student population of HEI	BME student population of HEI %	Ethnicity (as described by participant)	Number and description of participants	Under graduate	Post graduate
Campus A: The South	10000	40%	• Asian Pakistani • Caribbean • Nigerian • Congolese • Asian	Focus Group 5 participants. All female. Age range: 23-30 years		PG
Campus B: The South	14,085	Not available on website. Application made for information and followed up, but no response received.	• Black Caribbean • Turkish Cypriot • Somali-African • Somali-Arab • Turkish • Black British	Focus Group 6 participants. All female. Age range: 19-43 years	UG	
Campus C: The North [Group 1]	11000	8%	• British-Pakistani • British (Indian heritage) • British (Indian heritage)	Focus Group 3 participants. All female. Age range: 20-22 years	UG	
Campus C: The North [Group 2]			• Nigerian-British • French-Spanish • Indian • Indian	Focus Group 4 participants. 3 female, 1 male Age range: 21-30 years		PG
Campus C: The North [Group 3]			• Indian • Indian • Pakistani	Focus Group 3 participants. All female. Age range: 23-24 years		PG
Campus D: The South	150	85%	• Afro-Caribbean • Bangladeshi-British • Bangladeshi • Turkish • Black African • Bangladeshi	Individual interviews 6 participants. All female. Age range: 19-31 years	UG	
Campus E: The Midlands	28,664	32%	• Indian • British-Caribbean • Black-African • Bangladeshi • Turkish	Individual interviews 5 participants. All female. Age range: 20-41 years		PG

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All participants were at the mid-point of their ITE courses: either the second year of a three-year course, or third year of a four-year course, or at the mid-point of their postgraduate course. I considered this a good point to capture their perceptions and attitudes as they journeyed through ITE because they were not in the throes of the initiation of a new course, with naïve expectations, nor looking back and reflecting on a course with regret or a lack of memory (Basit et al, 2007; Roberts, 2012).   A mid-point meant they were speaking about live experiences and thoughts.   However I am aware that at this point, they may also have been constrained in their responses to avoid repercussions on their standing on the course or their grades.   They may also have guarded their responses to protect themselves from possible negative reactions from their tutors and faculties (Jones, Maguire & Watson, 1997). This is further discussed in section 4.2.1 below.

These issues were discussed as ethical considerations in the previous chapter. This mid-point therefore provides a stability and instability to the data which embraces the idea of tension and insecurity when analysing data on race and ethnicity (Gunaratnam, 2003).   Gunaratnam (2003) suggests that this shows race research is dynamic and organic, responding to issues as they arise. Hall (1996) says that this dynamism is necessary because racism is constantly changing, so race researchers should also be constantly adapting in response.   The notion of counter storytelling for BME student teachers involves the tensions of recounting difficult experiences and the knowledge that this will create challenges to ITE (Ladson-Billings, 2016).   These are necessary tensions and part of the challenge of staying true to the importance and message of the study.

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4.2 Listening to participants' stories

To analyse participants' stories I will use Delgado's (1989) philosophy of counter-story because it refutes the majoritarian view of BME experiences as abnormalised, exposes hurt and degradations and promotes shared understandings between minority and majority spheres. Delgado's (1989) perspective, discussed from page 80, invites us to understand how the nature of counter-story is not necessarily combative but opens up dialogue with the powerful majoritarian culture because it draws in the listener and looks for responses which can work towards dismantling closed views and stereotypes. CRT understands stories as nuanced and deep forms of data where the inequities of race and intersectionality are brought to the forefront as important signifiers of experience. They challenge objective-focused research and recognise the raced human lens as unique (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The notion of counter storytelling, by its very name, is about providing an alternative narrative and to hold to account existing ways of being and knowing. Counter storytelling, as a key CRT principle, pursues the purpose of dismantling racism and creating more equitable and dialectical processes and structures (Delgado, 1989). In addition, by being focused on the participant, counter storytelling is also where neglected and ignored voices are brought alongside majoritarian perspectives to re-balance the focus (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). Counter-stories can be read on several different levels. They can be a powerful individual testimony of resilience, ingenuity, and pain but can also bear witness to institutionalized and unequal social and racial relations that the dominant culture tends to minimize or deny (Bell, 1995). As a researcher, using CRT as the tool of analysis, I will listen to the stories of the student teachers, aiming to perceive issues of countering the majoritarian narrative in ITE in England. The research environment in which their stories were told, as outlined in Chapter Three, was sympathetic and empathetic, so that they could tell it as openly and candidly as

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possible.   Through listening to the participants' stories, as suggested by Delgado (1989), the effect of ITE upon BME student teachers in this study can be understood more deeply.

4.2.1 Myself as researcher in the process

My racial position alongside the participants was both convergent and divergent in racial background and experiences. Knowledge of racism in our everyday lives and exercising a daily race-conscious analysis on everything we do and how we are perceived, were among the factors that I shared with participants. We knew about being judged on the colour of skin and texture of hair, on our gestures and mannerisms, the way we spoke and our clothing choices. We also knew that we dealt with these and more with silences, dismay and sometimes by trying to fit in or deliberately rebelling against them.   In the individual interviews and focus groups I shared my own journey as a BME student teacher and the difficulties I experienced, alongside my hopes. I spoke of being a mature student, not having the privileged or sort of family background to have gone to university as a young woman, and when I did begin a course, of trying to juggle family and studies. Also by stating my differences to them such as being a lecturer in a steady and respected job, I tried to show that I was sensitive to and aware of insider-outsider tensions. I felt this to be an honest approach in order to create an environment in which they were comfortable to share their issues. I also had to consider how it would affect the data if their stories were told in response to my being an insider, like them, and/or being an outsider. As an insider they could tell of issues and incidents which affected their raced status as student teachers; as an outsider they might focus on generic teacher education issues, perhaps to impress me. They could also veer between the two as they sought to find suitable ways of expressing their feelings and attitudes towards

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the ITE process. I refer to and question their responses as I present and comment on their

stories later in this chapter, in relation to such insider-outsider tensions.

Fig. 4.1
Looking at BME student teachers' stories

Constructing the stories
Participants' stories are constructed from
interviews and focus group transcripts, so that each
participant's response is formed into a whole,
uninterrupted piece. This allows focus to be on the
participant's voice to reflect the role of counter
story (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001;
Solórzano & Yosso, 2016) (See section 4.2.2)

Early observations and annotations of the stories
I observe and annotate each story, looking for
Individuals' points and responses, commonalities
and differences that recur across them.
Insider-outsider tensions are seen as part of this
process where I as the researcher considers how
this affects what I hear and how I represent the
stories (Johnson-Bailey, 1999; Serrant-Green, 2002)
(See section 4.2 below)

Representing participants' stories
Stories are grouped according to commonalities
that include how they see race and ethnicity as
part of their teacher education, fears and worries
that impact on their performance during
their course. (See section 4.4 below)

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4.2.2 A note on presenting participants' stories

I re-constructed the focus group and interviews into individual stories of the participants. This involved reading and re-reading interview and focus group transcripts, from which I constructed individual's stories and annotated them with further and developing observations. A clear example of this is in Appendix F. The first stages of analysis involved close reading through of the focus group and individual interview transcripts to understand and grasp a sense of the participants' outlook, understandings and values. Individual responses were then formed into or constructed as whole stories in order to focus on the participant and their intentions, thus privileging their humanity (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Duncan, 2005). To show the process of constructing the stories from transcripts Appendix F contains an example of two extracts from transcripts, from a focus group. These extracts show myself as the interviewer with all three of the participants and focuses on episodes which are then included in their individual stories, shown later in the Appendix. They show the transcript made into a story process that includes the elimination of grammatical issues, extended pauses and unfocused points. In Extract 1, Z (Shaina) talks about adapting to a church school placement as a Muslim. U (Jacquiline) makes one comment at the end: The transcript reads:

> *Z: I had to adapt to a church school, like to their prayers, like three times, they do morning, lunch and all that; so you get used to that. Then the children that didn't want to do the prayers get used to… / **Int: Did you have to say the prayers?***

> *Z: Yeh, like I wanted to say the prayers, yeh. The [Muslim] children in Year Five, where I volunteer here at St. G…, they were shy, like…I said 'come on then pray like…at the end of the day it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands… / **U:** It's the same God. / **Z:** …you're speaking to the same God…*

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When it becomes part of Shaina's story it reads:

> *…when I was in a church school I had to adapt a lot, like to their prayers,*
> *three times a day. They do morning, lunch and all that; so you get used to*
> *that. I wanted to say the prayers, and I encouraged the [Muslim] children in*
> *Year Five too. I said 'it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands.*
> *You're speaking to the same God.*

In the second example in Appendix F, Extract 2, U (Jacquiline) talks about being of two

cultures. Z (Shaina) adds some comments. The transcript reads:

> *U: I do. I feel that a big part of me that's Pakistani, and then a really, really*
> *big part of that's English, and then to a certain extent…not just British I mean*
> *English in itself. When you go to Pakistan, you're an English person, you*
> *don't feel Pakistani; but then when you're in England you don't feel completely*
> *English; you feel Pakistani. In both places they're always reminding you of it.*
> *They're always telling you 'you're like this', then in Pakistan they say, 'you're*
> *English, or whatever. You're in both.*
>
> *Z: There's nothing wrong with it [being of two cultures].*
>
> *U: There isn't anything wrong with it. /Z: It's the best of both worlds actually.*
> */Int: You're quite comfortable? / U: Oh, Yeah. / Z: Best of both.*

When it becomes part of Jacquiline's story it reads:

> *You're not just part of one culture are you…you're never just part of just*
> *the one…you're always two people. I feel there is a big part of me that's*
> *Pakistani, and then a really, really big part that's English, and then to a*
> *certain extent…not just British I mean English in itself. When you go to*
> *Pakistan, you're an English person, you don't feel Pakistani; but then when*
> *you're in England you don't feel completely English; you feel Pakistani. In*
> *both places they're always reminding you of it. They're always telling you*
> *'you're like this', then in Pakistan they say, 'you're English, or whatever.*
> *You're in both. They have to take me as I am or that's it.*

Both of these transcript made into story examples (see fuller extract examples in Appendix F)

shows that little is altered from the transcript so that the outlook, understandings and values

of participants' remain reasonably intact.   This shows integrity in a study that is rooted in a

CRT approach where listening to and letting issues emerge reflect counter story principles.

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The 32 stories are of different lengths depending on how much was said and each one is reproduced later in this chapter. I re-visited the interview transcripts a number of times as I constructed the stories to ensure accurate incorporation of their points and as much fidelity to their voice and intentions as possible (Duncan, 2005; Phoenix, 2013). The flow of each story is mainly in the order of the questions they were asked in the focus groups or individual interviews (Appendix B). This order, which began with discussing their motivations for choosing teaching, moved through to experiences at university and on school placement and ended with their conceptual ideas about their BME heritage and its influence on their student teacher journey, allowed them to develop and build their thoughts, from factual remembrances towards abstract ideas. Each story has been edited to eliminate repetitions, irrelevant points and over-long descriptions and pauses but occasionally short pauses and use of colloquial terms and some descriptions have been left in, to capture realism in the participants' voices and intentions. Minor grammar amendments have been made at times to create sentences and aid clarification.   Out of the 32 stories, two participants in focus group interviews, Farzana and Nadia, did not say as much as their peers but I edited out as little as possible from what they said and constructed their story from almost everything they said. This was done to give them fair representation and can be seen in their stories presented later in the chapter.

4.3 Their Stories

The stories of the BME student teachers demonstrate different ways ITE in England impacts upon BME student teachers. I will use the key tenets of Critical Race Theory, as outlined and discussed in Chapter Three to listen to and analyse their stories (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

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First is the tenet that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England, particularly through microagressions at university and on school placement. Second is the tenet that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers. The third tenet of CRT is that race is a social construct which in ITE, can be used to control how BME student teachers progress through different stages of their course. This includes having to learn within a white-centric ITE curricula that does not easily see or accept BME perspectives. The-social and economic underlying structures, that favour white students, often remain unchanged placing BME student teachers at risk of being side-lined or failing their course. A fourth tenet is CRT understands that intersectionality means BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course. The fifth tenet is that BME student teachers have the authority to speak about their experiences of racism in their own way to express their views and feelings. This is the opportunity provided for the student teachers in this study to express themselves through their stories. Each of the first four tenets will be used to analyse the following student teachers' stories by using a different tenet for each group of students. The student teachers were grouped from my reading of their stories and noting initial themes from focus groups and individual interviews and then noting similarities in response and focus on themes by individuals across the whole data-collection process (Appendix G). These similarities of points and issues are shown in each group.

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 4.3.1

The Critical Race Theory tenet used with this group of student teachers is that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers.

These student teachers included very little talk of their own race and culture and its role in shaping them.

This group of student teachers were: Lubei, Julide, Inas, Tiana, Sharon, Aysha, Chetna and Saif.

Lubei

Lubei is a married 34 year-old student on a three-year undergraduate teaching course.   She describes herself as British-Bangladeshi. She believes women of her culture, in the UK, are overlooked due to their low-status stereotype. She rejected traditional Muslim dress as a younger woman and due to working with mainly white colleagues is keen to "become part of wider society". She states that she entered teaching as a way of gaining status and respect, seeing herself as a modern role-model for Bengali women.   "On this course, we are part of this change."

While she maintains that teachers are "indispensable" to children, her narrative does not display much self-awareness of herself as a BME student teacher preferring instead to focus her on general class teacher performance while on school placement. She does however comment and express sadness about the only black teacher that she noticed in one school, who was not on the senior management after being at the school for many years, unlike younger white teachers.

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Lubei's Story

I've been in a number of jobs before the course but none of them were stretching. I just wasn't using my mind. I wanted something and somewhere which would have some status. As a teacher you have respect, which I just wasn't getting. You are indispensable to that class; everyone is going to look to you for direction. I am surprised though that there aren't more teachers from BME backgrounds. But I hadn't really thought about it because I live in a heavily diverse area, so you just see Asian people all the time.

When I was growing up I was once walking with a friend who was mixed race, when a van pulled up and a man shouted, indicating my friend, 'go and grab her.' We just bolted. I choose not to wear traditional Asian forms of dress because I just don't feel comfortable. All my sisters do and my mum has tried to make me, but have just given up. I guess I want to be part of wider society more as well as having worked in jobs where there have been many white people. I think I see dress as part of integrating in society

The stereotype of a Bengali woman is that she is timid and meek because people think they don't say much or can't speak English or something. Unless we have role models the situation isn't going to change, but we're the third generation and I think changes are happening. With us Bengali women on this course, we are part of this change.

On the placement all of the teachers were all white, except one, who was from Trinidad. She was very experienced and had been there for 20 years. But she wasn't on the senior management group. I wondered if she had been overlooked. All of the senior management team were white many of whom were younger than this teacher. It may have been that she didn't want to move up, I don't know. It would be a shame if she was overlooked. I got on all right on placement. I did what I should be doing, which I hope was okay; my report was absolutely fine because there were no problems. I didn't have any problems getting on with the staff or children. They respected me.

Julide

Julide is a single 20 year-old woman of Turkish heritage. Her narrative reveals that she constantly negotiates her Turkish identity with the majority British culture. She states, "I don't know much about it" and "I don't really speak the language". She and her mother, with whom she lives, mix with a variety of people in the multicultural area in which they live, and do not want to be stereotyped as typically Turkish. She also feels that Turkish people can

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be "insular and arrogant".   On school placement she had a Turkish boy in her class, but did

not make any attempt to discuss their shared heritage with him to avoid showing favouritism

towards him, although in her story she states, "it is important to celebrate your culture; your

race".

Her attitude to race and culture is also displayed when talking about her Jamaican boyfriend.

She did not tell fellow students because she believed they would "judge" this relationship as

"wrong" because he is black and she is white.

Julide's story

Becoming a teacher just fell into place for me. In terms of striving for success you are always going to want to do more; not settle for less. On the course I thought there would be a greater[cultural] mix of students so on my first day I was quite shocked. I would be very wary of sharing my background with other students because I feel they would judge me. I would never tell them that my boyfriend is Jamaican because of what they would think. I feel they would think it is wrong. I would feel very uncomfortable.

I actually don't know much about my Turkish heritage and don't really speak the language. I've not thought about it that much. There was a Turkish child in my school, but I never told him I was Turkish. My own schooling was very mixed culturally. I live with my mum and we don't much mix with other Turkish people and possibly find it hard to relate to them, even though I am proud to be Turkish. They can be quite insular and arrogant and don't mix much with other cultures. I have mixed with a variety of cultures because I want to know about other people…but it is important to celebrate your culture, your race.

On placement the teachers were white with only two black teachers. The black teachers never socialised in the staff room. I wondered how I would feel and fit into that setting. It was odd. My teacher was Jamaican and I feel that I got along with her very well because she was from a minority group. There was a white boy who made a racial comment to a Polish girl who did not have much English. He told her it was because her mum did not teach her anything and that she needed to go back to her country. The teacher dealt with it, but I was shocked. He was only in Y1. It also shows what goes on at home.

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Inas

Inas is 19 years-old, single woman on an undergraduate teaching course.   She describes herself as Bangladeshi-British and lives with her family. She said that her motivation to teach was a result of growing up in a single-parent family where the daughters were encouraged to become independent.   Inas attributes her ambitions to teach to her ideas about teachers having a "better impact" on children than if she was just a teaching assistant. She said family members told her it is a superior role to being a teaching assistant.

She wears a hijab and is aware of and discusses her cultural background. She has an open-minded disposition, maintaining that it is "good to mix with people outside of my culture because it helps me to see things differently". At university however she has noticed how students' racial groups have formed, with "Asians" and "non-Asian" working and socialising together but attributes this to them being "naturally drawn to people they can relate to".   She maintains that she tries to "adapt" to different cultures. On school placement she was challenged to "think a bit differently" even though she was rendered "speechless" when asked by a child why she wore a hijab and if she had hair. She now recognises her role in educating children about other cultures because she believes there is a prevailing "perception that people have, that puts a stigma on ethnic groups".

Inas's story

I didn't really want to go into teaching but when I was deciding what to do I was captivated by the fact that you can have such an impact on a child's life. Education gives an individual, independence. My mum and aunts were TAs but I wanted to qualify as a teacher because it has bigger, better impact.

On campus, because of the area [in which it is situated]*, I am from the majority ethnic group. I knew that many of the students would be from a Bengali background. I feel like groups have just formed, whether intentionally or not. You see like the non-Asians together and then the Asians together. I think people are just naturally drawn to people they can relate to. To*

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a certain extent I believe I am having to adapt to those around me. When I applied to the course I didn't think what impact I can make because I am from a minority ethnic group, but after my experience on placement I think a bit differently.

On placement a child asked me in the playground why I wear a [head] scarf and if I had hair underneath. Then other children came up and were asking the same type of questions. I was speechless. I really didn't know how to respond. I just said, 'oh, it's part of my religion' and left it at that. May be they hadn't seen many teachers, as opposed to TAs, wearing one. I had never experienced that before even though I was at a secondary school where I was in the minority as an Asian person. Children are more drawn to you if you are from their heritage, so when they ask questions they genuinely are wanting to learn from you as opposed to putting you down through derogatory questions.

No matter that society is diverse, there is still this perception that people have that puts a stigma on ethnic groups. Because I was brought up by a single mother there is a strong thought that we don't need a man. If we want something we should go out and get it for ourselves. I am very used to mixing with other cultures. Where I live there are very few Asian Muslim families. I think it's very good to mix with people outside of my culture because it helps me to see things differently.

Tiana

Tiana is a 29 year-old single mother who describes herself as a black-African. She is on an undergraduate teaching course. She recognises that before starting on her ITE course, she was less aware of being in a minority because she lived in a multicultural area of black-Caribbean, African and white people. Since coming to the university, which has a significant Asian-Muslim population of students, she acknowledges that her racial self-awareness has developed because she is more aware of being in a minority and of working with people with which before she had hardly mixed. This awareness also extended into school where she taught Asian, mainly Bangladeshi-Muslim, children. One particular incident, on a school placement, impacted on her growing awareness of herself as a raced being. When a small group of children, of Asian-Bangladeshi heritage, told her that they found her black skin and

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features offensive, she was challenged to recognise her African heritage, rather than

downplay it.

Tiana's story

If I'm honest I never thought about race before joining this university. [The course] *made me reflect because I come from a mixed community, black and English people mainly. For the first time I am more aware of other ethnicities. In a way I've actually felt like an ethnic minority in regards to me being a black person.*

On Placement I have only been in schools where the children were mainly from a Bangladeshi background. It has been challenging for me because I felt very different. The teachers were mixed, including white, black and Bangladeshi. I felt it more from the children. One of the children (all Bangladeshi apart from one white child) *said to me, 'Do you know what we call you? We call you black Girl. I don't like your black skin. I don't like your black ears and I don't like your black lips.' Then the other children said, 'Yeh, you've got black skin, black lips and a black face.' I paused and thought let me handle this carefully because she was five. I discussed with her about me treating her fairly and asked her if it was nice of her to say those things. I saw her reflect. I knew from that environment, where I felt the parents, many of whom wore the hijab, were hostile to the way I looked and dressed and from walking through that area, I was asked by market traders if I wanted to buy a hijab so that I could cover up. The class teacher explained the very narrow environment in which the children live and that they had never seen anyone as black as me. As far as they were concerned everyone* [with a dark skin] *is Asian so they could not work me out.*

I have found a way to embrace being different for the sake of being liked by the parents and the children. I have changed the way I dress, even though I don't want to change the way I am. If I can adjust I will, so that it is not a barrier. I've also been in schools where the children are black, white, Hispanic, but I've never had problems there. I've found that it tends to be schools with Asian Muslim children.

I have read research that found schools ask for supply teachers with English names. This shocked me because I don't want to be discriminated against because of my name. They wouldn't know how good I am. I am aware though that my skin colour has had and does have a big effect on people which I have noticed more from placement. It is making me anxious about where I fit in and possibly that I won't be fully accepted.

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Sharon

Sharon is a 26 year-old single woman on a post-graduate course who stated she is of British-Congolese heritage. She appeared to be the most guarded of the participants in her focus group particularly at the beginning because she wanted to know about the confidentiality of the research, to check that it would not affect her progress on the course.   Later, she relaxed and offered some comments about her race and ethnicity, such as, "They will take more of us because we are black" suggesting an awareness that a positive effect of being black is that it may have helped to get her onto a white-dominated course.

Sharon acknowledged family expectations which led her to teaching and on the course she feels is following the right path and has gained a clearer vision of herself as a teacher. She stated, "…first and foremost, I want to be a good teacher…" which she supported with the idea that teaching is a "service" to the children.   Her narrative focused more on factual areas of the course and the university rather than on herself.   At points she was unable to articulate views about BME issues in education such as her response to learning that there is a very low proportion of BME teachers in the profession, "I don't know if there's a negative view to have…" and when stating her views on teaching children about racial and ethnic perspectives and values she hesitatingly began,   "I don't know if this is correct but…"

Sharon's story

These are archived, aren't they the ones that you said to sign? (referring to the consent form). *In the meantime are you responsible for keeping them confidential? I kind of worry about that… there are certain things that you don't want to be on record.*

There's more than one reason [for deciding to train to be a teacher] *apart from the fact that I actually like the job, I've got experience of what it's like in schools, because I worked in schools for about two years. It's something that I always thought about but … I wasn't ready for it but then, you know with experience, not only directly in school, but also indirectly…it just makes you think more as well and that's how I ended going back to teaching. My mum was a teacher, not in this country but she was a teacher back at home. I'm originally from*

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the Congo and my mum taught older teenagers. I would say my family did influence me because I've always like wanted to please them. You want something a bit more stable, you train to do something specific, like a profession. My uncle's always going on about an honourable career…they love the idea of me training to be a teacher.

I want to be a good teacher so at this stage it's just…getting into that role and doing the best I can. I don't really know how I'll get on, to be honest, I don't… I'm not really thinking about headship or deputy headship or anything like that at this stage I'm looking forward to being a teacher, having a class and doing the best that I can in teaching…you know, children, especially in London where there's such diversity and different needs and stuff. I was in a school where the head teacher was black and the deputy head teacher was black as well, so I saw there was black teachers, there were Indian teachers, so from my experience, I haven't… been in a school where there's been a lack of teachers from different backgrounds. I don't know, in terms of how it affects me, I don't think it does,

*[This university has] a good reputation.   I kind of knew there weren't going to be many black people. I don't know if there's like a negative view for me to have? I probably see teaching as…[a white profession].   Just looking from my experience [as a pupil] in Primary school, I I only had white teachers, and then when I went to secondary school there were some black teachers but it was mostly white teachers, with a few Indian teachers; and then at uni (*where she completed her first degree) *there was like one black lecturer, so…ummm….*

(Discussing the support group for BME students on her PGCE course) I don't know, for me I used to go but I didn't get anything from it. The thing is, I don't know if, I went just because I wanted to, you know it was something that was suggested and I thought 'ok, I'll go and have a look but I don't necessarily feel like I need a support group, you know what I mean? What's the point, you know.

In my last placement, the school was mainly white with a few Asian and black children, but they responded in the same way to me. I had a little boy; but he was autistic, so coming from him it was quite a normal question for him to ask. He asked why my skin was brown, but he used to pick up on detail like that, so for him he just wanted to know. He was Asian. I just spoke to him about different people , 'I'm from this place and my skin is this colour and look at your skin, you know, your parents are from India. I compared it with other children in the class that they were from different places, different backgrounds. And he got it. He never asked me again, it was just one of those things, because he just wanted to know. But I'd prefer to work in a multicultural school. It's such an enriching experience.

I don't know if this correct, but if you're doing your job as a teacher, it's almost, a service, isn't it? If you're teaching children who are mainly from…I don't know, a white background, you kind of have to relate to them. I can't go up there and relate all my background history, because …it's not in context for their learning. They won't get it because they're not from that background. I wouldn't feel like that takes anything away from me, I just feel I'm doing my job.

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Aysha

Aysha is a single woman of 23 years-old, with no children. She is on a post-graduate teaching course. She states that she is from an Indian-Muslim background. She wears a coat-dress in an abaya style, but no hijab, and is opinionated about how her generation wears a mixture of Eastern and Western clothes to reflect their British-Asian identity. She states, "…it's important to know [who] you are…as long as you don't change yourself."

Awareness of her Muslim identity was challenged in two episodes in which she is made aware of her ethnicity and culture. The first was a school placement where she was partnered, in same class, with another member of the focus group, who dressed in the same way as her but with a hijab. The children asked many questions of the other student but not of Aysha. This surprised her, "That's the thing, it was the same children!"   The second episode was her dismay about her white peers at university whom she said, "…didn't naturally tend to sit with us" suggesting a silent acknowledgement of a racist microaggression.

Aysha's Story

It's quite regarded in our community [to become a teacher]. I've got an aunty and uncle who are teachers and then my mum who's a teaching assistant, and friends…I also got the idea from college because they had this set-up where you could join this introduction to teaching course. We were introduced to teaching through a couple of small placements, where we could go into schools and sort of help out and do bits of teaching. It helped you to know what it was like in a classroom.

It's important to know where you are [culturally]; what ways you can go about it to achieve things. That's how you improve yourself. As long as you have your set structure about what you need to do…how you go about it and as long as you don't change yourself. We're born in this country and that's how we see it. It's more normal amongst our sort of communities that you do wear certain kind of clothes (mix of Eastern and Western), so I think you would stand out more if I wore just traditional clothes. You'd probably just wear Asian, more traditional, clothes for [special] occasions.

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(Discussing the PGCE sessions) *Everyone's got their own group that they sit with…I think it happened more at the beginning when people didn't naturally tend to sit with us… whereas now… I've never been in that situation [of being the only Asian person in a group of white people].*

They (children) *didn't see me as Asian or different because I didn't have a scarf on* [my head]. *I don't know why they were like that towards me...but with Z____ , they asked her questions about what she was wearing and things about who she was. I didn't notice them looking at me and they didn't ask me anything about [my clothing or culture] that's the thing, it was the same children.*

[Teaching's] about making the classroom look nice…You just think about the teaching. I feel as though we should know these things (ethnic and cultural issues in teaching) and naturally treat everyone equally. I don't think we should be officially taught it. That's what teaching's about...trying to include all the children, regardless of what they need...I think that's what is the main thing, including all of the children and not make them feel disadvantaged in any way. That's inclusion really.

With that one Asian child who was in our class… you do wonder how he feels, as the only one in a white setting; because it had crossed my mind. He doesn't [think about it] because he's very young, but maybe at some point he might…

Chetna

Chetna is a 25 year-old, single woman on a post-graduate teaching course. She describes herself as British-Indian and speaks three languages. She comes from a Hindu family which, though traditional, are open to other cultures and religions. She describes family members: one who founded a major religious movement in the mid-19th century, a great-grandfather who was a judge during the British Raj; and relatives who took part in Gandhi's Salt March in 1930. She believes that her family's activism influenced her decision to pursue a caring career and some family members are teachers.

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In her story she does not directly offer any race commentary but states that at university she did not consciously seek BME student friends, but preferred to mix with a variety of people. When talking about school placements, she does not dwell on negative racial or cultural issues, apart from one direct racist name-calling incident from when she was a child at school, preferring instead to talk about children's characters or motivations and their socio-economic backgrounds. She does however recall that her most enjoyable placement was where the staff were multicultural and welcoming.

Chetna's story

My dad's family are from quite an academic kind of background. His grandfather was kind of a judge in India…so he actually went to the University of ….. in America, and he did his studying there; My mum, she was from a different family and she'd gone to college, but unfortunately she wasn't able to finish her education. She came over to England with my dad to start a new life...she's from a very traditional family. One of my ancestors created a new thing altogether…When the British Raj were in India, they were forcing a lot of Indians to actually convert to Christianity; but what my ancestor did, was he gave people this option, that you don't have to convert completely to Christianity. It was a way of linking both together; so it's an amazing idea for that period of time. My grandfather, his sister, my Great Aunt, actually went on the Salt March with Gandhi…but they felt it was important to make a stand and say that "enough is enough, we need to do something about this". There's all sorts of things in my dad's family where they've broken the glass ceiling. They've broken barriers and been able to... kind of, make their mark in their way. It makes me very proud to be part of that family.

(Her family settled in a white, affluent southern English city which is the only place she has suffered any form of racism, which she narrows down to one event.) The only time that [I experienced racism] was when I was in Year 6 where someone called me something, literally, directly. You know the head teacher dealt with the situation very well. I guess I was different…and that's the only time I've really felt it, when I was at school; because I was very different and there wasn't anyone anywhere who was similar to me. I guess being a child, the things you hear, do shape you to who you are.

When I went to university, where the norm was to see the big corporate companies as the thing to aspire to; almost like the big corporate machine; you kind of think, "well actually, I want to do something different". I kind of thought in my heart, "there's something more I want to do...there's something more I want be...I should be giving something back to society."   When I was 17 I went to Malaysia as part of a World Challenge Expedition. We worked at a special school for a week and we painted the playground there, we played with the children and I met a wonderful girl. She was deaf and was so full of energy. I did actually write to her quite frequently. I think that's when the teacher in me came out. That's when I realised that I really wanted to help. It was that feeling that never left me.

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I'd only been on the [PGCE] course from September to December, and I was in this new placement in January, and I was just amazed at how far I had gone myself and how quickly I'd developed and how quickly I was aware of all of these buzz words: like AfL. Three months ago I didn't have a clue…I'm able to have them on my fingertips, which is so handy. When you are recognising children's work, you have to think very quickly on your feet. When you spot something in the classroom you have to pick up on it, really quickly because something might happen.

I look at the children, and I have to say they're probably the only reason that you keep going. You look at them and they're a lot of children from different cultures, different backgrounds and I see the diversity in my own classroom and I think that I actually build relationships with the children, very quickly. I don't know whether that's me or that's the children, who knows, but that keeps me going because seeing their smiles and seeing the fact that they're so keen to learn and seeing the fact that they actually want me as a teacher, really that is a beautiful thing. Even in my first placement as well; I saw the children's faces and you see how you impacted on them, even in those five weeks and you really just think, "wow, if I can make that much of an impression in five weeks, who knows what I can do… And the fact that they remembered me as well because I went back to my first placement, to get a couple of things and sort out some paperwork and the children called my name from the field and I turned around and I saw some white [pupils] there and I thought, "well, they're able to remember that I said I'd come back…Maybe I'm not always the best in the classroom, but they seem to think that you are who they see as their teacher. No matter how many mistakes you might make as the teacher, they still want you as their teacher.

In the first school [placement], out of a class of 22, I'd say six were EAL. The rest were white and from mixed families.   However in terms of the socio-economic situation…I mean we had children whose parents were in prison. That was a different kind of challenge, in the sense that the children needed more…kind of caring, a kind of a more nurtured sort of environment because they needed that extra, extra support from the teachers because they not only saw the teacher as the teacher, they saw them as someone they could confide in; someone that they could relate to; someone who was consistent in their life.   In the second school there were two…three who were white in my classroom. I've grown quite accustomed to working with EAL students and working with students from challenging backgrounds. The thing is…that's the type of school I can see myself working in and it's not everyone's cup of tea…I feel more comfortable there and I think it might be because the teachers there are Indian…from Asian backgrounds. We had dahl and rice for lunch; the dinner ladies knew me very well… I did find it easier to work with the teachers because they almost treated me like family and it was very nice [and] they did say to me that it's not always that they bring someone in so closely into their staff culture…I went to see a Bollywood film with them and I absolutely loved it and they were really fun to work with. I could ask them for anything and I could be quite honest. It's not always you get that.

When I first enrolled onto the course, I thought I was going to be the only ethnic minority. It's something that I've noticed because when I went to school in B… I was the only one in my whole school who was from an Indian… an ethnic minority. So from that I tend to mix with white people and even in my friendship groups are…white…This is the thing about me; I don't, I sit with other [BME students]. It's only us two [she and another BME student] *that really step away from…many of my friends are not BME.   If your skin's a different colour…people might notice you if you suddenly are able to articulate and speak and present yourself and put a presentation together…and naturally portray yourself as a good teacher. I*

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don't know, because I mean…it is hard to put your mark on society sometimes; it is hard to push yourself forward.

I know that teaching is a massive part of who I am…but a bit more possibly the managerial aspect…and I think I'm certainly moving towards being a head teacher…I'd like to make a mark somehow. If people like me then back down, who will then take to the stage…someone who just wants to be a head teacher, and then you might regret it and think I should have gone for it. In some ways you kind of think, if I'm able to bring people together; if I'm able to inspire [others] through the head teacher's role…

Saif

Saif is a 30 year-old post-graduate man who describes himself as British-Indian. He is married and a father. He acknowledges that his father's ambitions had a strong influence on his decision to become a teacher. He is aware that he is unlike his brother who has struggled with literacy and education, and also educationally and socially unlike his peers in his home town. He does not know why he is "excited about learning" and his peers are not, when he believes they all had the same chances.

His narrative states that on school placement at a white school, he wanted to fit into the culture, to the extent of being reluctant to ask if he could have a space for prayers. "I felt as though I couldn't," he said. He is aware that being British-Indian, he can be a model to young people through motivation and education.

Saif's story

It was my experience of Primary school that made me want to go into Primary teaching. I really enjoyed my time in Primary School. But then as I got older and progressed through secondary school, college, university and so on, I was noticing that the children in my class in primary school, were still there, still in the same area, not really gone out of the area that much. I noticed when I speak to them they still speak very, very poorly. These are people that had grown up with me in the same town, in the same class. So it made me start to think why have I been given the right chances? Why did I have a chance to go to university and been influenced by other people…become excited about learning and things like that. So why is it different for them?

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Because of my ethnic minority I thought seriously about going into teaching, because I knew I could speak the language of the children in my area; that I can actually communicate with them and they look at me as their role model.   The people that I had grown up with me, initially their English was bad anyway, but their English is still bad. They can't exactly talk like how I talk. When I look at them, I think to myself, you've grown up with me; you've grown up in the same area as me and I talk like this and you talk in this really, really broken English, so why are you still ....I'm asking.... What is it? I know I've done college; they've done college as well, but maybe they've not gone to university. But we're in the same area, so why is there such a big difference and why is it when you talk to people, they feel a bit intimidated by you? They say that themselves. You know I talk to some young people and they say I'm being a bit aggressive and I'm not. So my ethnic minority is a driving force for me, of going back into school and maybe influencing children…to get them to speak. I don't want them to speak the Queen's English, but I want them to understand that the way they talk and the way they communicate with people will make a difference in [other] people forming opinions about them.

My main influence has been my dad because he thinks teaching is the best profession you could ever adhere to. I realised that I can actually make a difference and my dad has influenced me in a positive way. My younger brother didn't actually go to any sort of study. He's another one that I look at and think that he's not going through college. But then again he's in a good position; he manages a restaurant and he earns a good salary. But, yeh, a few months back I said to him, "why don't you go back into study, find something you can do, and he kind of said, "Oh, I don't think I can read" and he has always struggled to read. He's 27, but I thought you know what, I can't believe he's told me he can't…and I tried to brush it off. I'm his older brother, I thought of course you can read. But he was being quite open and serious with the fact that he can't…I said you can't be in a position that you're in right now…if you can't…surely you can read. He said, "I can't read long words, I can't concentrate". It made me really think how come he's not been an influence on me and I've not been an influence on him and so on.

I went to a school [on Placement]…which is predominantly white…they could all speak English, they could all communicate quite well. So all of a sudden…it was not where I thought I was going to be. I've been brought up in an Asian area and Asian school you know, grown up with Asian kids and so on, but I feel quite comfortable going into a school full of white people and know that I'll get on with somebody. I go for Friday Prayers and I felt hesitant in asking, "can I go for prayers on a Friday", at that school…because they didn't know my culture and background and so on.   They didn't ask me. I felt as though I couldn't. If it was in a more mixed [culturally] school I would have done.

We had this blackboard thing. (Discussion in a university session about calling the main board a black or chalkboard *that annoyed me because me and all my friends of a Muslim, Indian or Pakistani background, when we talk about diversity, culture, things like that; we all want people to understand…you know…we want diversity, we want people to understand…because…I am actually British, but I am also Indian.*

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With this group of student teachers I use the Critical Race Theory tenet that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers. As I read through and listened to their stories they included very little talk of their own race and culture and its role in shaping them. As stated in the earlier sub-section of 4.2.1 this may have occurred because they saw me as more of the 'outsider', in an ITE lecturer role, more than as an insider BME researcher; perhaps stating what they thought I wanted to hear.   On the surface they appeared confident in their projections about becoming teachers and demonstrated a tendency to want to transform themselves to fit the picture of the acceptable student teacher.   Their language and commentary is focused on succeeding on the course.

Some used generic ITE language such as Aysha's, "[Teaching's] about making the classroom look nice…You just think about the teaching." And Inas', "I was captivated by the fact that you can have such an impact on a child's life. Education gives an individual, independence."

Chetna suggested that ITE was changing her:

> *Teaching's a massive part of who I am…I was just amazed at how far I*
> *had gone myself and how quickly I'd developed and how quickly I was*
> *aware of all of these buzz words: like AfL…"wow, if I can make that*
> *much of an impression in five weeks, who knows what I can do…*

And Sharon added:

> *I don't know if this correct, but if you're doing your job as a teacher, it's*
> *almost, a service, isn't it?...I don't know if there's like a negative view*
> *for me to have? I probably see teaching as…[a white profession].*

Sharon's declaration that, "I actually like the job" reflects Lubei's view that saw teachers as "indispensable" and Eve who saw the role as "stimulating". Both Lubei and Eve had left

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administrative jobs to pursue what they saw as a more fulfilling career. Others saw teaching,

not just as a profession but as affecting themselves such as Saif's:

> *...as I got older and progressed through secondary school, college, university*
> *and so on, I was noticing that the children in my class in Primary school,*
> *were still there, still in the same area, not really gone out of the area that much.*
> *I noticed when I speak to them they still speak very, very poorly. These are*
> *people that had grown up with me in the same town, in the same class. So it made*
> *me start to think why have I been given the right chances? Why did I have a*
> *chance to go to university and been influenced by other people...become*
> *excited about learning and things like that...I realised that I can actually*
> *make a difference.*

There was also the idea that they would not let their race and ethnicity impede their progress.

This was shown in Sharon's comment, "[Schools] won't take anything away from me,

because I'm doing my job." Her belief was that as long as she did her job as a teacher, then

no one could see her as deficient because she was black. Tiana acknowledged that she was

consciously changing to accommodate becoming a teacher.

> *I have found a way to embrace being different for the sake of being liked by*
> *the parents and the children. I have changed the way I dress, even though*
> *I don't want to change the way I am. If I can adjust I will, so that it is not a barrier.*

Their motivations of becoming teachers came from family members with upwardly mobile

aspirations and expectations. Saif's father, a first-generation immigrant, was a strong

influence. He said, "My main influence has been my dad because he thinks teaching is the

best profession you could ever adhere to." For others, motivation came from family members

who were either teachers or in other middle-class professions, such as Aysha's aunt and

uncle, Chetna's parents and grandparents and Sharon who said:

> *My uncle's always going on about an honourable career...they love the*
> *idea of me training to be a teacher.*

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These student teachers did not talk about their racial heritage, unless specifically asked in the interview questions and did not demonstrate a developed understanding of how race and ethnicity was part of their becoming teachers. Lubei, a second-generation Bengali woman, wanted to be part of "wider society" and not seen as the "timid and mild" woman she says is typically expected of her heritage. She said that by training to be a teacher she was "part of the change" she envisaged.   Julide did not like to express views on race and ethnicity, shown in her comment on her Turkish heritage, "I've not thought about it that much". However both Julide and Aysha mentioned that they noticed the minority ethnic child in their classes and wondered how they felt but did not elaborate on any further action taken.   Other participants thought that they were role models for BME young people to help them move forward socially. While Saif's statement, "my ethnic minority is my driving force" appears to show the beginnings of race-consciousness, his comments are set in the context of educating BME children to the level of the white-majority, rather than also helping them to understand their heritage. He said,

> *I want them to understand that the way they talk and the way they*
> *communicate with people will make a difference in [other] people*
> *forming opinions about them.*

Saif's narrative includes arguments about how he is happy to adopt British culture alongside his Indian-Muslim identity, to help him succeed and progress in life. This is unlike his brother and peers at home who he believes have not gained much from British schooling and culture. He recognizes that he is unlike his brother, who has poor literacy levels. "It made me really think how come…I have not been an influence on him?"   He is also surprised that former school friends,

> *" still speak very, very poorly" [even though they had] "grown up with me*
> *in the same town, in the same class… it made me start to think why have*
> *I been given the right chances?"*

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Further examples of adopting white ITE ideals emerged in Julide's views.   Julide, of Turkish heritage, did not want to be seen overtly helping a Turkish child in her class in case it was seen as favouritism. She also pointed out negative characteristics of Turkish people. She said she and her mother did not live in a Turkish area and that she had a Jamaican boyfriend. She stated however that she would not openly talk about having a Jamaican boyfriend to her university peers, for fear of judgement of choosing a black man.   Aysha felt it was inappropriate to discuss the topic of race and culture at university because "we should all know these things" while Lubei added to this picture of race absence by stating, "I got on all right on placement… I didn't have any problems".   Furthermore Jenny maintained, "You get knock-backs but I don't think it's anything to do with colour"; and Sharon said that her race and ethnicity did not affect her and actually felt she should downplay it.

> *If you're teaching children who are mainly from…I don't know, a white*
> *background, you kind of have to relate to them. I can't go up there and*
> *relate all my background history, because …it's not in context for their*
> *learning. They won't get it because they're not from that background.*
> *I wouldn't feel like that takes anything away from me, I just feel I'm doing*
> *my job.*

Tiana, consciously changed what she wore and her mannerisms while on placement, to seek positive responses, "I've found a way to embrace being different"; while Saif was reluctant to ask for a room in which to conduct his Friday prayers for fear of upsetting the [white] school's expectations of him. This cluster of comments from Saif, Tiana, Jenny and Julide show that they have heard from ITE that they need to largely move out of their racial and cultural backgrounds because it is unacceptable to be shaped by them as they train to be teachers.

There were some examples in this group of where individuals showed opposite tendencies to fully adopting white attitudes. For example when Aysha said,

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> *It's important to know where you are [culturally]...as long as you don't*
> *change yourself. We're born in this country and that's how we see it.*

Saif wanted to give back to his home community by staying and working there to be a role model to children and young people. Tiana had to face the fact that her very dark skin colour elicited reactions such as when a child in her class told her, "We call you Black Girl. I don't like your black skin. I don't like your black ears and I don't like your black lips." Inas was rendered "speechless" when children asked her if she had hair under her hijab but knew the personal importance of wearing it; while Chetna, who had entertained ideas of working in a big corporate company before the PGCE, admitted that she preferred working in an ethnically-diverse school.

> *...I think it might be because the teachers there are Indian... We had*
> *dahl and rice for lunch...they almost treated me like family...I went*
> *to see a Bollywood film with them and I absolutely loved it ... I could ask*
> *them for anything and I could be quite honest. It's not always you get that.*

These student teachers' stories showed many examples of how ITE had shaped them to think, speak and act according to white-majority norms. I raise the question here of how much their responses were because I was an ITE lecturer as well as the researcher, which brings expectations they associated with succeeding on their course. Responding to me as the 'outsider' lecturer impacted on what they said because they used the correct and appropriate ITE terminology, appeared perennially positive as expected of student teachers and put aside their racial and cultural backgrounds to focus on generic ITE expectations. They were less able to express themselves adequately as raced beings for fear of rejection by peers, tutors and schools or, in their estimation, risk of their course grades being adversely affected. Their stories appeared to present a picture of becoming accomplished teachers and there was far less expression of themselves as raced beings. ITE had endowed upon them characteristics of

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cultural invisibility; rendered them silent on issues of race and ethnicity; and demanded easy compliance.

4.3.2

This Critical Race Theory tenet used with this group of student teachers is that CRT recognises race as a social construct which in ITE, can be used to control how BME student teachers progress through different stages of their course, including having to learn within a white-centric ITE curricula that does not easily accept racial minority viewpoints.

These student teachers did speak about aspects of their racial and cultural heritage but tended to focus on those they deemed acceptable to being student teachers in white ITE.

This group of student teachers were: Shaina, Jenny, Maria, Aliya, Sara, Parvina, Jacquline, Zainab, Eve, Haifa.

Shaina

Shaina is a 20 year-old British-Indian Muslim on an undergraduate teaching course. She admits that like her parents she is liberal-minded about religion and culture and makes a point of wearing Western clothes outside the home, to university and on school placement. This is unlike many Muslim women in the area in which she lives. She believes that outward forms of Islam, such as clothing, are false ways of showing the faith.   She values her religion, stating "yeh, I fast an (sic) all".   Her willingness to adapt her culture and fit in was shown on a placement at a church school where the ethos and attitudes made her feel welcome. She

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took part in assemblies including encouraging the Muslim pupils to pray. This experience

was the opposite to an earlier placement in a deprived white area where a child's query about

being on a sunbed for too long, because "you're very brown" and a parent's comment to a

child, "have you had a good day with your Paki teacher?", were compounded by being

circled by teenagers on bikes, one afternoon, while waiting for the bus home. This placement

made her fearful of working in a white school.

Shaina's story

The way my mum was brought up is very similar to the way I've been brought up so there hasn't been that change. She was born in India but she came when she was two, so it's the same as if she was born here. She dresses in a Western as well. My dad he was brought up in a religious family but he has his own views. He's very liberal minded. My parents aren't so religious...I'm like my parents basically. [My brother] went to a different school and college [from me] and that had an impact [on him]. I went to a school where it was 99% Asian and my brother went to a Catholic school which was like 15 children [of other faiths] in each year. This has influenced the way he views culture and tradition and the values. It started last Ramadan, when we were fasting and he said it didn't want to go to mosque and that was a big shock for [our parents] because he'd been going for years. Then on Fridays; you know that Fridays is our holy day right, well he has a break of two hours at college, so my dad says "if you have a break go to mosque on Fridays and pray" but he was like, "I don't want to do that". He's just got different values and I think my parents are like accepting it; and maybe he'll change. But I am very similar to my parents.

I have been on a school placement where about 60:40 are the Asian majority. I guess, that's quite a lot and I've done volunteering at.... (a high-density mainly Muslim Infant school) but when I was in a church school I had to adapt a lot, like to their prayers, three times a day. They do morning, lunch and all that; so you get used to that. I wanted to say the prayers, and I encouraged the [Muslim] children in Year Five too. I said 'it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands. You're speaking to the same God. If you're a Muslim, do this.' They were told if you're not a Christian then you don't pray at school. They were like really shy in front of all the other children.

I don't change myself. I don't think I need to. I just go in [to school] and be myself and I've never had a problem. The only problems I've encountered, was in my first year [placement] to quite a rough estate and umm...and it was really bad...there was like guns...and in the evenings I had children circling me on their bikes, while I was waiting at the bus stop. It was a very white area...and the first remark I had on the first day from a Reception child was, "Miss, have you been on the sunbed too long, you're very brown?" And then when the parents would pick their children up, because they used to come to the [classroom] door and say [to the children] "have you had a good day with your Paki teacher?" I don't know what it was [they were thinking]. It did slightly affect me, but then I thought why should it? They're just ignorant and they're uneducated. They don't know I'm from India and not

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Pakistani. There was one black teaching assistant. She left actually. But they said in that area the chippy man (chip shop owner)*, was a Muslim, but he got bullied; in two months he had to leave. So that's how it is down there. But I loved teaching them. By the end of it the children had learned a lot about different places and things. I don't know if I'd particularly like to go back and teach there because I did find it challenging at some points.*

Everyone around me does it [wears a hijab]. I'm an oddball in this community. In this area, if I set out now, you'd see most women in veils and scarves...So I'm really odd to not have it on round here. No, it's not all about wearing a head scarf or about wearing your dress in a certain way. I think you do have to dress modestly, but it's not all there is to it; it's much, much more than that. Act...yes, act...everything you do it's the way you act...more than the way you dress. Yeh, I fast an' all.

There's nothing wrong with it (being of two cultures). *It's the best of both worlds actually. If you look at my photos (of her time in India), I didn't wear jeans because it was hot but I wore trousers, tops...but when it was really hot I'd wear [items of traditional Indian dress]. I wear Asian clothes in the house because they're comfortable. I would have been in my Asian clothes today, but we're going out after. ... but I don't know if I'd wear it out because maybe... not a lot of people wear them out...I don't know...You do feel a bit odd. I wouldn't step out in them, unless I'm going to a party.* (Discussing another Muslim student's traditional clothing on placement) *...is she accepted to wear it in the school? I've seen TAs, [wearing traditional Asian clothes] but I've never seen a teacher...You've got to be authoritative and look the part. You've got to look like a teacher...(traditional clothes) not very professional, they're kind of flashy...*

My ideal job is in a church school. From my experience, I loved the space, I loved how disciplined the children were. The atmosphere was so serene through the school. There was no bullying in that school. The anti-bullying policy was fab, you know from all the things I'd experienced in different schools. So my ideal is a church school, but like I say, when it's job time I'd apply to any...but if I had the choice I wouldn't go into the area I was in last time, the really rough area. I'd try and avoid it, but beggars can't be choosers. I think the reason I wouldn't face it, was my transport issue. I was waiting at the bus stop and the buses were like, only once every 40 minutes. I was waiting and I was being 'circled' and it was late and it was dark and my mum was worried, so she'd try to pick me up as much as possible. As long as she was bringing the car into the gates and I was getting into the car, then getting home was all right.

I think we (BME students) *have more stories to tell about life. I can't say that they (white, students) don't have stories...but they do take it [life] for granted. I constantly see the world from two points of view, not just one. I think it really helps. There's never just one way of seeing a thing. You always have to question everything. It's interesting for life, not just for teaching because, you learn so much more.*

Jenny

Jenny is a 24 year-old British-Nigerian single woman on a PGCE course.   She was previously a teaching assistant in a white school when she was the only black staff member. Her narrative states that this did not "affect" her and that colour was not "an issue" at the school. She shows awareness of being a BME student teacher because she noted that on her first degree course, taken at the same institution as the one at which she is currently taking her PGCE, there were mainly black students. She is now aware that the PGCE course comprises mainly white students and describes BME student teachers as "spots" of colour. On her first day on the course she consciously aimed to 'spot the black person' which she states helped to make her feel she fitted in.

Jenny's Story

I didn't really plan to become a teacher. I looked back on what I've done in the past and I have worked with children in other settings like play centres and I've gone into schools to talk and I thought, it does kind of make sense for me to become a teacher. I want to become a head teacher or at least deputy head, yeh. The school that I was working in, I was the only black member of staff. I didn't feel anything negative. Most of the parents knew who I was but not in a bad way. Colour wasn't an issue. I'm black but it doesn't affect the way I'm going to teach your child or how I'm going to treat them.

Before the PGCE I studied on another course at this campus which had a lot of black students, and then coming onto a PGCE and walking into the hall, it was all white faces and it was like spot the black person. I know that sounds bad, but…yeh, I tend to do that. This course is majority white, but I don't think it affects me. I didn't have to change or anything. I worked really hard to be here. I thought they have to take me on. I've got so much experience with children... I'd make sure I had the experience. I think you get knockbacks in confidence but I don't think it's got anything to do with colour. If a lesson didn't go well, you learn from that lesson and make sure the next lesson is better.

I think you do have to work hard. I don't like to think, oh race is an issue for me, but I think in the school I just came from, my partner was white and I do feel I had to be…work a lot harder just to make sure you're on the same level. Just so that there's no excuse for them to see me in a certain way.   Like there was a situation…I just remember there was an occasion where my partner, she got quite upset about things, whereas I'm quite laid back and laugh or joke about things.   On this occasion, I had said something that was wrong and my partner had corrected, I said, 'oh, ok' and laughed about it, but the teacher told me to calm down. I wasn't excited; I wasn't shouting. All this time my partner's been getting angry and stressed. It made me feel odd and wonder why. It's my personality that sometimes, when I

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get excited about stuff, I do get loud, but in that situation I didn't feel that I was loud. I wasn't aggressive, I wasn't rude. My smile stayed there quite a while just so that she didn't pick up on my real feelings because I didn't want any excuses for it to affect my placement. I just thought I want to get through this.

Maria

Maria is 23 year-old single, undergraduate student of Caribbean heritage. She was the quietest member the focus group and tended to offer affirmative nods and gestures to show agreement. She believed her place on the course was due to the fact that she is black, a category she knew was under-represented on the course. She believed she was there "to fill numbers". She sees it as a 'way in', providing her with the opportunity to become "a good teacher". Her experiences in school as a former teaching assistant and on placement, have made her more aware of being in a BME student teacher in terms of surviving on the course and later, progressing as a teacher. She prefers working in ethnically-diverse schools. If she was in a white school she believes she would have to "constantly prove herself".

Maria's story

I feel that's why I got a place…to tick a box. Yeh, we've all got degrees but I got a place to fill numbers. For white students it's based on something else. It is hard to be a black teacher or even student but regardless of all that I still want to be a good teacher. [On the PGCE course] my confidence is growing as expected and I am learning the things I need to know for the profession. I've also got an open mind and realise that I will have to work hard.

*Sometimes I do question whether I could really be strong enough to survive in a profession where I'm **always** (her emphasis) going to be in the minority. I feel in certain schools you need to prove yourself more because of your race. You always have to make sure you are as high and as best as you can be, not giving anybody any excuse. That's the thing that annoys me, that I feel that I constantly have to do that. Black people are easily stereotyped.*

[On campus] we thought that we may have had a support group but it seemed as if the group was more just so that they [the university] can support us to stay on the course; so as to avoid issues that would stop people from dropping out. I used to go…but I don't necessarily

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feel like I need a support group. I thought for me, I wanted to share experiences and get to know people. Well it wasn't a support group. It was for their benefit; to help avoid us dropping out.

I haven't been in a white school, I've only been in a multicultural setting and actually my placement was where there were all black children; but all the teachers bar one, was white. Yeh, one was black. But it may be that if I was in a different area, a white area, where the children were white, I may have found they reacted to me differently. But in terms of actual teaching my ethnicity does not affect my responses or how I teach.

I like the way that schools try to have a curriculum that is for their children. Like, if you go to some schools in East London, they incorporate a lot of their culture. Just by bringing in things like that, it's not always from a European perspective.

Jacquline   (She chose this spelling of her pseudonym)

Jacquline is a single 20 year-old British-Pakistani undergraduate student. She states that she

is like her family who is "liberal" and open to Western culture. For example she believes

Muslims should be able to marry non-Muslims but also that arranged or "assisted" marriages

are acceptable. She is not in favour of Muslim women wearing a hijab or young women

aiming for marriage above getting an education, because she feels it is out of touch with UK

culture and the modern world. She understands that she inhabits two cultures, "You are

always two people", and feels white student teachers lack this knowledge of other cultures.

She believes her position allows her to educate the children she teaches, about good aspects

of Islam.

Jacquline's Story

My family is very liberal in the sense that Education is important and that everybody has to have a go at it. You don't really hear about Muslim girls being kept back, only the odd case. I knew of someone, back five years now, where the girl, she said to me 'Oh I want to get married. No I don't want to study; I don't want to go onto college, I just want to get married.' I couldn't understand that. I said 'Why do you want to do that?' She said 'Well my mum said that you can get married and have kids; you can have that life, you don't

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necessarily have to do this [further education]'. She was happy with that. I couldn't fathom that at all. I thought why would you want to take your life away?

A lot of my cousins have married white ladies and everybody's accepted them. It was more people on the 'outside' [of the religion] who had a problem with that. They'd [white partners] go to Pakistan regularly. They'd fast. They're fully converted. For the white ladies that have been married into our family, what they like about it is the fact that to a certain extent they feel protected, if that makes sense? There are difficulties I'm not going to lie, there are... It shocks me more to see a group of just one sort of ethnicity. I get a lot more when there's different ethnicities and then you can learn more I suppose. Not the way you think, 'oh my god...they're all different ethnicities'. You think, well, that person looks interesting and you kind of speak to them and learn about them.

Being a Muslim does affect how people see you. Even when I go to work; sometimes I work at nurseries and schools [during the holidays], I am always trying to create a good image; trying to help people to understand because there's so much wrong stuff going on...there's so much bad that you're hearing about. I spoke to a child the other day. He was about nine years-old. I fell in love with that child. There was something so genuinely intelligent about him. I was speaking to him and he goes, 'where do you come from?' I said well I grew up in Pakistan. I was born here, but I grew up there. He said 'oh, Pakistan, is that where all the wars are going on?' I felt so gutted, I thought that's all you know. Then I said, 'actually it's very beautiful. There are lots of rivers and mountains and that's what it is, that's genuinely what it is, but you don't know that, you've never heard of those...

When I went to a [Church] school [on placement], they were doing the prayers. I joined in, and they looked at [me] just like...I actually wanted to join in their praying, and do the whole thing. I think it's curiosity because it's something out of the ordinary. If tomorrow I decided to wear a scarf, full-time, the children would go 'wow'. They would want to know what's up with me [we all laugh] because you wouldn't normally wear one'. The first time I met Z. [another student], you know she wears a headscarf, and I said, 'have you always been wearing a headscarf?' She said, 'no, I started in Primary school and that's mainly because I wanted to'; and I was like' all right, okay' and ummm... it's not very... It is unusual in the sense that now in Pakistan, when I was there, not many women wore a headscarf, unless they're out in public in which case they would wear it differently and they cover their faces just a little bit and it's not the whole other way [niqab covering] and they wear different coloured clothes...very different to how they do it here. Here it's all completely black... It's not all there is to being a Muslim though. No, it's not all about wearing a headscarf or about wearing your dress in a certain way. I think you do have to dress modestly [but] it's much, much more than that... It's more than what you speak, it's more than what you say, it's what you do isn't it?

You're not just part of one culture are you...you're never just part of just the one...you're always two people. I feel there is a big part of me that's Pakistani, and then a really, really big part that's English, and then to a certain extent...not just British I mean English in itself. When you go to Pakistan, you're an English person, you don't feel Pakistani; but then when you're in England you don't feel completely English; you feel Pakistani. In both places they're always reminding you of it. They're always telling you 'you're like this', then in Pakistan they say, 'you're English, or whatever. You're in both. They have to take me as I am or that's it.

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I think it's something to do with the contact hypothesis, something about being exposed to different cultures [in order to] learn more about each other. I went to C…. school which has all white children and they asked me 'why are you brown? I had never thought about that…but what a good question!...and at the time I answered it really daftly and said, 'oh, I've spent far too long in the sun, outside'. Anyway the next day I went to them and said that's a really interesting question and explained it all…but, yeh, I would go out, I would actually try to find an all-white school and perhaps get a placement there, and even if they didn't accept me, I would try to make them…try to make them understand, and say, 'look, this is what it's about and this is what it is'. I don't know what it is about church schools. There's such a similarity to Islam…and you feel quite…you feel human. Whatever they're saying and doing you agree with it. If you are teaching those children to be Christian, you are encouraging them, that is a good thing… now there's more of a freedom if you want to be religious, then go ahead, go and do it, even though whatever's going on in the World, you can still be religious or non-religious as you want. There's not that pressure anymore to be a certain way, so people are pressurised to think, 'why are you wearing this or why are you not'; even though there'll be questions, there won't be that pressure.

I feel as though I have a responsibility to Pakistan as well. I feel as though…I've not deserted it, you know left it…I feel as though I should go back and try and help develop the country. In England you have to play a role to try and develop the country here, but it's pretty developed (laughs); there's no shortage of teachers, there's no shortage of anything. Everything is going well. Whereas if you look at the state of Pakistan, it's a bit of a mess…in fact it's a…no it's a mess and we have try and develop that. If I could I would like to be a lecturer here for a few years, then go back to Pakistan, and help educate people there. I feel it's a responsibility for me.

(Discussing being a Muslim) *It all depends on world events and it's horrible to think that if tomorrow somebody decides to say or do something wrong, people are going to think that's what I think…what's even worse is that you feel you are somehow paying for mistakes that somebody else has made. I think they* (white students) *should get the chance to experience being in another country, being the other person...to go out and just try and make themselves accepted. To try and see someone else's point of view. That'd really help.*

Aliya

Aliya is a single, 19 year-old Turkish-Cypriot undergraduate student. She states that her parents "pushed" her to pursue education and do the best she could. Her mother wanted to be a teacher, but also meeting a Turkish teacher on placement, the first one of her heritage that she has ever come across, made her feel that teaching was something she could do. She sees her position as a BME student teacher as being a role model for and enabling children to

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enjoy their heritage, realising that her bilingual skills are an asset in the classroom. She also

sees BME teachers as "breaking barriers" to achieving greater equality.   She uses terms such

as "everyone is equal" and "it doesn't matter where you come from".

Aliya's story

My family, particularly my parents pushed me to go further into education and do something to increase my prospects. My mum always wanted to do teaching but she never got the chance because she married young. If it wasn't for them I probably would have not had the strength to get into it...you know, do it. During my whole education (as a pupil herself) *I actually haven't seen minority teachers or any Turkish teachers. It makes me want to go forward and show that everyone's equal. It doesn't matter where you come from, you can achieve what you want to achieve.*

So far I have found my Turkish background to be an advantage. There is a member of staff in my placement who is also Turkish, but she's really basically the first Turkish member of staff that I have seen. I speak with her and I talk with her and I don't see it as an issue because I have someone who's come from the same background as me. All the other members of staff are white but luckily I'm in a placement that does accept you for who you are. I can also use my Turkish [language] to help the children.

Although teaching's hard I would definitely recommend it because I think we need to break that sort of barrier [of] mainly white teachers. I think it would be a lot better because it will help not just ourselves and other people, but the children as well. Ultimately it's about teaching children you know and raising them to be accepted and if we're not within the schools then, how are they going to learn? .

Sara

Sara is a 19 year-old Muslim woman of Somali-Arab heritage on an undergraduate course.

She is single and lives with her parents. She comes from a family of eight children whose

parents wanted them to pursue a profession.   Although born in the UK, she could not speak

English when she entered school where the children and teachers were mainly white.   She

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wears an abaya and a hijab with pride and believes that she will be a role model for minority children. She speaks of BME teachers as "educating a generation…changing society…". But she showed an awareness of the precariousness of being racially different as a student teacher when she revealed uncertainties about her identity. On one placement in a white school she practised her daily prayers and the children did not comment on her Muslim dress but in another school she did not feel able to ask for a place to pray and the children asked many questions about her dress and customs which she felt to be intrusive and made her anxious.

Sara's story

I was born here, but I didn't really speak…[English] before going to school. I was really shy and I kind of felt uncomfortable in practising… my religion as well, because we were taught to do things in a set way. There weren't a lot of Muslims in my school. When I got older that's when I felt kind of open; when I saw other people who were like me, I felt comfortable and…I learnt to appreciate everyone in their different cultures and their religion. [At university] We all kind of mix in well together but there are certain people who act a different way when they're talking to us or they don't approach us or respond to us as they would respond to their own kind, so that is a bit... it is definitely a bit disrespectful…

My dad was more interested in each of us going on and excelling. There's eight of us [children] and everyone's done nursing to teaching to tourism and mechanical stuff. So that kind of motivated me and I don't want to upset my dad. I don't think I would have come here [the university] if it was all white, where I felt discomfort. If you're Muslim or black, it's about motivation, if you want to be a teacher. I used to work in a private Islamic school and a lot of them (teachers) *have degrees and teaching qualifications, but they feel more comfortable there where they can practise their religion. A lot of the schools they said they went to, didn't really appreciate that, so they didn't feel accepted.*

My placement is in a mixed kind of cultural area, black, white, Muslims, everyone. The school actually celebrates the cultures and different religions, so I'm really lucky. The teacher was telling me to 'tell her when I need to pray, and she'd get out of her office'; but I kind of shied away from asking. I expected the children to ask me about what I was wearing, but they didn't 'cos they were so diverse. They're used to it. But on another placement I had, children asked me about my dress a lot but I've generally kind of got used to that reaction.

I think we do need more teachers who speak other languages, who are from different cultures and backgrounds. You don't really see those that are from different cultures and if you do there's always one that stands out, everyone else is just the majority. I think that might help the children who are not of a certain…who are the minority to have someone they can relate to. I was one of the minority [at that placement] and I did feel a bit left out and everyone was

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English and white. I didn't really feel included. [BME teachers] educate a generation about…um things that maybe they're not taught. If they know about it, if they're taught about it by someone who's in that [ethnic] group, then they're more likely to listen, maybe have more of an understanding. If you don't find out about other ways and cultures, something's missing and then it seems normal. And when it's normal you don't think about it.

Parvina

Parvina is a 24 year-old British-Indian Muslim woman who is single but is engaged to be married. She is on a PGCE course. While her family are traditional Muslims, it includes white aunts by marriage of whom she says "[it is] normal to have somebody who's a different colour to me in the family". She was expected to do well in education by her parents. Her narrative appears to not acknowledge racism in her life. For example although she admits to feeling uncomfortable as the only Asian woman in her group at university, she states that she was then accepted by the group because they asked her to join them for social evenings. She feels that people of the same ethnic grouping "gel better". In addition, on placement at a white school she dismissed children's questions about her clothing and culture by being "bubbly" and talking about pop stars to show her normality.

Parvina's story

My mum and dad have really struggled. My dad just had a normal job. My mum's a housewife, so they didn't want me to struggle. They were like, 'just try your best; put your hard work in now, so then life's easier for you when you grow up'. Mum was like, 'get your education; it's not for us, but once you've got that, you're settled for the rest of your life'. My brother's becoming a lawyer and my sister's becoming a social worker; so we're all kind of being pushed into education

I think when I become a teacher and my pupils are the same ethnic minority as me, they might come up to me and want to be a teacher. They might kind of come to me for help or come to me for other things because I'm like them. People from the same ethnic minorities gel better. Like all my cousins are younger than me and they're like I want to be a teacher because I'm becoming a teacher.

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I think at first it did [affect me] when I first walked into a classroom and I was the only Asian girl. There were only two of us there and, I was like…ooooh. I was really uncomfortable because everywhere I've been, I've always had somebody who's the same ethnic minority as me and I don't know why…I know everybody's the same…but you just kind of go together like…, but now I'm not. I love it. But I won't speak out in class. I don't feel comfortable. [Commenting on an incident in a university session] *someone called it a blackboard and then changed it…'oh chalkboard' and [the lecturer] goes 'you can call it blackboard, it's no problem'. I wonder why make a big deal out of blackboard, whiteboard? It's just a word. The others did always try and make us feel included. They'd always ask us out, you know. They'd never think, oh, she's Asian, so we'll leave her out. But I just think Oh, no if you weren't drinking then I'd be…Sometimes I feel like I'm letting them down a bit but there's nothing I can do.*

I'm quiet but in school [on placement] I was larger than life. I think to make up for the fact that I'm Asian. There was only about four Pakistani children in the whole school. There was one in my class. I was a bit uncomfortable when I started as well. I wore a [head]scarf on placement and one of the kids goes to me, "what's that on your head". He wasn't being rude, he was just being like… asking questions. I try to make friends with the kids so they think, 'oh she is actually normal…' They thought I was different because I wore a scarf. A lot of [pupils] came up and said, "what's that on your head…why do you talk like that?" I got all these questions, not rude, but asking.   So I was really bubbly and tried to get on the level with kids, talking about Justin Bieber, stuff like that, just to make them feel like, 'oh, yeh, she's normal, and not different'. I felt like I had to. I didn't want them to think, 'Oh, she's weird' because of what I was wearing. I wanted them to think, 'Oh, I can actually go and talk to her'. I always wear a scarf because that's me, that's who I am. I just feel more comfortable with them [in an ethnically-mixed school] and wouldn't feel the need to be over the top. I asked the Deputy Head whether I could do my prayers every day. She was really nice about it and showed me a quiet room and said, 'any time you want to use it, feel free as long as you don't take too much of the class time off'.

Zainab

Zainab is a single, 23 year-old British-Indian woman on a PGCE course.   She has always lived in the town where she was born and grew up.   She admits that she mainly relates to the two other members of the focus group while at university stating, "…you have more in common with people who share the same culture".   But she admits that with people of other cultures she "makes the extra effort…an exaggerated version [of herself]" to fit in with their expectations.   While she dresses in an abaya and a hijab she respects other Asian women

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wearing Western clothes.   She related racialised difficulties, experienced on a placement,

which she felt were due to her clothing, particularly her hijab.   She felt the children's

reactions made her uncomfortable.

Zainab's Story

I think it was in the sixth form for me; that's when I realised I was in a minority [ethnic group]. I live in… where there are a lot of Asians and then I went to…(a grammar school 10 miles away) *which is mostly white. In the sixth form we were like a small minority; and then I started noticing that we were different. Then I came to uni and felt it a bit more…I think it was good that I went to that [6th form] college because it prepared me for uni. I don't really know what I feel about terms like black and minority ethnic' or 'Asian'…I don't mind…I'm not sure…if you are familiar to…like with another Asian person, you can have the same cultural understanding…you bond a lot quicker at times so it just always happens that you kind of group together. Obviously you do chat to everybody, like in class and things, but it just happens that you do group together…you always group together.*

[When I went into my first PGCE] session there weren't many seats and I recognised F… (another Asian student) *so I went to sit with her. But I think we're old enough not to be shy about that [being of a minority culture]. We know our identity; we're not hiding away at the back or anything like that. You're more aware of who you are in terms of being… I know that I'm Asian and the majority of people are white…and there are differences because I've learnt that you do gravitate towards the other Asians and the whites gravitate more to themselves, but when you're in class you do have to work together. On a more personal level you have more in common with people who share the same culture, so it's more about having things in common. We usually go and sit at the back, but for some things I sit at the front because I can't see the board, but when we're in groups, we go with whoever's there…the lay-out of the [ICT] classroom means it's easier to mix. [In sessions] it's not that we're on our own and no one sits with us; everyone [tends to sit] in their group. I think as a [whole] group we all get on really well. Initially it felt more divided, it happened more at the beginning, but when we got to know each other, we passed that [stage]. Also I'm used to it [mainly sitting with other Asian students]. Just having one friend is enough, but with there being three of us we haven't felt isolated at all. Before [the* group] *didn't really know each other; but now if we saw each other in the library, just walking past, we'd stop and chat.*

We went to a school, which was 95% white [pupils]. When I first went into the class, to be honest, I felt a bit weird because there was one Asian child in the class, One girl said to me 'Do you speak English' and I said to her, 'Well, what language are we speaking now?' and she said, 'I don't know…'. They asked me, 'are you Indian. Are you Pakistani? One did, like an Indian dance. She did it in a cute way, it wasn't like being mean or anything…it was like you see in Bollywood movies and she did those dance moves, kind of things. Somebody said, 'Oh, Miss are you Indian?' I looked over and they were like doing this dance. They asked me as though they were curious. They weren't asking me in a rude way. But when we

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went into assembly we were stared at, you know the whole school…well, I was being stared at. One kid was like twisting his head round to look at me.

All the time I was comparing it to what she was experiencing (her partner Muslim student). *If she wasn't there, I would have just thought it's maybe because I'm new…if I was white I maybe would have got the same reactions. Another thing is I felt quite aware of what the parents might think; I don't know why. I'm quite aware of that. Every time we told people that we're going to…every single person responded, 'be careful, it's a racist area'.   I felt quite secure within the school, in that the teachers were nice, the children were nice, but, I don't know why, as soon as I think about the parents, that they might not be happy…I don't know…all the teachers were white in the school, so maybe the parents are…I don't know…are not familiar with… In their [children] questioning it shows that they haven't been around many Asians; I think it's just that.   It's not because they're racist. I don't know if their parents might be racist and they get racist things off their parents.*

It's the first day, you don't know what to expect. I think I was worried about those things… I think I'm strong enough, even if I was compared to other teachers, I wouldn't change…no. It's part of me. I'm more worried about the placement [learning to be a teacher], not about my ethnicity…about it going well…thinking of ways of doing things and how you come across. I don't think being Asian or anything like that. I wouldn't really know how to handle a situation if one child said something racist to another child. I know how I'd treat them but then how do you handle it [between children]?   There was one Asian child in my class and I did notice that I felt that I shouldn't be too much around him…I don't know…the teacher might think I'm too…I don't know why…I do think I shouldn't be too involved with him. When I was at his table, I did think… I thought I should start moving around [to other tables].

Eve

Eve is a 41 year-old student teacher on an undergraduate teaching course and a mother. She

is of British-Caribbean heritage and came to the UK in the mid-1990s as a young adult. She

formerly worked as a personal banker.   On the campus of her university she has noticed the

ethnic divisions and groupings between students and has felt excluded. She described a

series of snubs by white students which led to her feeling "very uncomfortable" in their

presence.   She states that she feels more accepted by Asian students although this was

"limited" and overall she felt forced to mould her outlook to fit in with others in order to be

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accepted.   On placement at a white school she reported a racist playground incident that was

not acted upon by a senior teacher.   This made her fearful about that racism is not treated

seriously that has made her more reluctant to speak out.

Eve's story

At first I thought I would be a teaching assistant but after a while I realised it wasn't for me because I didn't find it stimulating enough. Initially I didn't think about being a black teacher but I have come to realise there are not many teachers of ethnic groups. I live in a multicultural area but notice that most teachers are white. The black staff tend to be in the TA role. Even in senior roles I don't see black head teachers or deputies. That has surprised and worried me. I understand now that I am a minority, so when I go for jobs I will probably be the only one. I wonder if I will be chosen if there are other white candidates? I thought when I came into teaching that it will be good for black girls to see me because that gives them a picture that black people can become teachers. I hope to empower black children. That idea wasn't at the forefront when I began the course; it has developed.

On this campus I don't see many black [African and Caribbean] students. Also the students tend not to mix much. I know that the first thing you do is go to people of the same colour as you. I felt more accepted among Asian students, but actually there was a cut-off point where they accepted me in the sessions but I didn't feel they wanted me to socialise with them. There's a limit to your inclusion. I feel that I have had to mould myself to fit in with [these Asian] students and feel accepted by them but the white students have not accepted me. When you try to have a conversation with them, apart from one or two, they are very closed. Even when you pass them in the hallway it is difficult for them to acknowledge you. I am used to it now but it is very sad.   In the first year I was paired with some of the white students and it was one of the most uncomfortable experiences.   It wasn't racial gibes but just the way they interacted with me. For a second presentation I asked to join their group but they said they had asked someone else, who was white and then asked me to leave the table…they were all looking at me. That was very uncomfortable for me. Even now, some of the white students will give me one word answers.

In school it was 98% Asian children. Once I was in the playground and heard two 10 year-old Asian children using the N… word about a black girl. I asked them about the use of the word and they showed that they realised something was wrong. I reported it to the Head teacher but when he heard it was a racial issue I saw his face tighten up. He didn't ask for many details and referred it back to the class teacher.   A few days later I asked the children what had happened and they told me nothing. I felt 'here we go again, no one is taking this seriously'. The teaching staff were all white. That always presents an internal barrier for me because I am not sure how they are going to embrace me. I've drawn conclusions that sometimes it's easier to mix with people of your own background.

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I know that I will change because I play safe by keeping myself to myself and if I end up in a school with mostly whites I need to know how to integrate. Life can be unfair for a black person in this country. If you're a minority you are struggling to compete. No matter how good you are you are at a disadvantage or work extra hard to provide yourself against a white counterpart. You have to deal with stereotypes that you are aggressive or ignorant. I have worked so hard so that people do not attribute these stereotypes to me, but they still do simply because of my colour.

Haifa

Haifa is a 19 year-old student on an undergraduate course, who lives with her mother and siblings. She believes there is a strong ethos of gaining independence as a female, in her family which she has adopted. She was motivated to become a teacher because her two older sisters are teachers. She believes becoming a teacher makes you a "better" person because it is a professional role. She stated that she wanted to have a bigger impact on children but also stated that teachers have more of a social standing because people, like parents, look up to them.

Haifa's Story

I have two older sisters who are teachers and they used to tell me what an amazing job it is because you are impacting on children. They [her sisters] believe it has made them a better person. A teacher can do more than a TA. If they [the pupils] have problems, you are helping them. Also if parents want to find out more about what's happening with their child, they are not going to the TA, it is the teacher they want.

I went to an Islamic private school which was ethnically diverse, so issues of my ethnicity did not arise. I was part of the majority. However I am thinking about who I am so if a child came up to me with questions about my ethnicity I would try to respond to them openly and not hide it. I could word things better; I would learn how to say things. On the course we only mixed across cultures when we had to because of group work, but if we don't have to mix then everyone tends to stay in their own cultural group. In the first year I could go up to anyone and talk to them, but now I feel a bit more reserved and we tend to stay in our own groups.

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This is a really shocking incident because it happened in the area I live which is very diverse area. This guy came up to me and said I look like a terrorist. He said it three times. I was really shocked that this could even happen here. That is what made me think more about who I am. This happened recently and it has never happened before. I come from a family of seven sisters so our parents have always said that we should develop ourselves, even if we get married. Being independent is important to me.

With this group of student teachers I use the Critical Race Theory tenet that recognises race as a social construct which in ITE, impedes how BME student teachers progress through different stages of their course. This involves having to learn within a white-centric ITE curricula that does not easily accept racial minority viewpoints. Such viewpoints do not sit easily alongside learning pedagogical knowledge and skills of a narrowed schools' curriculum that is focused on basic skills and the promotion of British values.   Bound by these constraints these student teachers spoke of their racial and cultural heritage in terms they deemed acceptable on a white ITE course. At times they were able to raise problems about racism and speak of microaggressions although their descriptions and language also showed evidence of being constrained by what they thought was acceptable.

 Some narratives showed how the participants embraced their race and ethnicity, seeing it as an expression of who they were and how it was shaping their professional identities. These ~~participants openly and willingly shared~~ were both positive and negative examples. Other narratives denied or avoided discussion of the part that race and ethnicity had played in their journey to become a teacher. Some displayed a willingness to change themselves culturally, either as a calculated route to success on the course or because they felt it was the right thing to do. Others stated that how they dressed and expressed themselves were who they were and would not change.   This variety of reponses in the narratives of this group, show the

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complexity of the students' situatedness within white-centric ITE and an awareness of how they were being racially constructed by the demands of the course.

Positively embracing their race and ethnicity was shown in different ways. Aliya and Parvina were very aware of their family's struggle to settle in England and wanted to show their gratitude and support.   Parvina said, "They were like, 'just try your best; put your hard work in now, so then life's easier for you when you grow up". This was echoed by Aliya's, "If it wasn't for them [parents] I probably would have not had the strength to get into it [teaching]".   For Sara it was conscious awareness of the movement from her parents' culture into English culture that had a positive impact, "When I got older that's when I felt kind of open…I learnt to appreciate everyone in their different cultures". Parvina and Sara demonstrated that they believed the best way to achieve success was to adopt white behaviours and values which is an example of being racially-constructed to fit ITE demands. Shaina and Jacquiline however felt they were positively living in two cultures.   Shaina, described herself as "an oddball in my community" because, like her parents she consciously wore western clothes. Many women in her community, she explained, wore abayas, hijabs and sometimes a niqab.   She is concerned to be authentic in faith and life, making it clear that she fasts during Ramadan but states that dress is a façade,

> *it's not all there is to it…it's the way you act…There's nothing wrong with it*
> (being of two cultures). *It's the best of both worlds actually.*

This view was echoed by Jacquline who is passionate about the importance of cultures mixing: "you're not just part of one culture…you are always two people". She has white aunts who have converted and she has been educated in both England and in Pakistan for a short while. "There's a big part of me that is Pakistani and a very big part of me that is English…you're in both."   She cannot understand young Muslim women who just want to

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marry and stay in their community, without getting an education and experiencing life. Shaina and Jacquline, stated that having parents with liberal Muslim attitudes, helped them see the inter-play that is possible between the two cultures.   Shaina, felt that BME students "had more stories to tell"; and Sara and Jacquiline stated:

> *I think they* (white students) *should get the chance to experience being in*
> *another country, being the other person…To try and see someone else's*
> *point of view (Jacquiline).*
>
> *If you don't find out about other ways and cultures, something's missing*
> *and then it seems normal. And when it's normal you don't think about it. (Sara)*

Shaina and Jacquiline believe that they straddle two cultures and see it as not only a positive position to be in but also a desired one. They see it as the most sensible way forward in a white-majority society and as student teachers, as shown in their Western dress. But while they talk of assuming the values of white ITE there is also explicit recognition how much they value and adhere to their faith and culture.

Embracing their race and ethnicity was also painful for some students in this group because in seeking acceptance in white ITE they found it difficult to express their fears about being BME student teachers. Haifa felt the move from being part of the ethnic majority at her Muslim school to a greater racial and cultural mix at university had made her less confident and now chose to associate more with other Muslim students. She said, "In the first year I could go up to anyone and talk to them, but now I feel a bit more reserved… everyone tends to stay in their own cultural group." This draining of her confidence was also shown in an account of a "shocking incident" in her neighbourhood when she was called a terrorist because she was wearing a hijab and abaya.   It was shocking to her because she lives in a ethnically-diverse area, but she admits that due to not often experiencing racist incidents and

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avoiding mixing with other cultural groups at university, she wouldn't know how react to racist incidents in a school setting.

This group showed further examples of being racially-constructed within white-centric ITE, poised as they are between a determination to succeed in teaching and the knowledge that their race and ethnicity raises barriers and microaggressions. Their stories often lauded teaching as a fine profession, for example Eve had left an administrative job to pursue a more "stimulating" career. Aliya spoke of breaking "the barriers" by being a black person entering teaching. "It doesn't matter where you come from, you can achieve what you want to achieve" she said. While Maria recognised the difficulty of being a black student teacher she still expressed the desire to "be a good teacher". Jenny took this further stating a desire to be a head teacher and dismissed race and ethnicity as barriers, "I'm black but it doesn't affect the way I'm going to teach your child or how I'm going to treat them."   Shaina felt that a placement in a church school, as a Muslim, was positive and, along with Jacquline, another Muslim, agreed that there were uniting values across religions. Jacquiline said, "I don't know what it is about church schools. There's such a similarity to Islam…and you feel quite…you feel human." Shaina commented on the atmosphere, acceptance of her culture and religion at the school that made her feel welcome:

> *I had to adapt a lot, like to their prayers, three times a day. …I wanted to*
> *say the prayers, and I encouraged the [Muslim] children in Year Five too.*
> *I said 'it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands. You're*
> *speaking to the same God. If you're a Muslim, do this.*

The expectations and rhetoric of ITE impacts on their views, that teaching is a fulfilling and worthy profession but the complexity of their position is also shown by the other side and the microaggressions that they suffer. Shaina experienced a placement in a school in a deprived, white area where she overheard a parent ask a child, in her class, if they had had a nice time

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with their "Paki teacher". Zainab, who wears a hijab, suffered sustained, negative attention at a white school, when the children in her class questioned her about her race and culture,

> *One girl said to me 'Do you speak English' and I said to her, 'Well, what language are we speaking now?' and she said,   'I don't know…'*

One white child performed an Indian, Bollywood-style dance in her sight; and another "twisted his head round" to stare at her in assembly. Her bemusement was intensified because they did not do the same to another Muslim student at the school, who did not wear a hijab. These two students, on a paired placement, were presented with a situation of understanding racism which was not clear cut. These white children could divide the students into one who clearly did not fit because she wore a hijab and abaya, while the other appeared to be more acceptable, in contrast, because of her Western clothes. Another student Parvina, who wears a hijab, also experienced questioning from pupils, who she says saw her as "different". *"*A lot of [pupils] came up and said, "what's that on your head…why do you talk like that?" Her response was to talk about popular culture and music to appear "normal". "I felt like I had to. I didn't want them to think, 'Oh, she's weird' because of what I was wearing." Eve was also uneasy about race while on placement. She reported an incident of racist name-calling between children. She said the face of the senior teacher, who took the details, "tighten up" when she said it was a racist incident. She found out later that nothing had been done. She is now more fearful about being in a mainly white school stating that she aims to "play safe" and integrate so that she does not stand out and attract criticism. She believes that she has already moulded herself to fight against stereotypes that black people are aggressive and ignorant. Jenny too felt she had to change to fit in when she recounted an incident of working with a white peer on placement. While talking with the other student teacher, Jenny responded by laughing out loud. This prompted the teacher to tell her to calm down because she saw her as "loud and excitable". Jenny states it was the white student who

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had been getting angry but this was not noticed by the teacher. Consequently she felt that she

had to work a lot harder "just to make sure you're on the same level".

As she spoke of microaggressions Eve felt that she had to modify her outlook to some extent

because she wanted to "play safe". Maria understood that in some schools it was necessary

to "prove" herself more so there was no excuse for them to see her as deficient. She

questioned however whether she was "strong enough to survive…where I'm **always** (her

emphasis) going to be in the minority". This made her annoyed that she had to constantly be

on her guard to avoid stereotypes. Jacquline felt shame that she was reduced to making jokes

about being on the sunbed too long to explain her colour to a pupil. At university Eve felt

extreme pain when she was told by a group of white students to leave the table after they

replaced her with another, white, student for a group assignment; and Zainab was

disheartened that white students would not sit at their table in university sessions but

bypassed them to sit with other white students. Others, like Jenny, felt they should show they

were just getting on with it. She maintained, "You get knock-backs but I don't think it's

anything to do with colour", while Sharon was cautious about speaking out too much about

race and ethnicity issues in case it affected her progression. Sharon had checked with me, at

the start of the focus group interview, about her comments "…there are certain things [I]

don't want to be on record." Zainab also struggled with too much acknowledgement of race

issues, stating, "I don't really know what to feel about terms like 'black', 'minority ethnic' or

'Asian'. Sara, a Muslim student who wears a hijab and abaya, dismissed children's queries

about her culture by stating, "I've kind of got used to that reaction".   However Shaina and

Parvina stated that they would not change themselves because becoming a teacher was about

having confidence to know who you are racially.

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This group occupied a complex position showing, in their stories, how they changed cultural codes to fit expectations and requirements of white-centric ITE. However they also demonstrated how the incidents and microaggressions they suffered made them question the subsumation of their racial and cultural values and began to show a self-awareness of developing as BME student teachers. Their stories showed a greater complexity than the first group because there was evidence of their silences about race and its possible effects on their progress but also pride in their heritage. Surrounding this complexity was their realisation that they needed to comply with the demands of ITE and in doing so, fulfil the hopes of their families. Their responses suggest a considered compliance towards ITE. Their stories to some extent demonstrated that they responded as much to me as an insider BME researcher, by beginning to open up about their deeper understandings, as opposed to me as the outsider ITE lecturer where they showed a level of caution in opening up too much. It was evident however that a level of trust and openness emerged in their stories.

4.3.3
The Critical Race Theory tenet used with this group of student teachers is that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England by creating racial hierarchy and causing racialised difficulties and microagressions at university and on school placement.

These BME student teachers showed significant pain and confusion on their ITE course.

This group of participants were: Taz, Nadia, Farzana, Osa, Connie, Deena, Ruby, Hanima.

Taz

Taz is a 22 year-old student teacher on an undergraduate course. She recently married and stated that as an Indian, she was not allowed to marry a Pakistani Muslim; "I have a criteria to fulfil". However she states that her mother wanted her to study and do well. Like her mother she wears a mixture of Eastern and Western-style clothes to university to "represent your religion…culture".   On placement she is willing to fit in and wear what is appropriate but is adamant that she would not wear Eastern-style clothes to a school because she does not consider them suitable for professional work and would not have felt "comfortable".

Taz's Story

My mum never studied; like after school level. Basically, like the year she left school, she went to get a visa, the following November, in India. But the visa failed so she had to wait a year, otherwise she would have been married by then (laughs)…She had me when she was 20 and I'm 22 now.   She always wanted us to study; she always wanted us to have the opportunities that she never had. She always says that, 'I'm glad you had the opportunities'. I'm Indian, yeah.   In Islam men are allowed to marry outside [the culture], but the women aren't allowed to go out and marry a non-Muslim man. I couldn't marry a Pakistani, because I'm Indian. It's not really allowed. I felt I had to fulfil the criteria.

I don't think I have [been in a mainly Asian school on placement]. In the first year it was all white. Then the second year it was [in] London, that was mixed, but there wasn't that many Asians; it was more African, black children…it wasn't really Asian. Oh there was white as well, but it was quite mixed. I was again in a predominantly white school in the third year. I think I've been pretty consistent in all placements [in the way I dress and how I come across]. I think I've been the same. I think at the first one, I was a bit like 'oh, it's a church school like…what am I going to do? Am I going to do something that I don't know, but it was fine. The teacher said to me, 'You don't need to join in with prayers if you don't want to'. It was a really good school. I loved it.

[I wear a head scarf] when I have to… My mum, she sometimes says that when it's Ramadan, I should wear a headscarf. I always comment saying, 'if I wore a headscarf, why would I only wear it in Ramadan; why aren't I wearing it all the time?' Lots of women only wear it for Ramadan, then they don't wear it. I don't like that…no. I think like, maybe if I was living in a really…if everyone around me were strong Muslims or had headscarves on, then maybe I would kind of adapt to that … I think I would, yeh.   My mum always wore one, but she's never like forced us to wear … or said, 'oh you have to wear one'. In Saudi Arabia you have to wear one. You can't be outside and not have a scarf on. It would be a crime… even little

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kids have to…not tiny [ones], but when they're four or five [years-old] they start making them wear headscarves. Then when you go there you think this is what it's supposed to be like…this is what [being] a Muslim means, do you know what I mean? I know girls that wear it [hijab] just like a fashion statement, that doesn't mean…They wanna look a certain way…you might think 'oh, like they pray five times' [a day] but behind closed doors they're probably the same as us, they don't do anything religious…it's just like a fashion statement. Yeh, I fast.

You see if I was in India, I don't think I'd dress like this…I'd be more towards their… I wouldn't wear English dresses…I think I would be like… [In school I wear] formal pants [trousers] and a blouse. But in London there used to be Asian teachers that used to come in their traditional Asian clothes…with a cardigan on top.   I think if you wear clothes like that you kind of represent your religion, maybe…culture? But I wouldn't have felt comfortable in a church school. I feel bad saying that because that's my… Maybe in my local primary school where there is a mix of Asian teachers and pupils…I would have thought in a church school, wearing Asian clothes… I would never have done it. One day I did, where there was like a Hindu Day going on and I wore traditional clothes. All the teachers were like, 'oh, you look really pretty' and stuff; and all the teachers were dressed up in saris and stuff.

You see my mum's never owned a pair of jean. She'll wear English dresses with like black pants, coloured pants… In a full time job you'd make the right choice for you and once you're in there, you'd be accepted in. You'd be full time; you're not there five weeks and that's it, like on placement.   You'd make the choice that's right for you and the situation.   I always say that I'll do my NQT [year] anywhere. At the end of the year, if I felt like I wasn't happy in that place, I wouldn't stick it out. If they're not going to accept you they're never going to accept you.   Why do you have to keep fighting?   I always try to give a good impression, but I wouldn't keep doing it if I'm still not getting accepted for who I am. Why would I make the effort then? If I hadn't had that experience [of a church school placement] *then maybe when I'm applying for jobs, I might have avoided church schools because I wouldn't know if I'd be accepted or not sure about what my role would be. But because I've had that experience I would definitely go for it, but if I hadn't maybe my thinking would be different.   I'd want to be in a safe context.   If I heard things or if a school was very anti…I don't know…I would be a little bit more apprehensive…diversity [is important because of] where I'm from and things like that as well. It's like…like EAL children, helping them as well...*

Nadia

Nadia is a 19 year-old woman of Turkish heritage on an undergraduate course. She is single

with no children. She is born in the UK and is a first-language Turkish speaker who entered

school, as a child, with no English.   Nadia was very quiet during the focus group and

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appeared to be very under-confident. She showed that she was listening to the others' stories and made suitable responses but seemed unable to offer much more than one or two sentences at a time. This may have been due to language limitations because she stated that she did not start learning English until starting school. Her narrative is very short but she does have opinions about becoming a teacher.

Nadia's Story

I wanted to be a teacher since I was a little kid. I used to always play teacher games, mums and dads. Also in my primary school - it was a multicultural school…but it's just [that] I felt left out because I was Turkish. I couldn't speak English. Turkish is my first language. I would want to teach my children [when on placement] some Turkish I think. In my setting (Nursery)*, there isn't* (sic) *any Turkish children or teachers.* [Discussing her school placement] *There were practitioners…there's Indian, there's a Muslim lady and the main room leader, she's English, a British woman, but they're fine with me, they accept me for who I am. The only thing they've ever asked me is, 'how do you say welcome in Turkish' and made me feel…like, they've introduced me to the children, that's it.*

I wouldn't have come here (the institution in which she is training) *if it hadn't been multicultural. Also [I came here] because it's near to my house and it's only a few stops on the train. I didn't know anyone here. To be honest, I didn't* [know anything about its reputation]. *I think everyone should have an opportunity to become a teacher, not to be discriminated because of your race or who you are…your background. No, I don't think there should be [any barriers to stop BME people training to become teachers].*

Farzana

Farzana is a 24 year-old single woman of British-Pakistani heritage on a PGCE course. She has no children. She worked as a teaching assistant prior to the course and admitted that she felt isolated as the only Asian member of staff. She explained that she takes time to settle into a new setting. She displayed a stammer throughout the focus group and was noticeably less talkative than the other two participants. Her narrative is short and offered little information about her perception of her racial and ethnic identity at university or about being on placement in a white school. She said, "I think I've got other things to think about…like

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my planning*."* She also believes that children do not need to be specifically taught about

cultural or racial issues.

Farzana's Story

At work, as a teaching assistant [before coming on the PGCE] *I was the only Asian person. At the start I felt a bit uncomfortable but that is just the way I am, whether I'm the only Asian person or not; I take some time to settle in and get to know things. But after two to three months a new member of staff came and she was the same age as me and the same ethnicity, so I never felt it* [isolation] *for too long.*

[When I started the course] *I saw Z... was sitting at the back and I didn't want to go to the front...I wanted to stay unnoticed. We usually go and sit at the back but when we're in groups, we go with whoever's there. I think* [the PGCE group] *has become more friendly…*
*You do so (*adapt to each placement setting) *just to fit in. You can't just go in and do the things you want to do. You just try and be part of it all. See how you can fit in.* (For her placement Farzana was in a mainly white school. There was one Asian teacher and TA in the school. There were 2 Asian children in her class.). *I felt OK.   When you're in a classroom with a teacher whom you get on well with and can work closely together you do things naturally without thinking.*

(When asked about her feelings about racism from children or their parents) *I think I've got other things to think about…like my planning* (laughs all round)…*it all just comes at once… What would affect my performance in teaching, is if I did not get on well with the class teacher and if I know that teacher's looking for things where she can just criticize or whatever. If you just basically get on with the teacher and feel at ease then obviously you're going to try out things and do more. The key thing is how comfortable I am in that situation. Personally I have some issues that I need to deal with, but they're not about ethnicity.* [Race and ethnicity issues] *are just normal social skills, isn't it* (sic)*? We treat someone as how you would want them to treat you.*

Osa

Osa is a 21 year-old single woman of black African heritage on an undergraduate teaching

course. Her family are middle-class and have aspirations for Osa.   They do not live among

others from their heritage. Osa attended a multicultural school and had white and black but

not Asian friends.   She admits that she struggles to accept some Muslim students at

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university, "I've never had a friend who has worn a headscarf so I found it difficult to sit down with them." But she is also unhappy that the students stay in racial groups at university. While she appears quiet and composed she admits that she has strong opinions that caused racial tensions during a school placement.

Osa's story

I live in an area where we are about the only black family among mainly Asian people. When I came here [to the university at which she is studying] *I thought it was predominantly Asian and of an Islamic background. I've never had a friend who's worn a headscarf, so it was hard to sit down with them and…*

In the first placement school, the teaching staff were mixed, but in the second one the staff were all white and the class teacher I had, always had more negative things to say about my teaching, even though I had done everything she had asked, than to my fellow student who was white. When I was teaching I could see what the teacher thought by the expression on her face. At one point she went straight to the head teacher to complain about me and requesting that the head monitored me instead.   I would choose to work in a school with a multicultural teaching staff. I have since volunteered at a Primary school where there were mainly black male staff, but the other staff are mixed ethnicities. Being in school has challenged me to think differently. I am very much on my guard now because I had never experienced teachers acting in a negative way like that towards me. I am worried about going into another placement where the teachers just don't take to me. I am very quiet, especially when I am in a learning situation, like school or university because that is what I have learnt growing up, so I suppose I can come across as this quiet, meek person. But when I do speak I can be very opinionated because I'm trying to express what I think, but that might stereotype me as an angry black woman and I don't want to be stereotyped like that.

On the course I have noticed how the students group together. We have a white group, two Asian groups and then the group I'm in is more mixed. Now we're in these groups we don't mix and don't change our thinking.

My mum experienced institutional racism and is very aware that you have to be careful how you act as a black person because of the way you will be treated differently. Before my school experience I'd never been treated in that negative way which I believe was because I am black. It has made me think I will choose carefully where I work when I qualify.

Connie

Connie is a mature 31 year-old student on an undergraduate course. She was born in and lived all of her life in London. She is African-Caribbean, single, with no children, who came to teaching from the civil service and local authority children's work.   She is aware of the lack of black people in professional roles and states that it "saddens" her.   Her knowledge and experience of racism is also acute because she notes that her very dark skin has attracted negative criticism. As a school child she was called explicit racist names such as "monkey" and at work suffered indirect racism.

Connie's story

When I was in Primary school I had this one teacher who really inspired me. I applied for teacher training a number of years ago…but pulled out because I didn't want to leave London. But when I worked in children's centres I thought 'I can actually do this'. A teacher has impact on children. You are playing a big role. Society recognises that. I know there are not many teachers from BME backgrounds. They tend to go into nursing more. black males tend to go into sports in schools, like coaching. It saddens me because I am not represented in the classroom and as society becomes more diverse, we are not recognised in the profession.

In my Primary school [that she attended as a child] it was very mixed ethnically. I was called 'Monkey' and 'Black Girl'. Even at work, I used to work in telephone sales, another worker, a white man, said, 'oh you can use the phones to ring your family abroad can you'? I said, 'but all my family's here!' There were many other Caribbean people working there, but no one supported me which surprised me. It was if it was accepted that people could say something like that. And in a way society enables those type of things to be said.

On the course I am one of a handful of black people and I did wonder how the others would respond to me, especially when there is the majority of one culture over another. I feel accepted by others. I am not on my own in sessions but that is because I make a point of joining a group and taking part by talking and joining in. If you're quiet and black you can get stereotyped as not very clever or just sticking within your cultural understanding. I think the others would just side-line and ignore me otherwise.

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Deena

Deena is 19 years-old and is single with no children. She is a student on an undergraduate course.   She describes her heritage as Bangladeshi-British and chooses to wear a hybrid of Eastern and Western clothing.   Her decision to enter teaching arose out of a developing confidence as a child, but she now admits she is less confident and more unsure of herself. Her family's move from a high-density Bangladeshi area to a mainly white town, brought bullying at school and constant microagressions in the area. "I felt like an outcast".

Deena's story

I have always wanted to be a teacher, since I was two [years-old]. When I became head girl of my school. I had becoming a teacher in the back of my mind, so I put myself through the interviews and canvassing, so that I would get experience of leading. My parents are really happy about it but my grandparents think teaching is not good enough. They asked me why I am not training to be doctor or to go into law. He [(her grandfather) kept on saying to this to me and on one occasion, when lots of other family members were there, he started talking to my uncle about me. I got really angry and started crying. I just ran out of the room. For me being a teacher, not a teaching assistant, means I have a degree and qualified status.

I'm a Muslim and would love to wear a hijab, but I can't because I and my parents are scared that I will be picked on. I live in an area where there are hardly any Muslims, so I would really stand out if I wore a hijab. The media has a lot of influence. As soon as anything happens about what Muslims are doing, straightaway it's in the news. It may be natural for people to feel hatred and anger towards us, but it frightens me. I was bullied a lot in Primary school because I was the only one in my school who was not white. I felt like an outcast. My family moved from London to a school in an outer county, so I was just picked on. It has made me much less confident in how I interact with people. I will not go on social media, for example, because I do not want to get any racist comments. Just by wearing a hijab will make people see me. Where I live it is not very diverse. My aunt and Grandma do wear traditional dress and they have had people calling out to them and once had a bottle thrown at them. I just try to dress modestly.

On Placement I had more a problem with the teachers, rather than the children. I was working with another white student in the same class. The teacher would seem to address him more than me. When she was talking to the two of us she would look at him and seem to ignore me. It was as if she was expecting him to pass on the information to me. This happened more than once. It happened with the second teacher too, so this time I went straight to the tutor from the university, who helped me. I was really looking forward to that placement. The first two weeks were great but then it all went downhill. I thought 'I'm not enjoying this'. I am fighting against the rest of my family to do this course, to become a teacher, so if this part of the course isn't going well it began to make me feel really bad and question myself.

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Ruby

Ruby is a 30 year-old woman of Asian heritage on a PGCE course, who is married with two young children. She has formerly worked as an unqualified teacher in Muslim schools. She arrived 10 minutes after the focus group had started and sat at one end of the semi-circle. After noticing the recording equipment she moved to position herself behind me then began to question the purpose of the research and the need to record responses. When the content and purpose of the research are explained she raised questions, first about anonymity and if she has to sign using her real name; and then where and for how long the data will be stored.

Ruby's story

Are you just… you're basically focusing on one area. You're sort of doing your research here. I thought you wanted us to do additional research so that is what made me totally confused.   I didn't know that I was going to be recorded.   (She moves her position to behind me.) *Yes, that's fine.*

Is it Diane your name? So you'll be using what we've given, the name we've assumed? And the consent form, how would you want that signing then?   Do you want us to sign with our real names or…?   Our name won't be used?

I don't want to be rude, but is it ok if I don't …because I've got enough on my mind and that sort of thing.   I want to give it my full commitment but I don't think I will be able to. And I'm just a bit hesitant because I really didn't know what was expected, so I'm really sorry, but it's like… I know you're youngsters, I'm…and you know, that sort of a thing. Is that ok?

I'm fine to answer any questions if you want to, I can, if you want to talk to me one-to-one, that's fine. I will support you in that way; but I think it's better if I leave it to the one-to-one? Yeh, because I'm not going to be part of your research anyway, so is that ok?   But if you want to I can see you at 4[pm] because we finish our lectures at 4, if you want any…I don't mind doing that.   Thank you for that. It's not personal. Where will I find you at 4[pm], because I don't mind sharing my ideas.

Hanima

Hanima is a 21 year-old married mother who chose not to disclose her cultural heritage, but wears a hijab. She is on an undergraduate course. Her sister, who is a qualified teacher, has struggled to find work in the UK which has reduced Hanima's confidence. She wonders if she is "fit to be a teacher". She acknowledges that she is stereotyped because of how she dresses and believes that this might lead to "rejection" in terms of how schools and children perceive her.   "If you are in a predominantly white school it will affect the children in how they think and speak. It's integrated in the classroom."

Hanima's story

When I started at this university I felt I shared nothing with other Muslim students, even though they dress like me. I still feel like that. I have nothing in common with them. I have more friends who are white or black, but never feel fully accepted by them either.

On Placement the children thought I was of an Arab background then Pakistani. I felt the Arab thing was a compliment but felt offended that they thought I was Pakistani. My first school was a Catholic school where the children were black and white but in my second school there were more teachers who were Muslim but I didn't feel as welcome. There were cliques.   On placement if I thought someone was going to be racist towards me, I wouldn't know how to deal with that. Some children have asked me why I wear a hijab. Now after placements I'm questioning myself asking 'am I fit to be a teacher? Will other white teachers be favoured more than me? Am I ready?'

When I started [on] the course I thought 'oh, yeh I'm going to become a teacher', but it's not that easy. At university there are the white group of students, the Muslim students but I feel I don't fit anywhere. I thought the students, because they are adults, would be more diversity-minded. I am surprised they do this. I don't feel comfortable that I don't fit anywhere. I feel like an outsider. It's about your values…I don't think I feel valued by some other students so I have stopped saying things because I don't want a negative response. I don't always think about being Muslim and a teacher so I am surprised that other people stereotype me. If I went for a job I think a white candidate will be preferred over me because they see that I'm wearing a traditional dress. My sister only got jobs in schools where there was a large, diverse teaching staff.   If you are in a predominantly white school it will affect the children in how they think and speak. It's integrated in the classroom.

I worry about my experience here at university and on placement whether I will be one of those teachers who feel they cannot go to the staff room because they feel not that welcome, but I even worry about getting a job first of all because people will look at my dress and religion and reject me.

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With this group of student teachers I use the Critical Race Theory tenet that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England by creating racial hierarchy and causing racialised difficulties and microaggressions at university and on school placement. They spoke of pain and confusion on their ITE course and were aware of microaggressions within it that affected their confidence. But they did not make clear links between these racialised difficulties and racism even though some of their stories suggest that they just felt numbed by the whole experience. However their openness and willingness to talk about their experiences showed a level of trust in me as a BME researcher, an 'insider'.

Some were unable to articulate much detail about their BME experiences due to their fears and pain. They felt unaccepted in society generally and unsure about their capabilities as student teachers.   However they wanted to become teachers, as seen in Connie's statement, "I can actually do this" and her understanding that teaching plays an important role in society. Connie was very aware of the lower numbers of BME teachers in general,

> *It saddens me because I am not represented in the classroom and as society*
> *becomes more diverse, we are not recognised in the profession.*

While Taz said she had positive experiences on some placements, she recognised problems that BME student teachers face stating, "If they're not going to accept you they're never going to accept you. Why do you have to keep fighting?"   Hanima was hopeful at the start of her course, "Oh, yeh, I'm going to become a teacher', but it's not that easy". She became disillusioned as the course progressed leading her to question if she was "fit to be a teacher… Am I ready?" She believed that she will be overlooked by schools because white students will be favoured over her. Deena felt she was not accepted by the teachers at two placement

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schools who she perceived "ignored" her and spoke to the other white student teacher more. "It was as if she was expecting him to pass on the information to me."   This made her angry and disorientated, "… if this part of the course isn't going well it began to make me feel really bad and question myself."

Connie, the only African Caribbean student in her university cohort, saw racism among her peers. She worried about being accepted by other students because of her colour.

> *If you're quiet and black you can get stereotyped as not being very clever*
>
> *or just sticking within your cultural understanding.*

Her strategy was to speak out and take an active role in sessions to avoid being "side-lined and ignored".   The impact of endemic racism, in a white-majority ITE setting, on Connie and her peers, had revealed a hierarchy of white students at the top and black students at the bottom.   Connie tried to avoid being stereotyped by adopting what she deemed as a white strategy of speaking out, to show that she was intelligent.   Understanding of the way racism is endemic in ITE, led these students to wonder how to position themselves within the hierarchy.

Osa made the opposite decision to Connie because she was worried about being stereotyped as "an angry black woman" by her placement teacher.   She became guarded and quiet but was frustrated that she was seen as unworthy by the teacher.   This occurred because she perceived overly negative comments from the class teacher towards her that she said were not replicated towards the other white student teacher.   "I could see what the teacher thought by the expression on her face...I'd never been treated in such a negative way before which I

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believe was because I am black".   Osa made comments about her feelings to the class teacher

who complained about her. This resulted in Osa being observed only by the head teacher.

> *Being in school has challenged me to think differently…It has made me*
> *think I will choose carefully where I work when I qualify.*

Osa's pain revealed to her how the hidden racism in ITE affects BME students. She later did

a voluntary placement at a school with a large multi-racial staff and felt much more accepted.

She believes her experience at the first school revealed how the Black African (her chosen

description) female characteristic, of being "quiet and meek" which she says she has

consciously adopted, may have clashed with white ITE expectations of constant, easy

communication between student and teacher.

> *I am very quiet, especially when I am in a learning situation, like school*
> *or university because that is what I have learnt growing up…But when*
> *I do speak I can be very opinionated because I'm trying to express what*
> *I think, but that might stereotype me as an angry black woman and I don't*
> *want to be stereotyped like that.*

Hanima, a white Muslim who wears a hijab and abaya, demonstrated a different perspective

on how to position herself in the racial hierarchy of ITE. She too, was worried about the

future and how white schools would react to her;

> *If I went for a job I think a white candidate will be preferred over me*
> *because they see that I'm wearing a traditional dress...and reject me. I*
> *don't always think about being Muslim and a teacher so I am surprised*
> *that other people stereotype me.*

She felt that she "has nothing in common" with other Muslim women on the course and while

she feels more affinity with white and other black students, she thinks they do not relate to

her because of her religion and dress.   "I don't fit anywhere…I have stopped saying things."

This feeling of being in limbo followed through into a placement where she reported that the

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children could not 'place' her either.   However this made her own ambiguous attitude towards her ethnicity emerge because she revealed that she felt pleased if they said she was of an Arab heritage, which she deemed as of a higher culture, but displeased if they thought she was Pakistani, which she deemed as of a lower culture. Hanima wanted to be seen at the top of the racial hierarchy from where she felt she was more likely to succeed in ITE but although she is white, she believed it would be a circuitous process because she is also a Muslim convert. Her story shows unhappiness that others see her at the bottom of the hierarchy which has destabilised her outlook and confidence.

Endemic racism and its effect on these student teachers also included how insider-outsider tensions impacted on them. I stated in Chapter Three that at the start of each focus group and interview I shared my own story of journeying through English ITE as a BME student teacher. I did this to signal similarities and shared understandings between my experience and those of the student teachers so that they felt accepted and trusted enough to share their stories.   There were, however three student teachers who displayed tensions during the interview process which made me question the insider-outsider issues at play.   Farzana and Nadia struggled to communicate their stories coherently.   Both of their narratives were very short and barely expressed how race and ethnicity impacted on their developing professionalism. Farzana focused more on generic teaching points, "I have issues I have to deal with and they're not about ethnicity." This suggests that she is overwhelmed, even paralyzed by the process of what is required to become a teacher. While she wants to "…fit in... try and be part of it all" she shows a fear of being scrutinized when, "…the teacher's looking for things she can just criticize". This fear disables her ability to show her skills. Nadia however offered more about the effect of her race and ethnicity on her journey through ITE. This was shown when she spoke about why teaching is important to her, "I wanted to

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be a teacher since I was a little kid [even though] I felt left out because I was Turkish. I couldn't speak English". And despite experiencing these language and cultural issues as a child, she experienced a good placement as part of her ITE course, "they're fine with me, they accept me for who I am". Her comment,

> *I think everyone should have an opportunity to become a teacher, not*
> *to be discriminated because of your race or who you are…your background.*

suggests restrained, unexplored and deeper opinions.

Ruby too showed issues of communication.   Ruby's narrative is interesting because it does not explicitly show aspects of pain, unsureness, worry or even opinions on becoming a teacher, although they may have been implicit due to her self-absence.   During her short time in the focus group she avoids being seen in the video recordings, questions my research rationale and confirms that she will be anonymous. When I began the focus group by sharing about my position as a black lecturer she interrupted me to state that she could not help. She said that as a mature student, she did not feel comfortable among "youngsters" and could not give her "full commitment". She also perhaps avoids allying herself with BME issues, once she ascertained the focus of the research, "I really didn't know what was expected". She stated that she would prefer to talk to me on her own, after lectures, later that day. She did not turn up later. (I discussed the ethics of informed consent involving Ruby in my study, in Chapter Three.).   My presumptions of allying with the student teachers as BME insiders, was tested the most with Farzana, Nadia and Ruby and demonstrated the difficulty of wrestling with insider-outsider tensions.   I was not able to build connections with them and may not have adequately demonstrated that I was hearing their pain or fears, making them sense a gap between us.   Despite my attempts to close gaps by assuring them of anonymity and

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confidentiality and the research not being connected to their progress on the course, perhaps my 'outsider' alignment with the powerful world of white ITE meant I unconsciously raised barriers and they consciously saw them. This could have come through my language choices, dress, use of recording equipment and the environment of a university room. This may have made them uncommunicative because it reminded them of how difficult they found ITE.

Insider-outsider issues also encompassed their sense of of identity. Farzana showed confusion, "…[I want to] fit in…and be part of it all. You can't just go in and do the things you want to do". This suggests there was a cultural code to crack which she had not yet found how to do.   Taz, whose traditional Muslim parents saw their daughter's achievements as fulfilling their aspirations, was torn between the first-generation hopes and the reality of becoming someone in society. In some ways Taz had fulfilled some of her parents' hopes in marrying another Indian-Muslim. "I felt I had to fulfil the criteria", she said.   But her fear of racism as a future teacher made her falter. In discussing a future job she said,

> *I'd want to be in a safe context. If I heard things or if a school was very*
> *anti…I don't know…I would be a little bit more apprehensive*

Nadia, unable to articulate racialised aspects of becoming a teacher, did know that she would not have attended her ITE institution unless it was multicultural. She intimated that she would not have felt accepted or fitted in. As a white Muslim Hanima felt her traditional dress confused people, such as when children at a placement school asked her why she wore a hijab.   She was bemused. "If I thought someone was going to be racist towards me, I wouldn't know how to deal with that."   Deena whose family had moved from a Bangladeshi area to a white area felt the weight of being different.   She admitted that she would prefer to wear a hijab but does not for fear of negative responses. She has seen members of her family verbally abused because they wear traditional dress outside. Alongside this, like Taz, she has

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family expectations to consider but unlike Taz's family, some members of Deena's family saw teaching as a lower grade profession compared with medicine or law. "It began to make me feel really bad and question myself." She feels she has to "fight" against this but also keep the two cultures in balance as she proceeds on her course.

These issues of identity confusion arose from a realisation of being in an ITE system where racism is endemic. This group spoke of ongoing and multiple difficulties, where they felt excluded from a system that placed them at the bottom of a hierarchy. They spoke a little about their hopes of becoming teachers but this tended to be a quieter, parallel discourse. They showed characteristics of being culturally-invisible and they spoke of being disorientated, because while there was some articulation of themselves as raced beings in their conception of becoming teachers, it was undeveloped.

4.3.4

This Critical Race Theory tenet understands that intersectionality means that BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course. These student teachers demonstrated strong ideologies emanating from an awareness of being black and minority ethnic in ITE.

This group of participants were: Mona, Suzanne, Ayanna, Layla, Toni, Michelle,

Toni

Toni is 21 year-old single woman from a Nigerian-British background. She is on a post-graduate teaching course.   She states that her family see teacher training as second best and as a young Nigerian-British woman she feels she does not fit into any culture.   She has a white boyfriend but many of her cousins do not have any white friends.   Now living and studying at a Northern university she feels she sticks out as a black person and states, "When I left London, I became black".   She is keenly aware of the reactions elicited by her dark skin and her narrative contains a number of incidents of racism.

Toni's story

My parents pushed education. My dad was adamant that I was going to learn and be the top of my class. Going to university wasn't a choice. They wanted me to be a lawyer and they didn't want me to become a teacher, at all. My mum doesn't really respect teachers at all, unless they own their own school or they're a headmistress. It took me a while to persuade her. I had to show her that I was serious. I see my education as an opportunity to give back; to kind of support and uplift other students. I've had black female teachers in my Primary school because of the area we lived in. Two of them were from a Nigerian background as well. So to me the idea of a female Nigerian teacher is not a weird thing.

[As a child] my school was in a difficult area of London so we had a lot of supply teachers. Once this teacher that came into our class and started the register but struggled with the non-English names because we're not a school of Charlottes, Sharons or Victorias. She got to Vikramjit and she couldn't pronounce it, so he decided to be kind, and said, 'Miss, you can just call me Vicky,' but the teacher was like, 'I can't call you Vicky, it's a girl's name.' I remember the atmosphere in the class just went whoosh. All of us were like, 'What did she just say? He's a boy, why did she call him a girl'. At that school the idea of someone coming up to me and being racist to me was ridiculous. I remember when I was little my dad drilled it into me, 'you're not black, you're African, you're Nigerian, you're Yoruba'.   My family moved out of London, when I was 14, to a small town and I wouldn't leave the house for six months. It was a culture shock. When I came out of London I [became] black, but before I was just me. I was the only black girl in the school.

When I came to university all my cousins were like, 'Why are you leaving London?' Most of them would never leave London and I remember one of my cousins going, "I can't imagine being friends with a white person. I was like, 'what do you mean?' and she said. 'the thing is, we're just really different'. My best friends at the moment are also white, but one of them's more black than I am…When we're out together, I'm often taken as the 'hanger on' friend. When my boyfriend and I are together we're quite a striking couple. Both of us are quite tall. He's a red-head, so he's really pale and I'm very dark.

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On my placement I remember feeling uncomfortable. When I first turned up, god forgive me, I thought I'd never seen so many blonde-haired children. No diversity. It seemed a closed sort of community and I found it hard to have my differences pointed out to me. I got the kids coming up to me and saying, 'Are you from Africa?' and I didn't know how to respond to it. I was thinking my family's from Africa, but I'm from London. I'm very conscious of things like that even when nobody's saying it. Like when I walked into the staff room and...right, obviously nobody said anything but... I've kind of gotten used to being the only black... the only West African, in whatever field I'm doing. I wasn't surprised when I came here and there weren't like a sea of brown faces staring back. It means that sometimes I feel awkward when we have stuff like the equality and diversity lecture; because I found it really interesting, but others [white students] were like, 'What a load of crap! I've never been so patronised in my life!' Even another lecturer was disparaging about it. I thought do I say something or just sort of leave it?

On my placement my teacher was talking about polar bears and she was like, "underneath their fur their skin isn't black, it's white like ours." And I'm there like...(mock shock on her face and laughs) and the kids were like looking at me and you can see that even though they're only Y2s, they knew something's not right, but they're wondering whether to correct her.   I kind of don't know what to do because I've never been in the situation before where people will say racist things. You don't imagine teachers saying that sort of thing.

In unfamiliar situations I always go into default setting. I'm quite reserved and quiet and what I haven't realised is that because of my stature and my appearance I can be quite intimidating to people.   I'm quite tall, about six foot, and when you go into a Primary school and you're standing there quite tall and silent I could be intimidating.   I think what I'm subconsciously waiting to happen is for someone to bring me in; for the teacher to be overly friendly so that I can be myself with her. Children are fine. Initially they'll be a bit like, "she's really tall and scary looking", but once you smile, they think, 'it's all right; she knows how to be happy'.   My mum has embedded on me this massive 'respect your elders thing', so I find it difficult to speak to TAs, teachers or whoever, like they're my friends. So I will still call them 'Mrs' four weeks after I've met them. I still will wait for them to give me some sort of signal that I can advance forward; that I can take risks in the classroom.   I remember a lot my feedback at the end was about how I was really reserved and how I needed to be aware of the presence I have in when I came into the classroom. About how I might want to open up a little bit; and I'm like, "if you had told me or given me any indication that I could do this at the end of my first day, I would have done it. I felt mad at not being myself; waiting for this signal that she didn't know she had to give to me. It didn't occur to me it was a cultural thing, that's the way I am

My last name's K------, which is obviously not English. When I went on a visit day, [the class teacher] took a picture of me and my school partner so that she could hang it on the door and write our names underneath it, so the kids could get associated with us. She said the kids might find that a bit difficult to say, so she shortened it, but I was kind of gutted about it because my name's, my name.

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Suzanne

Suzanne is a 36 year-old woman African-Caribbean married woman with five children. All of her children have special needs, with three of them in special schools. Her children's conditions and her struggles to achieve support for them, form a strong backdrop to her narrative.   She feels that while education is that path to success she also experiences it as a "wall" against which she has to continually push. She believes that she experiences racism at university, first in being rejected for the PGCE course, despite possessing an undergraduate degree, and then in the negative responses of white peers at a teaching session on ethnicity and racism.

Suzanne's story

My children have been my drive to the pathway I've taken now. Over the years me and my husband have put in that support which has been very difficult and upsetting to go through the various ordeals with them. However it has made me passionate about this area of teaching and special needs. So by getting a formal qualification in this area. I will be able to do so much more because I have that passion and that drive. My struggles have shaped me

In my children's [Primary] school there's only one teacher that's from a black heritage and a few Asian staff. I said to them why is it that my son has a one-to-one who's black and my other son has a one-to-one who's White? They said the one-to-one who's White has mixed-heritage children, so should have an understanding of the culture. But I said if you feel that children from a particular background should have someone working alongside who can understand them, then why do you only have one black teacher in the school? It doesn't reflect what you are talking about. The only black males are the caretaker and a sports coach. He's (coach) *not a teacher, so it's showing our children that these are things you should aspire to – being a caretaker or maybe a sports coach, who may not have formal qualifications. So it doesn't give them any hope.*

England is a white country, so we [BME peoples] *have to fit in whatever way we can. You need to be educated because in England that's the route upwards.   We can't get in unless we educate ourselves to pull ourselves together and hold ourselves as a community.   Not getting onto the PGCE course discouraged me at the time because I thought I was worthy of that position and this course would be second best, because I am the only one in the class, with a degree. May be this course is better for me because I have got children with needs and it is difficult for me to cope with them.*

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I know people out there with degrees and Masters [degrees] *and they're not working, they're unemployed. Somewhere along the line the system has obviously failed. It's a battle you know. I'm not clueless; I'm going in there with my eyes open. It's like when we had a lesson* [in the university] *and they showed a You Tube video of a woman on a train with her young child on her lap and she was shouting out racist comments about black people, saying 'get back to your own country'. I couldn't believe how some of the class* (White students) *made excuses for her, saying she was on drugs or something. She was just being racist and they couldn't see it.*

When I went into my placement, I got to the point where I wanted to make myself a badge that says, student teacher on it, because I think as soon as I got there, it was almost like, 'yeh, you're the support person, you're the level 3 person'. They want you to clean up the equipment and to do this and do that, so you're doing all the underdog work.   A couple of times I've had to say, 'you know, I'm a student teacher, I'm observing at the moment'. I didn't want to come across as rude because obviously you want people to like you in your placement and they're going to give you feedback as well, so they could make life there difficult too. We have to be ready and understand that there are going to be barriers, as a student teacher, for those from a particular background. It's going to be hard, but if it means that you're going to make a difference to your child, your sister's child or whoever it is, then it is worth it.

[Discussing placement] *I know that in order to fit in I am going to have to come across and dress in a certain way. It's how you come across to people, how you talk, how you're perceived.   That's [the same] for everyone, regardless of their colour or race, but I want to bring a bit of me, my culture. Sometimes you have to change the way you look and speak but I'm prepared to do that but still have that element of myself in there.*
At the end when you qualify, you're then faced with another barrier of trying to get a job and you're competing with other people and you're part of a minority group, it's harder. You have to show that you can do far more; you have to be exceptional. You have to come across that you can do your job 150% more than the other person. I can push myself as far as I can go but there will be limitations in this country. [Even though] you can get to a point where you're respected and seen as a professional person, but it does not mean that you're 'up there'. We're not given the opportunity to get to that level. You can have [black] people with equal qualifications and they're not pushed to reach their full potential. That's degrading but they want to keep it a certain way. In some ways there's an order going on. No matter what job you do there is a level you can reach and no higher.   If you're lucky to go past a certain stage where no other ethnic person has done, you're seen as high up in the black community, but that person is probably doing much more than a [White] person in the same position.

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Ayanna

Ayanna is a 43 year-old single mother of African-Caribbean heritage. She worked as a legal secretary for 15 years before completing an Access to teaching course. She experienced what she terms "subtle racism" at school and saw herself in the mould of the black teenager interested in sport, but not academic areas. At school she was labelled a rebel but learned to conform. When she applied for teacher training, she was told by friends and family that she was going "above her station". Her own children experienced racism at school which she believes emanates from a lack of BME teachers. She believes her deeply spiritual life, emerging from her former Rastafarianism, keeps her going, but describes 'battling' the system of education as a student teacher where "red tape" ignores issues such as race and ethnicity.

Ayanna's story

I've wanted to be a teacher for quite a few years; I just didn't have the confidence. In the area I went to school, black children didn't generally aspire to be teachers. It was just way above our expectations, so it took me a long time to build confidence, to get rid of that thing that was in my sub-conscious mind. I've had experiences with my own children at their school which just…it wasn't a support. It was as if it was a constant battle all the time because they [teachers] didn't understand…I don't know if it's the race thing. I think it's because they're different. I thought, you know what, I need to get into a school so I can actually understand and see what's going on and know why it is like that. My sister's a big influence too…she's now a teacher, a Secondary school teacher. I was labelled a rebel [at school]. They were constantly trying to change me. My sister reacted differently….she just conformed. Whatever they said, she would just do. But I was more, 'this is how I am, so why am I doing it'.

When I started the [ITE] course I was very enthusiastic about being a teacher, but being within the system, I'm thinking it's either going to be a compromise on my part or a battle which I'm realising is going to happen. We've got a black lecturer; she's quite real. We get on with her. (This lecturer is of Caribbean heritage) And S...who's left now; we were very connected with her. If she didn't like anything she just said it straight…like the conversation we had (about racism). She said, 'today we're going to have a conversation about it because she went to a talk where she was surprised by racism within herself, so she wanted to find out what we thought about it. If you've got any thoughts about different cultures [which are racist]; [you need to be] taught that when you're a teacher you come from a place of love, if not, you're going to bring your prejudices to teaching and that's when it affects the child. But if from the [start] of your degree you're taught to have that connection with a child,

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regardless of whether that child is black, white, purple or whatever disabilities it has, then they can learn. I know they mention inclusion things, but they're not teaching it in the right way. They're approaching it in a way that doesn't make sense to me. I feel the subtleties of the negativities of the course; but I need to get the qualification, be a teacher then I might be able to change someone. I have conformed because there are certain things I don't say.   It's a necessity to do the course to be a teacher [but] if I could have done it in another way; in a more natural, spiritual way, rather than a conventional way, I would take it.

I'm also noticing that the majority in the establishment is not black female, in Primary. I'm not finding many black female teachers where I've been [on placement]. That's surprised me in a way, especially within my area, because it's so predominantly black. None had any on a high level, like deputy heads, nor heads; or even middle [level], like a head of English. It's just not ...there.

There was a [black] boy in the school when I did placement and he always knew the answers to all the questions, but I found the teacher, without realising, was trying to stop him so that obviously other children got a chance, but then by the end of my placement I realised he'd stopped putting up his hand, so I was thinking maybe that pulls him back so when he gets to Year 6, maybe that's why they're [black boys] failing. When my son, he's 19 now, started school, he could read, write and knew his numbers, but then he pulled back a bit as if he wanted to not be able to do these things. I want to get in there [to become a teacher] to say everyone's at different levels, and to recognise that that's what happens at home, because maybe the teachers don't realise that's what happens.

I was in a Reception class with a black teacher. There were two black teachers in that school; one in Y1 and one in Reception In that school there was 80% [English as an additional language children] mostly Somali and Ethiopian. It was very multicultural, very open and friendly. From the first point of contact, throughout. With other schools I've been into, the instant I've walked in [to a school] you're literally told 'you can't do this or that, whereas that school was very open. The staff liked me. They observed me in the first five minutes that I walked in and said, 'you're fine, we know we're going to get on with you'.

Layla

Layla is a 19 year-old Muslim woman of Somali heritage. She came to the UK when she was 12 years-old with no English. She is now fluent in English. She tells of "amazing" teachers who gave her extra support and encouragement, but was also aware of a culture gap because they were white and did not understand her background and cultural needs. She is aware that her Somali heritage is a barrier, "they don't want to accept you..." An example of this is a paired school placement where she felt the white student was treated more favourably than

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she was.   She says she "was excluded completely" and would often cry at night.   She states

"this industry's hard" to describe her feelings about ITE.

Layla's story

I started education in Year 7 [when] I was 12 [years-old]. I couldn't speak English so it was a struggle. I made a decision to try and fit in and learn the language. I thank God I had such amazing teachers who gave me that extra time to develop my confidence and language. I thought because they were sort of putting in the effort, then I should also try and do the same thing. The teachers were White, so I thought, there are other children like me who kind of struggle to fit in and maybe if went in to teaching, then I'll be able to support children who are bi-lingual but who are struggling to fit in.

Most teachers are White and the black youth cannot relate to them. So maybe if we do have more black teachers, then there would be more improvement in our children [because they would know] how black children learn. It's harder for black teachers to get that respect. On placement I don't think I'm seen as a teacher. I was with another student who is like blonde, blue eyes; like she gets it so easy. I was refused prayer time, no-one spoke to me or helped me that much and I felt the staff room wasn't a nice place to be. I'd arrive there always 10 minutes early at least and the other student arrived at 10 [am] sometimes, 11, saying, 'oh, I'm stuck in traffic' and they say to her, 'ok, do you need some time to compose yourself'. If I did that I'm sure they wouldn't have liked it. She would read a story to a group of children and then she would be given an hour for feedback. I asked if I could do story time, with the teacher sitting there but I didn't get any feedback. So, I mean I know I didn't mess up because I planned and practised to make sure because I knew no-one liked me and I needed to put in the extra effort.   She gave me some comments about the children not being able to see the story. The whole experience was negative. I would often go home crying.

The school did have Asian and some black children and when I first went there the black children all ran to me because all the teachers are White.   There was an incident where a [black] boy, sat on my lap but I was told to ask the child to get down. I said, I was not going to ask a three year old to get off my lap without explaining why I have to. And then she moved the child, just like that. Later, in the playground I looked at the child and he just looked away because he felt like I'd kind of pushed him away. So I had to build that bond with him again for him to come to me when he needed support.

Even with the way I dress, the first time I got to the school they said, 'um, is this how you're going to be dressing?' and I said, 'this is how I've been dressing all my life and I don't intend to change it.' Then I heard the main teacher 'I wonder how she's going to be moving around'. I was standing there and she knew I could hear her. I wanted to say, 'just because I have a scarf on it doesn't mean I can't hear you.' I played football just to show them just because I'm wearing this, it's not going to stop me doing anything. I've been dressing like this since God knows when because my parents encourage me to dress like this and to represent who I am. The children asked me lots of questions about the way I dress. I think it's because they've not been exposed to that sort of environment.   I think children should be see people out there and feel like, 'yeh if she can do it, why can't I?'.   That's how it was with

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me…but also [for] the parents because they [would] have people they could communicate with and they could relate to and like, sort of also help the child learn more.

But it's like, this industry's hard. Because in the university they talk about diversity and inclusive practice and then I'm sent to a place where I'm excluded completely. I mean you don't have to like me; that's fine, but at least don't show it to me. Be professional…like, you know what, you probably won't like her, let me just give her a chance, so that is something that I've learnt from this placement. I mean I've been to different placements, I've never been treated like that, so I can't sort of say, yeh just because you're a White teacher you're going to be like that, no, because I've been among White teachers. They're not all like that .

Mona

Mona is a 26 year-old woman of dual English-Pakistani heritage. She previously worked in marketing and community work and during course she still taught at a community Saturday school for African-Caribbean children.   Her narrative shows concern about the lack of BME teachers in the profession and student teachers who do not make it through their ITE course due to racism. She remembered a fellow BME student teacher who did not complete the course due to a racist class teacher. She is also unsympathetic towards those who do not acknowledge racism such as the student who left the focus group after a few minutes, after learning the topic of the research, stating that race is not talked about, for fear of negative responses from peers and tutors.

Mona's Story

I've taught Saturday school since I was little. I thought, 'I don't want to be stuck as a teacher'. I worked as an international marketing manager and did a lot of amazing things but then speaking to young people [at the Saturday School] and mainly its director, who's from a Caribbean background; she's one of the best teachers in the world.   She was the key role model for me, and because of my family situation, breaking the stereotype of, 'oh you're just going to be a single mum on benefits. There's a lot of diversity in the classroom now and I thought as a person of an ethnic minority background that was one of the reasons I thought I should do this.

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I remember first coming [on the course] and being scared to death, thinking, I'm not going to fit in? How are they going to take to me? Can I really do this course? I already knew that there weren't going to be a lot of black people on the course… that wasn't a problem for me. I'll never forget this girl sat next to me when we came for the interview, who said, 'oh you'll get there. You're Asian'. I've got a mixed race guy in my group and they were like, 'oh you know, he'll get it. He's a black male.' Some people think it's not necessarily because of your ability, but because you tick a box. But you can't take that on board, you have to know you're here because you deserve it. It's (race and racism) *seen as such a controversial thing [on our course]. No-one wants to talk about it, because to be honest, when you're in a situation where you are a minority, you just kind of accept certain factors and you don't want to challenge that because that could be the person marking your paper. I think you've got enough things going on in your head with the course as it is, so you just have to kind of play by the rules.*

There was one incident that happened in my year that made me cautious. A good friend of mine, the only black guy on the course, went on a placement and his class teacher was racist, end of. She didn't want him alone with the kids, there were all kinds of issues going on and it really broke him down. The uni really wanted him to continue and try another placement but he was so hurt by it that he's left now; and you know, he won't come back and he won't even think about approaching teaching again. He wasn't someone either that forced his culture upon anyone, you know. He was just exactly the same as everybody else, but the teacher obviously had some issues.

For my first placement, the majority of the school were black pupils, mostly from African backgrounds, and my partner (a white student) was a bit anxious, going into that environment. The parents and children took to me, but she maybe wasn't so comfortable, and it came across. It was not necessarily her fault but, yeh it was quite funny that it was the opposite way round. My preference is not to be in a multicultural school or an all-white school, it's just to teach children. I'm passionate about, and you know, I want this career, I'm serious about it, then I will adapt and adjust to whatever environment I'm in.

Michelle

Michelle is a 22 year-old white student teacher of French-Spanish heritage, who came to the UK a few years' before starting her PGCE course. Growing up in a poor, multicultural neighbourhood of a French city, where she saw race riots and a friend being deported back to Mali, she understands how her background has shaped her. She feels an outsider in the UK and calls herself a "nomad". She has experienced a "lot of negative social pressure and racism, particularly because of her accent and grasp of English, and feels she has to "work

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twice as hard" on the course. She is dismayed at hearing a university lecturer joke about equality and diversity in a session and feels devalued.   As a student teacher, having English as an additional language has proved to be problematic. She has suffered issues with English first-language speaking pupils who flouted her authority.   This made behaviour management, on her placements, difficult and affected her confidence.

Michelle's story

My mum's French and I was born and brought up in France; but my dad's Spanish so I've got two [identities].I've grown up in what is classified as the most violent town in France; where the riots happened. So in some ways it was quite difficult, but it was my home. For me school was the only place where I could do something else and discover things, so I always thought I want to go back and help all the children to see there are things you can do with your life; and that's why I wanted to be a teacher. It was a bit weird though because no one went to university in my family, although they knew that school was really, really important. I remember one time I got 19 out of 20 in dictation and for once I was happy about it; but she said, 'why didn't you get 20?' But when I said I want to go to university, she thought I was being lazy because in her view university was for lazy people, those who didn't want to work. She thought I should go out to work and I thought that was really weird. I've been controversial since the age of five so I just went [to university] to be different.

I'm weird, because I feel I should have been black really because I feel black in a political sense; so I'm really weird in that manner. Lyon, as a city, is very, very multicultural. We didn't have racism because my friends were like a lot of different people: a lot of African people, Muslim people, many from North Africa. The only racism we ever saw was from white people. The first time I knew racism was when I was nine [years-old]. A friend I had, who was from Mali; they took her away in a police car to send her back. So you see that and think, yeh, I don't like white people. I'm always up for the minority.

I feel I haven't been able to socialise with my [PGCE] group. I don't feel integrated at all. When I come in [to a seminar] I usually sit on a table of my own and I wait for people to sit down around me. Sometimes they do, if there's nowhere else to sit. Then, when that lecturer started joking about equality and diversity he was just playing the 'race' card because I was in his class again the other day when he brought it up… I was going to say that maybe they've lost the point because they've never had the thing [racism] against them. What I find difficult being here is that because English is not my first language I am constantly behind everybody, there's lots of inferiority complex, if you can say that. So I always feel like what I say is stupid compared to the others because I won't say it with a vocabulary that is as developed as everyone else, so I'm still behind. I have to work twice as much and still not be at the same level. There's been a lot of negative social pressure and it's not working somehow.

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The pupils I've had, so far, don't get it because they hear my accent [even though] I speak English all of the time. They don't hear me speak another language and I'm white. So it's like, 'What are you?' They don't get it. I spent four weeks on my placement and at the end of the four weeks I had a kid coming up and say, 'Are you actually French?' My name's hard to say as well [and] when I've been in the other schools I changed it, but this time I had to pronounce it in the way I wanted it to be pronounced and actually they could say it.

On placement the [tutor] told me that I had no teacher presence and if I was not dealing with it I could leave the course, so that [has been] one of the many things on this course which made my confidence collapse. I wouldn't recommend [teacher training] to EAL people if their English is not quite high [enough]....because the children already doubt you, because English is not your first language. It's hard.

With this group of student teachers I use the Critical Race Theory tenet that intersectionality means that BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course. This group of student teachers recognised the intersecting axes of their lives, in terms of race, class and socio-economic status, gender, parenting and cultural aspects such as religion and language, and how these impacted on their ITE education. They were outspoken in their opinions and ideas about becoming teachers as black people and their stories, telling of painful microaggressions and difficult events, revealed how they felt suppressed and thwarted in their ambitions in ITE. Their conceptualisations of how race and ethnicity were shaping their transformation into teachers also showed an understanding of how whiteness in ITE was forcing them to put aside their multiple and rich racial and cultural heritages to fit an essentialised a one-size-fits-all position.

They understood how in ITE there was an expected compliance to white majority expectations which they saw as part of the systematic under-privileging of BME student teachers. They told of microaggressions that systematically wore them down and pushed

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them towards changing or down-playing their race and ethnicity.   Despite their outspokenness during the interviews there were also issues of silence leading problems such as when Toni, of Nigerian heritage, admitted that due to her culture she was very quiet on placement because her culture had taught her to be quiet and respectful to elders or people in authority, such as teachers,

> *I will still call them 'Mrs' for weeks after I've met them. I still will wait for them to give me some sort of signal that I can advance forward; that I can take risks in the classroom.*

This led to her receiving negative feedback from the tutor about her lack of initiative. This made her confused and angry, "I felt mad at … waiting for this signal that she didn't know she had to give to me." Toni felt hampered by the "cultural thing" of what she was taught, as respecting those in authority, but also understands that it is part of her being.   Michelle, a French first-language speaker, also felt silenced in ITE due to her language problems, "…because English is not my first language I am constantly behind everybody, there's lots of inferiority complex (sic)". She feels her speech "is stupid" so keeps quiet to help herself.   At university she feels isolated, both physically in sessions, "…I wait for people to sit down around me… they do, if there's nowhere else to sit" and politically, such as feeling anger against a lecturer who,

> *started joking about equality and diversity he was just playing the 'race' card because I was in his class again the other day when he brought it up… I was going to say that maybe they've lost the point because they've never had the thing* [racism] *against them.*

This need for reserve was echoed in Suzanne's "you have to come across in a certain way" and Mona's, "you just kind of play by the rules".

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These incidents expose intersections of culture, gender and language that are part of these student teachers' lives.   Toni faced the intersection of culture and gender as being unacceptable. This is shown in her respectful manner towards people in authority, as befitting a young Nigerian woman. But on placement, by waiting for the teacher's instructions before acting, it was seen as lacking initiative and intelligence. While Michelle's story revealed how the intersection of language with her BME status placed her as 'other' and also lacking intelligence. This caused her to become distressed that language was such a barrier in the classroom, showing that ITE disallows those who do not show or possess behaviours and language that reflect the professional white-majority expectations and mores.

Conversely understanding and celebration of intersections also led the student teachers to speak out, name and challenge inequality and microagressions in ITE. Suzanne and Ayanna used combative analogies and language. Suzanne said:

> Somewhere along the line the system has obviously failed. It's a battle you
> know. I'm not clueless; I'm going in there with my eyes open.

Ayanna saw teaching as, "…either a compromise or battle" and felt constrained and suppressed in her teacher education:

> I know they [ITE] mention inclusion things, but they're not teaching it in
> the right way. They're approaching it in a way that doesn't make sense to
> me. I feel the subtleties of the negativities of the course; but I need
> to get the qualification, be a teacher then I might be able to change someone.
> I have conformed because there are certain things I don't say.

Both of them believed ITE does not see or hear them as black people but actively works against who they are. Both experienced difficulties with their own children struggling at school which they felt does not understand the needs of black children. They are clear that they want to succeed on their course but mainly so that they can be a force for change for

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black children in schools.   Suzanne and Ayanna celebrated the intersection of culture and family as part of their ITE journey and were willing to name it as part of their challenge to ITE.

The intersection of culture, as shown in family bonds, was also the case with other students. For the parents of Layla, traditional Muslims and not fluent in English, their daughter's achievements would fulfil their aspirations for making a better life in this country. This is echoed in Toni's narrative whose parents felt their daughter should be a doctor, lawyer or at least a head teacher and while Toni felt this weight of responsibility she also knew the importance of becoming a professional.   Both Suzanne and Ayanna were also propelled by family to succeed in ITE because they wanted to be role models for BME children. They felt the education system had failed their own children.   The home community and culture of the participants also had an influence on their becoming a teacher, as shown by Mona who was inspired by an African-Caribbean teacher of a Saturday support school. This "best teacher in the world" helped her see beyond herself to wider cultural aspirations of, "breaking the stereotype of, 'oh you're just going to be a single mum on benefits". She believed that teaching is a good profession stating, "I want this career. I'm serious about it".   Ayanna also wanted to rise out of her community's low expectations where "black children didn't generally aspire to be teachers" describing it as,

> *…way above our expectation so it took me a long time to…get rid of that*
> *thing that was in my sub-conscious mind.*

"That thing", seen as a blight by Ayanna, and confusion and anger over her own children's difficulties in school, helped to push her into teaching.

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> *I thought, you know what, I need to get into a school so I can actually*
> *understand and see what's going on and know why it is like that.*

Alongside these intersections of cultural family and educational expectations was also the intersection of parenting which for BME parents can vary from white expectations. Ayanna had three children from two different fathers and at the time of the research was a single parent. Suzanne had five children, all with the man to whom she was married but her children all had different special needs and the family lived on a low income. Ayanna and Suzanne were wrestling with not only the emotional demands of raising a family, but as black women, with being stereotyped as inadequate due to low income, poorer housing and in Ayanna's case as a single mother. By being present within and persisting on their course they created spaces to resist being victims and challenge stereotypes and expectations.

School placements also proved to be sites of intersectional difficulties between culture and religion. While Layla's own schooling in the UK by white teachers was positive, she faced large obstacles in her journey in ITE, particularly on placement. She admitted that she "would often go home crying", because of the poor relationship with her class teacher.

> *I planned and practised to make sure because I knew no-one liked me and*
> *I needed to put in the extra effort [but] ... the whole experience was negative.*

 She listed a catalogue of microaggressions including being "refused prayer time", being ignored in the staff room she described as, "not a nice place to be" and not being helped or supported as much as her white student teacher partner. "I mean, I know I didn't mess up…This industry's hard". Being seen as teachers was a problem for both Layla and Suzanne who felt they were seen as teaching assistants which added further struggle. Michelle was told that she had no "teacher presence" which was one of the many "negative

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pressures" she experienced. Michelle, who came to England a few years before her PGCE course, decided not to downplay her French-Spanish heritage on one placement, and used her correct full name, rather than simplifying it. She described how her confidence "collapsed" because of a lack of acceptance from the pupils. However even though she spoke English she believes her accent made them see her as 'other'. "… I'm white. So it's like, 'What are you?' They don't get it."   Further microaggressions on placement were recounted by Mona of a university peer, the only black male on her PGCE course, of whom she is adamant was the victim of a racist class teacher.

> *She didn't want him alone with the kids, there were all kinds of issues going on*
> *and it really broke him down. The uni really wanted him to continue*
> *and try another placement but he was so hurt by it that he's left now; and…*
> *won't even think about approaching teaching again. He wasn't someone either*
> *that forced his culture upon anyone, you know. He was just exactly the*
> *same as everybody else, but the teacher obviously had some issues.*

This group's awareness of their raced position, as student teachers, supported their conceptualisation that there is a problem in ITE leading to a lack of black teachers. Some felt it was like an elephant in the room, a big unacknowledged problem leading to isolation. Mona described race on her course as, "…such a controversial thing …No-one wants to talk about it".   Toni felt her white peers at university did not understand the black experience when they called a lecture on Diversity "a load of crap".   She did not expect to see a "sea of brown faces" at her university in a white town but was still hurt at the simplifying of her Nigerian name by a class teacher so that the children could pronounce it, lack of acknowledgement in the staff room and most shocking of all to hear her class teacher say in a lesson that polar bears had white skin "just like us" under their fur. Suzanne saw her position as a battle within England as a white country where the system had failed black people. This

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view was echoed by Ayanna who does not see many black teachers in schools and feels that

black boys are failing because lack of black teachers.

> *There was a [black] boy in the school when I did placement and he always*
> *knew the answers to all the questions, but I found the teacher, without realising,*
> *was trying to stop him so that obviously other children got a chance, but then*
> *by the end of my placement I realised he'd stopped putting up his hand.*

 Layla, who was criticised for wearing a hijab and abaya for PE and not being allowed to

comfort a black boy at her nursery because it was seen as favouritism, added that "black

youth cannot relate to white teachers".

These student teachers saw ITE as a tense a difficult landscape shown in Layla's point about

getting through the course, "this industry's hard" and supported by Suzanne's observation, "I

will push myself as far as I can go, but there will still be limitations".   The personal

ideologies and to a certain extent, rebel natures of this group of student teachers, related to

their acute understandings of how their race and ethnicity affected their progress on the

course.   It is interesting to note that this was the group who I felt were most open and made

clear connections between race and the difficulties in ITE.   They opened a discursive space

which invited further exploration.   However it is important for me to state that the

assumptions of being an insider with them, may have made me less critical of how I

represented their stories.   I may have presented them as less complex and negative, as an

antidote to white-majority thinking, and gave a positive representation of them as thinking

BME student teachers with developed race perspectives and who have the capacity to probe,

challenge and bring change.   The danger of categorising the participants into the groups that I

have done is that they may be too clear cut.   I return to this idea in section 4.6.

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The CRT tenet that intersectionality is to be valued as part of the rich contribution of BME people, is seen in these student teachers. Intersections of race, class and socio-economic status, gender, parenting and language are part of their discourse of self. These students' stories show that to some extent they resist cultural erasure and are strengthened by their ideologies and beliefs to speak out against whiteness in ITE, that attempts to fit them into simplified constructions of teaching.

4.4 Responses of BME student teachers

These groups of student teachers demonstrate varying perceptions, ideas, views and outlook but also commonalities, between their views and experiences as they journey through their course. They all spoke of racisms and other microaggressions in varying degrees which they acknowledged as having a significant impact on them by this mid-point of their course. Some believed they had not and would not change in regard to their race and ethnicity; others maintained they were successfully balancing their home culture with British culture; and yet others thought they were already of British culture or least appeared so. By presenting their stories as whole units it was possible to encapsulate participants' perceptions, fears, hopes and outlook, thus presenting them as whole people within the frame of the study's focus. Their stories also conveyed their humanity through their sheer variety of responses and ways of expressing themselves. Their stories, of which I tried to remain as faithful as possible to the transcripts, included inconsistencies, ambiguities, contradictions and unexpected points which troubled and disrupted the data, so that neatness in analysis of the stories, was challenged. Their responses, including their differences and commonalities are outlined in the table below.

Table 4.2

Responses of BME Student Teachers

Student Teachers	Characteristics	Over-lapping characteristics	Description	Positioning
Lubei, Julide, Inas, Tiana, Sharon, Aysha, Chetna, Saif.	**The Critical Race Theory principle for this group recognises that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers.** These student teachers included very little talk of their own race and culture and its role in shaping them. They are culturally-invisible; silent; easily compliant, managing	Silence Persistence	Although racially and culturally aware of their minority position in ITE, they less confidently or willingly reference family, culture or religion, or make significant links between these and becoming a teacher. They favour instead the 'good teacher' discourse (Moore, 2004) which is generic and neutralised. They fit 'pre-determined social patterns and mind-sets' (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).	**Manoeuvred Position**
Shaina, Jenny, Maria, Aliya, Sara, Parvina, Jacquline, Zainab, Eve, Haifa.	**The Critical Race Theory principle for this group, recognises race as a social construct which in ITE, can be used to control how BME student**	Desire to succeed	They confidently reference family, culture and religion and culture as the motivation and undergirding support for their training. They appear confident in both their professional and private lives and combine these with a vision of being role models to and empowering children in their	**Vibrant Position**

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	teachers' progress through different stages of their course, including having to learn within a white-centric ITE curricula that does not easily accept racial minority viewpoints. These student teachers spoke of aspects of their racial and cultural heritage that they deemed acceptable on a white ITE course. They are silent; culturally visible; easy but considered compliance		home communities. They seamlessly incorporate their culture into their stories. They too fit 'pre-determined social patterns and mind-sets' (Solórzano & Yosso (2016) but within a context of considering the importance of their culture.	
Taz, Nadia, Farzana, Osa, Connie, Deena, Ruby, Hanima,.	**The Critical Race Theory principle is that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England by creating racial hierarchy and experienced through microagressions at university and on school placement.**		They continue on their ITE course but demonstrate bemusement and some ambivalence towards the requirements of ITE. They are disorientated in the ITE environments and unsure about how to fulfil the requirements. They do not fit easily into the student teacher position and are under-confident. They value their cultural and religious	**Stagnated Position**

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	These BME student teachers spoke of pain and confusion on their ITE course They are silent, culturally-invisible, disorientated, compliant with reservations.		heritage.	
Mona, Suzanne, Ayanna, Layla, Toni, Michelle,	**This Critical Race Theory Principle understands that intersectionality means that BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course.** These student teachers demonstrated strong ideologies emanating from an awareness of being black and minority ethnic in ITE. They are silent and		They have strong, personal beliefs and ideologies about themselves as racial and cultural beings and racial inequity both in society and in ITE. They speak about racism which has affected them, either before or during the course and assess the impact of their teacher education on their cultural identity. While they desire to succeed and become teachers they are less compliant with ITE demands and principles.	**Discerned Position**

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	discomforted, culturally-visible with strong, personal ideology, resisting compliance			

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Table 4.2 draws together the stories of these BME student teachers in relation to the CRT tenets used to analyse each group of student teachers. In the table the second column shows over-lapping characteristics that I observed in all of the participants' stories which were 'silence', 'persistence' and a 'desire to succeed' which will be explained below. In the final column I draw together my understanding of their different characteristics into four responses. They are: manoeuvred, vibrant, stagnated and discerned positions. These positions are not fixed and immutable, but representations of some ways that these BME student teachers cope with and negotiate a way through their teacher education. The positions are also responses to the expectations and requirements of ITE that have been revealed as limiting and damaging to BME student teachers.

I chose the term 'silence' to indicate how participants felt marginalised and bemused due to the racial microaggressions they suffered. Even those student teachers who were outspoken against issues they experienced in ITE, acknowledged that requirements and expectations can silence them and make them less confident.   Their skin colour, dress, accent and language, family life, gender, religion and culture were some areas that raised negative responses for them. The impact of their BME status on their practice while on school placement revealed that many of them acknowledged that Primary teaching is a white profession and more difficult for BME students to flourish and progress. Some felt judged against white peers in the classroom and had to work harder to be accepted. Some experienced direct racist remarks, often unintentionally, from pupils and some faced religious issues about engaging in Muslim prayers during the school day or wearing their hijab and abaya when teaching. Their responses varied from presenting these difficulties as issues that have to be endured as a BME student, to making them confused and wary of ITE.

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I chose the term 'persistence' because all, by this mid-point of their course, were still continuing and felt they had the same academic and professional qualities as their white peers. The reasons for undertaking an ITE course and being able to persist in order to succeed often came from family support, particularly parents, who had social and professional aspirations for their children. Other participants persisted on the course because of wanting to change the system of education, which they felt did not provide for or understand BME pupils and had let them down. The communities from which they came, was a key factor of persistence for some because they aspired to be role models who challenged the culture of low expectations and wanted to give something back by remaining and teaching there.

I chose the term 'Desire to Succeed' because all of the student teachers wanted to become qualified teachers. They believed teaching to be a good career because they believed it to be stimulating, respected and an important service to society and they saw themselves as role models for children and young people. They felt that by training to be a teacher, they were branching out from low-expectations in their working-class home and communities, fulfilling family aspirations and defying stereotypes of low achievement.

The final column develops my understanding of their responses using a CRT analysis in terms of where they are in their ITE journey. I have called the different positions: Manoeuvred Cultural Position, Vibrant Cultural Position, Stagnated Cultural Position and Discerned Cultural Position. I have represented these below in the *BME student teachers' indicator of cultural position as they become teachers* (Fig. 4.3) and they will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

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4.5 BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers

Overlapping and at the heart of the four positions of Manoeuvred, Vibrant, Stagnated and Discerned are displayed in the quadrants of the *BME student teachers' indicator of cultural position as they become teachers* (Fig. 4.3) the commonalities of 'silence', 'persistence' and 'desire to succeed', explained above, are shown at the centre.   The student teachers are 'visible' or 'invisible' on the horizontal axis and if they are 'managing' or 'struggling' on the vertical axis.   The surrounding 'drivers' and 'limiters' show that 'managing' and being 'culturally visible' are positive drivers, indicating that participants affected by one or both display characteristics of coping and progressing on their course. Conversely those student teachers affected by both negative 'limiters' of 'struggling' and being 'culturally invisible', have less ability to cope with the racialised difficulties and demands on their course.   In between are those affected by one driver and one limiter and show concomitant characteristics.

Participants called 'vibrant' are affected by the two positive 'drivers' of managing and being culturally visible. Their stories show they value and draw on their race, ethnicity and cultural background to determine who they are and recognise it is a significant factor in journey to become teachers. They willingly speak of family and traditions which infuse their stories with a vibrant element.   Participants affected by the positive driver of 'managing' but the negative limiter of being 'culturally invisible', are called 'manoeuvred' because their stories indicate that they have adapted, and to some extent moved from, their home culture towards the white-centric culture of ITE.   Their stories include examples of striving to adopt white majority-ethnic characteristics to help them achieve success. This included downplaying

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their race and ethnicity and replacing it with a focus on acquiring generic teaching skills.
Those affected by the two negative limiters of struggling and being culturally invisible, I
have called 'stagnant' to indicate their unsure, static response to the racialised difficulties and
racisms encountered on their course. Examples in their stories show they are bemused, often
unhappy and are unable to articulate how their position on their course is informed by their
race and ethnicity. While they persist and want to be successful, they do not cope well, and
they struggle with the requirements of their course. They appear to be silent about or
stagnating in terms of racial self-expression and awareness.   Finally those participants seen
as 'discerned', are affected by the positive driver of being 'culturally visible' but the negative
limiter of 'struggling'. I called them discerned, because while they highly valued their race
and ethnicity, they questioned and resisted the white-centric nature of ITE. They recognised
the value of becoming teachers but were very aware of the systemic and structural racism
within ITE which makes it difficult for BME students to succeed. They are racially self-
aware, articulate and discerning about their position as BME student teachers.

Fig. 4.2

BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers

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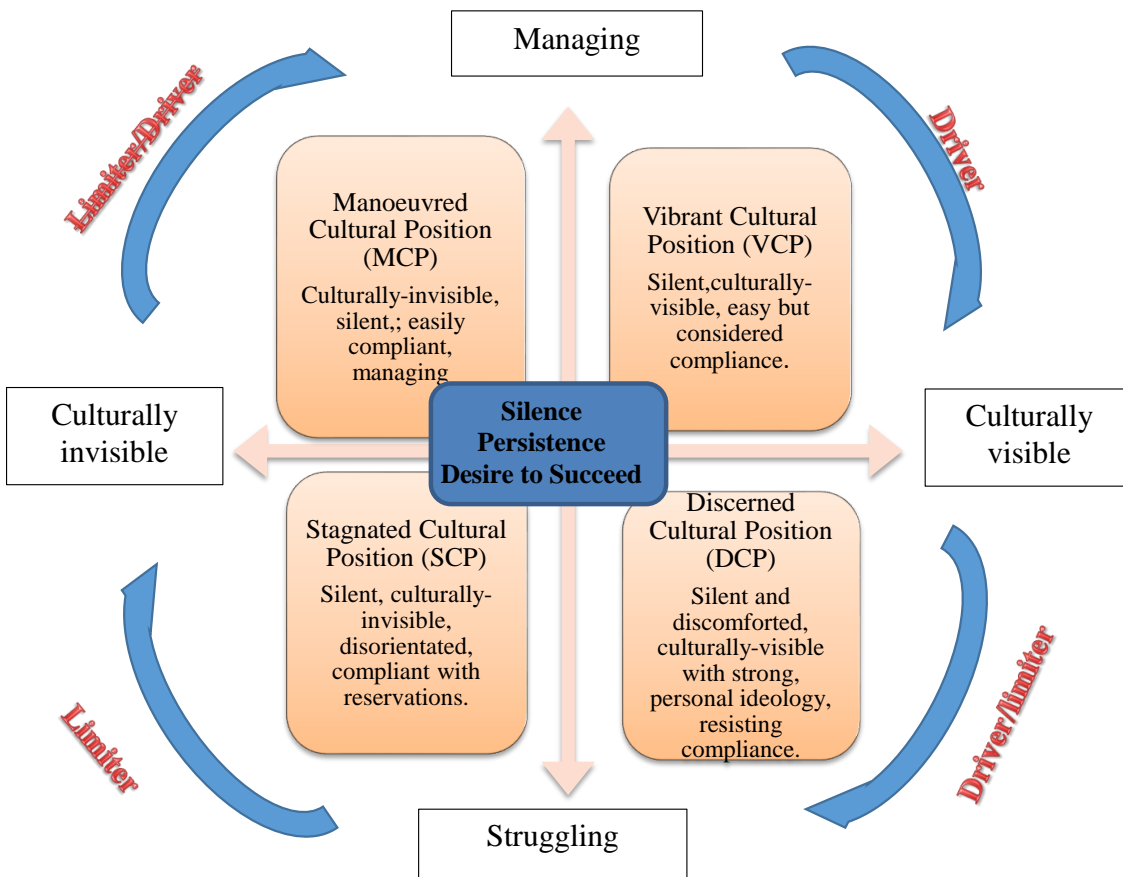
4.6 Conclusion

The belief in the power of counter-stories, to challenge and change is a tenet of Critical Race Theory (CRT).   The role and use of counter story exemplifies and reflects the other tenets of CRT as outlined in Chapter Three and used in this chapter as the tool of analysis. These are: exposing racism as endemic in society; rejecting the neutrality and colour-blindness of liberalism; refutating race as a social construct, leading to damaging racial hierarchies; and celebrating intersectionality and promoting anti-essentialist understandings about race and ethnicity (Delgado, 1995: Delgado and Stefancic, 2001). The counter stories of the student teachers in my study are told with feeling, candidness and some, more directly, express hurts and fears. Delgado (1989) argues that counterstory occurs when the otherness of minority peoples, those he calls 'outgroups' is dissipated in the telling of and listening to the experiences of those on the margins. The sharing of experiences creates a necessary dialectic with the majority narrative and constructs more pluralistic understandings.   At different points in my analysis of the student teachers' stories I question and reflect on how they may have responded to my ITE lecturer 'outsider' status in telling me things they may have thought I wanted to hear or conversely only partially or did not reveal what they actually thought in case it detrimentally affected their progress on the course or showed themselves as deficient in some way. Those student teachers who took this stance only referred to some aspects of their race and ethnicity. This could have limited the data, reducing depth and complexity and giving me a partial picture. As an 'insider' BME researcher many of them shared hurts and fears including some who really struggled to comprehend and articulate what they were going through and only managed short responses. All of the participants spoke of different realities of being a BME student teacher in ITE and revealed to me, that no matter how much racial common ground is present, insider-outsider tensions involve

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being uncomfortable for both myself as the researcher and the participants and that it includes

disappointments, insights and negotiation (Islam, 2000; Gunaratnam, 2003).

Counter stories, sensitively told with authority and an expectation of action and change,

provide irrefutable truths for dominant narratives in education (Ladson-Billings, 2016). They

are also a grounded way to discuss and reflect on racial issues in ITE (Bell, 1995). Counter

story enables 'contours' of reality to be seen, adding depth and reality where participants

become the meaning makers because they are pivotal in owning their reality and in imbuing

the events with personal reasoning and motivations; (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Elliott,

2005).

The student teachers' counter stories interrupt the majoritarian discourse by telling us of

difficult racialized experiences and microaggressions that are a significant part of their ITE

experience that diminish their confidence and authority.   These are documented in Sections

4.3.1 to 4.3.4 (see above).   Huber & Solórzano's (2015) definition of racial microaggressions

as incessant and cumulative, emanating from seemingly innocuous white attitudes, frame an

understanding of their pervasive and continuous effects. They see racial microagressions as

not merely lazy or unfortunate slights from individuals but as resulting from their complex

relationship with white supremacy ideals that lie at the heart of structures and processes in

society.   Through their counter stories the student teachers in this study related how

experiences on campus and placement included racial microaggressions and how they uneasily

struggled to fit the ITE one-size fits-all template that was created for white students.

Recognition of racial microaggressions, Huber & Solórzano (2015) assert, enables racism to

be   seen   in   everyday   interactions   and   identify: context,   type   and   effect   of   racial

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microagressions to support further understanding. These three areas helpfully provide an interpretive framework of how the student teachers' counter stories interrupt the majoritarian discourse in ITE. The contexts in my study included; white-centred curricula that largely avoid and do not directly encompass BME and culturally diverse experiences and their effects on shaping students. Some of the students in the study they were also in a context of a mainly white campus, where their stories told us about noticing and being subject to separation of racial groupings among peers which left them feeling isolated and bemused. Their stories also tell of how they often felt a lack of support in such contexts. Their stories related these types of racial microaggressions: spoken comments that showed profound lack of understanding of the hurt caused when, for example, fellow students dismissed a university session on racism and cultural diversity as "a load of crap" that was later compounded by a lecturer also dismissing it as not relevant. Also comments from school tutors who wanted a student to simplify her Nigerian name and stated that polar bears have white skin under their fur "like us". Another type of racial microaggression are the acts the student teachers endured. One such act was the avoidance of other white students not sitting at their table in university sessions, which the group of BME student teachers explained as everyone 'staying in their group'. This explanation demonstrated hurt and betrayal. The effects of racial microaggressions, shown in the analysis of the different groups of student teachers earlier in this chapter were, that they denied their racial positions for fear of being seen as deficient, only highlighted the 'exotic' or 'acceptable' parts of their culture, became timid about their knowledge and abilities or pushed the other way and were outspoken against the drawbacks of their ITE course.

Their stories name and challenge issues in ITE, significantly by how they are seen by their peers; a narrow and white-centric ITE curriculum, based on top-down documents such as the

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Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2012), that makes little concession for race and ethnicity; university and school placement cultures that encompass assumed and uncritical attitudes and approaches; and universities that often do not or only have, small numbers of BME tutors or senior managers which gives a message of whiteness and has less potential for racism to be exposed.   All of these mould thinking, language and actions so that racism shown in microaggressions and other racialised events and difficulties become casual, normalised and part of the ethos. This makes them hidden so that those who speak out appear disruptive and abnormal. I draw on and reflect these important conclusions in the recommendations in Chapter Six, sub-section 6.8.2 to address issues of the ITE curriculum, lack of knowledge and understanding among university and school ITE tutors and ITE and HEI cultures where the damaging effects of hidden racism may not be addressed.

In the next chapter the student teachers' stories' disruption of the majoritarian narrative are discussed using the four cultural positions in my *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers*.

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Chapter Five

DISCUSSION

The previous chapter outlined how my *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers (*Fig. 4.3) recognises and conceptualises a range of responses by BME student teachers as they journey through ITE in England. It draws together their stories and has the effect of disrupting the majoritarian narrative in ITE because it aims to understand and show that race and ethnicity are specific factors in their progression and how it affects their confidence and resilience in a higher education system where structural racism still persists (Mirza, 2015). My *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers* recognises complexity and diversity in researching race and offers the differing cultural positions of Manoeuvred, Vibrant, Stagnant and Discerned as useful and discursive insights, not as fixed and immutable. Using Critical Race Theory (CRT) I understand BME student teachers are on a journey in which their identities are in flux due to the complex and contested discourses within it (Roberts, 2007; Maylor 2010).

This chapter will discuss the characteristics of the four cultural positions, of Manoeuvred, Vibrant, Stagnant and Discerned, shown in my *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers (*Fig. 4.2). It will be referred to as 'Indicator'. I will also raise ambiguities and contradictions to trouble the data, resist stereotyping and strive for the presentation of complex and lived realities (Gunaratnam, 2003; Roberts; 2007).

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5.1 Manoeuvred Cultural Position

The group of student teachers who have been ascribed in my 'Indicator' as having a

Manoeuvred Cultural Position (MCP) because they are 'managing' yet 'culturally-invisible'

are: Lubei, Julide, Inas, Tiana, Sharon, Aysha, Chetna and Saif. I have called their cultural

position 'manoeuvred' because as stated in Table 4.2:

> *Although racially and culturally aware of their minority position in ITE,*
> *they less confidently or willingly reference family, culture, community,*
> *religion or language or make significant links between these and becoming*
> *a teacher. They favour instead the 'good teacher' discourse which*
> *is generic and neutralised (Moore, 2004). They fit 'pre-determined*
> *social patterns and mind-sets'* (Sólorzano & Yosso, 2016).

They appeared to have manoeuvred themselves within the majority culture of ITE, focusing

on how their white peers perform, in order to benefit from and succeed in the system of ITE.

Some express a few racial issues, but only when directly questioned in the interviews, and do

not see them as sustained and structural. Instead they focus more on their motivations to

become teachers and the pedagogic skills they need to develop and acquire. I have identified

their characteristics as: culturally-invisible; silent; easily compliant; and managing. These

will now be discussed in turn.

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5.1.1 Culturally-invisible

MCP student teachers appear culturally invisible because their stories appear not to raise negativities against the university in which they study, the ITE curriculum or the difficulties they may experience on school placement. Students like Sharon were hesitant about mentioning or discussing what it is like or what it means to be of BME heritage.

> *I don't know, in terms of how it affects me, I don't think it does…*
> *I mean I don't know if there's like a negative view for me to have?*

She was unable to express her feelings and did not know if she should have an opinion about the politics of race on her course. Her repetition of "I don't know" could be an inability or reluctance to identify with her race and ethnicity. Her want of self-realisation as a black person was shown in her lack of regard for a BME support group at the university.

> *The thing is, I don't know if, I went just because I wanted to, you*
> *know… it was something that was suggested and I thought 'ok, I'll*
> *go and have a look but I don't necessarily feel like I need a support*
> *group…what's the point…It's like we're just…*

She shows that it was not actually her idea to attend, but it was imposed on her. She wants to appear strong and not in need of an activity which exposes her as weak and lacking in knowledge of majority cultural norms as shown in the assertive "what's the point" and the hanging phrase, "it's like we're just…".

MCP students do not want to appear as problems or as culturally-deficit, so in a way their stories do not always appear as the counter stories, as outlined by Solórzano and Yosso (2016).   Instead they offer views on how they negate the racial stereotypes which they see as barriers to progress. They do not talk about or make significant links between their teacher

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education and family, language and culture and appear to swap the voice of the marginalised for the voice of the mainstream. They avoid identifying with and talking about themselves as 'raced beings' which they deem to be too difficult to negotiate in the white world of ITE (Warmington, 2008; Rollock 2011).

While the Indicator describes MCP student teachers as shifting away from their culture in their thinking and conception of themselves to appear invisible, they do articulate some positive aspects of their race and ethnicity, although it is minimal. When Aysha was on placement she reflected**:**

> *The [children] didn't see me as Asian or different because I didn't*
> *have a scarf on [my head]…They didn't ask me, at all, anything*
> *about…that's the thing, it was the same children.*

She was bemused that the children were focused on her student teacher partner who did wear a hijab, but aligns the word "different" with "Asian" to denote that she appeared normalised and therefore culturally invisible, in their eyes. Her non-wearing of a hijab allowed her to escape intrusive questions about her culture which, even though it is not mentioned, it is shown by the ellipsis and followed by "the same children". This incident is further outlined in her partner, Zainab's story, in the VCP section below.   Discarding traditional Asian forms of dress to avert unwanted attention, is also recounted by Lubei:

> *… I just don't feel comfortable…I guess I want to be part of wider society…*
> *I think I see dress as part of integrating in society.*

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Lubei begins by suggesting it is to do with the practical aspect of comfort but then admits that she sees it as negative because attire transmits strong cultural messages about how she is seen in "wider society" and is also her passport to being accepted, succeeding and "integrating".

In trying to be culturally invisible some MCP student teachers are faced with how to address their skin colour. Tiana, who describes herself as Black African and is very dark-skinned, said:

> *I am aware though, that my skin colour has had and does have a big*
> *effect on people…It is making me anxious about where I fit in.*

The "though" indicates that she is unable to ignore her skin colour and that she has to admit that she notices it does affect people. It troubles her because she replaces the word black with "skin colour" and uses the phrase "big effect". The rest of her story reveals that this realisation and accompanying discomfort increased on going to university, that had few African and Caribbean students and on school placement where she was told by children that her black skin, ears, lips and face were offensive to them. Her "anxious about where I fit in" statement shows that she is struggling to know how to stay culturally invisible.

These incidents reveal that among MCP students there appears to be a desire not to be seen as culturally or racially different, but a part of the culture of whitenss and its concomitant perceived benefits of acceptance and success through meritocratic achievement (Solomon et al, 2006; Picower, 2009; Ball, 2017).

In addition to down-playing outward signs of their race and ethnicity MCP student teachers are keen to show that they think in the same way as their white peers. Saif said:

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…all my friends of a Muslim, Indian or Pakistani background, or whatever; when we talk about diversity, culture, things like that; we all want people to understand… we want diversity…we want to understand others…

Sharon offered:

I don't know if this correct, but I think… if you're doing your job as a teacher, it's almost, a service, isn't it? If you're teaching children who are mainly from, I don't know, a white background, you kind of have to relate to them if you know what I mean, so you can't always… like I can't go up there and relate all my background history, because it doesn't…all this teaching children in context, it's not in context for their learning, they won't [understand]. They won't get it 'cos they're not from that background. I wouldn't feel like that takes anything away from me, I just feel I'm doing my job.

While Chetna spoke about her life at university:

… I don't sit with [other BME students] much… I like to kind of just integrate…

In these three comments above, Saif's repeats "want" to emphasise the aspiration to be like his white peers at university, which he regards as being open-minded and liberal. Sharon aligns herself with the skills and actions of being a neutralised, de facto, white teacher, justifying it by using the neutralised educational term "context" to state why it would be wrong to share aspects of her culture with white children. Chetna's admission that she associates the act of not sitting with BME peers on campus with being open-minded is shown in the word 'integration'. They believe they have the values and attributes of their white peers and act in a way that shows this. Solórzano & Yosso, (2016) argue that BME students suffer the effects of culturally-deficit 'solutions', proffered by majoritarian stories. These solutions include the demand that they should assimilate into the dominant culture of education or suffer marginalisation and failure. By acknowledging racial issues MCP

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students perceive it will disadvantaged them and feel it is better to be invisible in order to

succeed.

5.1.2 Silent

In all four cultural positions of my Indicator I have identified 'silence' as one of the

characteristics. For MCP students their silence emanates from similar reasons to their desire

to be culturally invisible. They have formed ideas about how to present themselves at

university and on school placement, but their silence is manifested in different ways.

Sharon's story showed that literally she did not want her words to be heard by tutors on her

course. "I kind of worry about that…there are certain things that you don't want to be on

record." She also called race and ethnicity 'it' as shown in the extract above, indicating a

desire to be silent on the topic. Lubei did not use the word racism to explain the lower

position of a BME class teacher, at her placement school, who was not a senior manager

despite being at the school for many years and other younger, white teachers occupying

senior roles. Instead she wondered if this teacher had been "overlooked". Aysha air-brushed

race and ethnicity out of her thoughts by stating that teaching is about:

> *…trying to include all the children, regardless of what they need…*
> *I feel as though we should know these things* [race and ethnicity]
> *and naturally treat everyone equally. I don't think it should be*
> *officially taught.*

And Sharon showed an inability to articulate how her race and ethnicity played a role in her

development as a teacher.

> *I haven't… been in a school where there's been a lack of teachers*
> *from different backgrounds. I don't know, in terms of how it affects*

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me, I don't think it does.

In examining MCP student teachers', I am faced with the challenge of understanding and interpreting stories that do not present the difficult minoritised experience shown by other participants and in wider research (Basit et al, 2007, Roberts, 2007). The challenge began by categorising them as having manoeuvred their cultural position from their home culture to the beliefs and values towards the white-majority culture. This reflects Gunaratnam's (2003) and Hall's (1996) notions that race research should reveal non-uniform experiences of minoritized peoples which Gunaratnam says, creates "an emergent property of the interactions between differently constituted and located individuals" (Gunaratnam, 2003, pp.7-8). In recognising that MCP students appear to deny aspects of their race and ethnicity, I show that race research deals with slippery and difficult notions and involves the emotions of BME researchers but it is also a site where new meanings can emerge through listening which resists the process of 'othering' (Parker & Roberts, 2011; Roberts, 2013). However my interaction with the MCP student teachers and my re-presenting of their stories, creates 'relationality', with all its difficulties, that Gunaratnam deems necessary in race research, particularly between BME researchers and BME participants.

Saif was silenced on a placement in a white school, because he felt as though he "couldn't" ask to do his Friday prayers. Inas was silenced when she was made "speechless" by pupils who asked if she had hair under her hijab. Julide however, like Chetna, Sharon and Aysha, is mainly silent about her heritage. She demonstrates unsureness about her ethnic and cultural heritage, stating that she and her mother do not mix very much with other Turkish people.

I actually don't know much about my Turkish heritage and don't
really speak the language. I've not thought about it that much.

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She is "wary" about speaking of her heritage and indeed of discussing culture in general. She does not, for example dare to tell other students that her boyfriend is Jamaican for fear of being "judged" for dating a black man. On placement she noticed how two black teachers did not visit the staff room which she thought "was odd." The relationality that developed between Julide and myself, as an 'insider' black researcher of Caribbean heritage like her boyfriend, possibly gave her the confidence to mention the two black teachers, but she was not able to discuss the culture of the senior managers in the school. The 'outsider' effect of being Julide's tutor, as well as the researcher, may have raised inhibitions within her (Johnson-Bailey, 1999). The idea of relationality enabled me to see Julide as being somewhat aware of, but mainly silent about race and ethnicity issues in relation to her training (Gunaratnam. 2003). Observing the effect of relating to these participants and the surrounding insider-outsider tensions is important in noting the impact on the data, that is the way they tell their stories and then of fairly portraying the complexities of difference and diversity (Maylor, 2009a).

5.1.3 Easily compliant

Solórzano & Yosso (2016) contend that Critical Race Theory disrupts the majoritarian narrative of racial equity purported by educational institutions, such as meritocracy, colour-blindness, equal opportunity and inclusion but which involves assumptions of power and privilege. Solórzano & Yosso recognize the majoritarian story can also be adopted by BME people, such as MCP student teachers, to show compliance to the system. Evidence from the MCP stories suggest they believe in the majoritarian stories and display a 'dysconsciousness'

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about racism (King, 2004) which is the stance often deployed by the white students who defend

their position in a system designed for them (Evans-Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011.

MCP student teachers showed compliance in a number of ways. One of these was how they

presented themselves as part of their culture. Julide tended to denigrate her background,

describing Turkish people as aloof, although she simultaneously maintained that they were

open and accepting.   This attitude was also adopted by other MCP students, ome of whom still

lived in their home town and who wanted to return to teach there.   However they chose their

terms carefully and related discussion of their culture to the majoritarian story of being

aspirational. Saif, stated:

> *My main influence has been my Dad because he thinks teaching is the*
> *best profession you could ever adhere to.*

This was echoed in Aysha's,

> *It's quite regarded in our community* [to become a teacher]*. I've got*
> *an aunty and uncle who are teachers and then my Mum who's a*
> *teaching assistant, and friends.*

While Chetna stated:

> *There's all sorts of things in my Dad's family where they've broken the*
> *glass ceiling; they've broken barriers and been able to... kind of, make*
> *their mark ... I think that's very admirable.*

The use of terms such as "best profession", "make their mark" and being "quite regarded",

illustrates family and cultural values but in another way illustrates majoritarian values of

complying with the idea of joining a profession as a passport to the benefits of the majority

culture. Studying in ITE, which assumes and promotes the privileges of the majority, MCP

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students have chosen to inhabit the majority space, which Fanon (1952) explains as "alterity for the black man…is the white man" (p.72) because their own cultural and ethnic identity are questioned and denounced (Villenhas & Deyhle, 1999).

In seeking compliance with ITE values MCP students manoeuvred beyond their cultural backgrounds into the white majority. Their desire to give back to their home communities was more to bring back and instil majority values, than raise awareness of inequity. (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). Saif said:

> …going back into school and maybe influencing children…to get them to speak…to understand that the way they talk and the way they communicate with people will make a difference in [other] people forming opinions about them.

He is also concerned about his Pakistani peers who he maintains speak "very, very poorly", an obstacle, in his view, to their manoeuvring into the white-majority.

Chetna spoke of becoming a head teacher to inspire BME children but the sub-text of it being the ultimate sign of success is shown in her statement, "if you know you would be okay at something you kind of want to give it a go".

> I'd like to make a mark somehow…I speak to head teachers and they are very inspirational … it's kind of if you know you would be okay at something you kind of want to give it a go to see if that would actually help in… Say, for example, if people like me back down, who will take to the stage…someone who just wants to be a head teacher, they might become a head teacher, might step up, and then you might regret it and then think I should have gone for it.

Compliance, like invisibility, discussed above, was further shown by fulfilling the requirements of the course and not presenting problems. For Tiana this was her appearance:

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> *I have found a way to embrace being different for the sake of being liked*
> *by the parents and the children. I have changed the way I dress, even*
> *though I don't want to change the way I am. If I can adjust I will, so that*
> *it is not a barrier.*

The use of "for the sake of being liked", "adjust" and "not a barrier" are disturbing phrases and reflect the 'dependent behaviour' refuted by Fanon (1952) as objectionable because personal agency has been negated. Lubei too, thought it important to fulfil expected requirements and not cause problems:

> *I got on all right on placement. I did what I should be doing, which I*
> *hope was okay; my report was absolutely fine because there were*
> *no problems. I didn't have any problems getting on with the staff or*
> *children. They respected me.*

The accolade of "respected me" shows achievement of crossing the cultural divide. Lubei, like the other MCP student teachers are easily compliant because they want to fit in and succeed.

5.1.4 Managing

As established earlier, MCP student teachers can be seen as manoeuvring their cultural position to reflect the majority and operate within a mind-set which avoids the reality of addressing their race and ethnicity (Troyna, 1994; Leonardo, 2016).   They project the image that they are managing well on the course because they can think, act and speak like a good teacher.   For example Sharon said:

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> *I want to be a good teacher so at this stage it's just…getting into that*
> *role and doing the best I can….I don't know if this correct, but if you're*
> *doing your job as a teacher, it's almost, a service, isn't it?*

Inas added:

> *I was captivated by the fact that you can have such an impact on*
> *a child's life. Education gives an individual, independence…*

This was echoed by Aysha:

> *[Teaching's] about making the classroom look nice…You just*
> *think about the teaching.*

They see their journey as mastering the skills of instructor and controller of learning, "passing on the building blocks of knowledge" (Gove, 2013; DfE, 2013). They use words and phrases they deem acceptable, such as "role", "service", "impact on a child's life", and Aysha's "you just think about the teaching" encapsulates that it is their primary goal, with no reference to how their race and ethnicity shapes their teaching skills. Chetna confidently reflected this viewpoint:

> *I think the most important thing ... is probably not actually the*
> *subject or the curriculum or things like that; it's really just the*
> *skills of life. It's trying to kind of allow children to enjoy education;*
> *allow them to enjoy their own learning.*

She less confidently discussed race and ethnicity, calling herself, "people like me" to denote her difference.

By aligning themselves to the majority view in ITE and by emphasising themselves as a generic teacher, they situate themselves in the realms of perceived normality and acceptability. They reveal their belief that drawing attention to one's race and ethnicity, as a developing teacher, is not acceptable because the majority view in ITE, sees those characteristics as personal and unimportant. Managing for MCP student teachers is also

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shown through their confidence. Lubei states that a teacher is, "indispensable to that class; everyone is going to look to you for direction". This locates teaching as a high-status, prestigious position in which she believes, she has a place. She confirms this by showing her ability in her comment, that on placement she was "absolutely fine" with "no problems".

Saif also identifies his suitability for the profession:

> *I am quite confident like that, regardless of what type of environment*
> *I'm in or whoever I'm with… I feel quite comfortable going into a*
> *school full of white people and know that I'll get on with somebody.*

Interestingly Chetna acknowledges her race and ethnicity could actually be a conduit to show white schools that despite her colour, she can speak and act like them and be the good [white] teacher.

> *I have become more and more confident and I always like to*
> *put my mark on something… If you look different…you know, your*
> *skin's a different colour…people might notice you if you suddenly*
> *are able to articulate…and naturally portray yourself as a good*
> *teacher.*

These examples show that MCP students seek the race-denying 'good teacher' model (Moore, 2004) which focuses on the rhetoric of ITE in developing skills and competencies, becoming reflective, wise and pastorally-minded, and assuming inherent qualities such as popularity and innovation.

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5.1.5 Ambiguities observed of MCP student teachers

Issues of struggle or failure did not arise in the stories of MCP student teachers, although there were some signs of awareness of their race and ethnicity, which was stronger in some individuals than others.

Saif was difficult to place in the MCP group because he spoke a little more about family members, either recognising the value of them or with concern that they had not benefited from white education and attitudes. He stated that his father was the biggest influence on his decision to become a teacher, "…I can actually make a difference and my Dad has influenced me in a positive way".   He is saddened by his brother's struggles with literacy, as an adult, and the lack of understanding between them.

> *It made me really think how come he's not been an influence on me and*
> *I've not been an influence on him.*

This slight veer towards their home background was also demonstrated in Aysha, who made these bold statements about identity:

> *It's important to know where you are [culturally]; what ways you*
> *can go about it to achieve things.   That's how you improve yourself.*
> *As long as you have your set structure about what you need to do…*
> *and as long as you don't change yourself. We're born in this country*
> *and that's how we see it.*

Saif's story focused on individuals, family members and his Pakistani peers at home; and Aysha's statements hinted at an emerging conception of a raced identity (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Warmington, 2008). Chetna too revealed tension between culture and ITE, shown in her altered language when describing placements at different schools. At the

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first school, in a white area, she focused on generalised aspects of teaching (Moore, 2004)

and did not discuss race and ethnicity:

> *…the children needed more… kind of caring…a more nurtured*
> *sort of environment because they needed that extra support from*
> *the teachers because they not only saw the teacher as the teacher,*
> *they saw them as someone they could confide in; someone that they*
> *could relate to; someone who was consistent in their life.*

In the second school, in an ethnically-diverse area, she focused more on herself as a raced

being, noticing the ethnically-mixed staff and appreciating them by her use of the words

"treated me like family".

> *I feel more comfortable there and I think it might be because the*
> *teachers there are Indian…from Asian backgrounds. We had dahl*
> *and rice for lunch; the dinner ladies knew me very well… I did find*
> *it easier to work with the teachers because they almost treated me*
> *like family.*

Inas too showed a dawning racial awareness when she spoke about how being on the course

and going on school placement meant she worked with other ethnic groups, "I believe I am

having to adapt to those around me" supported by her realisation of the general "stigma on

ethnic groups" in society.

These examples of ambiguity from the MCP category, recognises that the participants show

characteristics of, rather than an exact fit in the MCP category.   This indicates a certain

amount of fluidity between the boundaries in the Indicator whereby the student teachers are

recognised as mainly displaying characteristics, but are not exclusively of one type.

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5.1.6 Conclusion to the MCP group of student teachers

MCP student teachers, shown on my Indicator as culturally-invisible, silent, easily compliant and managing, mainly did not express conceptions of how their race and ethnicity shaped their ITE journey.   I found them a difficult group to analyse because they did not fit the image of BME student teachers struggling to understand and exist within the majority culture. Instead they presented views and examples showing they were culturally-invisible, easily compliant and managing in their desire to meet the demands of ITE (Sólorzano & Yosso, 2016). This lack of acknowledgment of their race and culture was difficult for me as a BME researcher because as Islam (2000) relates, research among participants who share the racial and cultural minority backgrounds is venturing into tricky terrain. As a researcher you feel like a race traitor because of the need to include idiosyncrasies and discrepancies but in using stories for this study, I recognise the subjectivities and paradoxes of real lives, with their complicated and contradictory threads (Wengraf, 2001). Their stories are products of their opinions and real experiences. In representing the complexity of the MCP stories, I have been influenced by Fanon's (1952 & 1967) conception of the black experience in white society which he saw as a complex internal response to subjugating, external factors.   MCP student teachers' sense of themselves as raced beings and personal agency are sealed off and there are resonances of Fanon's prediction that the only outcome is that they "turn white or disappear" (p.75).

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5.2 Vibrant Cultural Position

The group of student teachers described in my Indicator as having a Vibrant Cultural Position (VCP) because they are 'managing' and 'culturally-visible' are: Shaina, Jenny, Maria, Aliya, Sara, Parvina, Jacquline, Zainab, Eve and Haifa. I have called their cultural position 'vibrant' because as stated in Table 4.2 they:

> *Confidently reference family, home community, religion and culture as the motivation and undergirding support for their training. They appear confident in both their professional and private lives and combine these with a vision of being role models to and empowering children and young people in their home communities. They seamlessly incorporate their culture into their stories. They too fit 'pre-determined social patterns and mind-sets' (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016) but within a context of considering the importance of their culture.*

VCP student teachers, like MCP students, are managing and succeeding, appear confident and believe in the 'good teacher' discourse (Moore, 2004). They too have a vision of being role models to and empowering young people in their home communities (Bhopal, 2015). Unlike MCP students they engage positively, without prompting, with their race, ethnicity, religion and culture, seeing them as their motivation and support in becoming teachers, although they tend towards describing exoticised aspects which they deem more acceptable to the white majority. They show a capacity to begin to deconstruct and challenge negative racial images, being conscious that ITE is a white space (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). They are more willing to discuss their fears, linked to race and ethnicity, than MCP students, but not as stridently as DCP students who are discussed later in the chapter. I have identified VCP characteristics as: silent; culturally visible; with an easy but considered compliance. These will now be discussed.

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5.2.1 Silent

For VCP students their silence was a response to times of difficulty which they found upsetting. They were determined to be successful on their course and correspondingly complied with requirements, even if they faced racial obstacles. Their stories show that they mainly avoided contention with university or school tutors, exemplifying Solórzano & Yosso's (2016) belief that it is difficult to raise issues when racism is disguised and normalised. This is shown in a statement by Sara:

> *If you don't find out about other ways and cultures, something's missing*
> *and then it seems normal. And when it's normal you don't think*
> *about it.*

Jenny showed silence by not saying what she really felt but hiding it behind a forced facial expression, following a difficult incident on a school placement.   She felt she was unduly admonished by her white teacher for laughing and being loud while her white peer, who was also talking, was unchallenged.

> *My smile stayed there quite a while just so that she didn't pick up on my*
> *real feelings because I didn't want any excuses for it to affect my placement.*

The silence of VCP student teachers was sometimes initiated and compounded by the push of family aspirations. They did not want to disappoint parents who placed a high value on education which they saw as the route out of the poverty and difficulty they had experienced as immigrants (Jones, Maguire & Watson, 1997). The students stated that while their families gave them strong support, this could render them silent to some of the indignities

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they suffered on the course because they could not let them down (Basit et al, 2007).   The

family push was stated by Aliya:

> *My family, particularly my parents pushed me to go further into education*
> *and do something to increase my prospects….If it wasn't for them I*
> *probably would have not had the strength to get into it...you know, do it.*

Sara, echoed this:

> *My dad was more interested in each of us going on and excelling*
> *….and I don't want to upset my dad.*

At university the realisation that racial difference is not positively presented and largely

ignored in ITE rhetoric led to them being unsure about how to speak of race and ethnicity.

This included being overwhelmed by the whiteness of the campus (Jessop & Williams, 2009)

such as Parvina who was at a mainly white campus in the north of England:

> *I think at first it did [affect me] when I first walked into a classroom*
> [of her peers] *and I was the only Asian girl…I was like…ooooh.*
> *I was really uncomfortable…*

Zainab, at the same campus, felt this too, which silenced her ability to state how she really

felt:

> *… I don't really know what I feel about terms like black*
> *and minority ethnic' or 'Asian'…I don't mind…I'm not sure…*

Others, at more ethnically-diverse universities, still felt exclusion.   Haifa, at a south of

England campus, felt the different ethnic groups of students, stayed separate and only tended

to mix for some course work if required. This was compounded by Eve who said:

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> *I feel that I have had to mould myself to fit in with [these*
> *Asian] students and feel accepted by them but the white students*
> *have not accepted me.*

School placements were difficult spaces for VCP student teachers because they felt vulnerable, over-scrutinized and looked upon as the exotic 'other' (Basit et al, 2006; Davies & Crozier, 2005). Even though they acknowledged being uneasy about standing out because of their colour or culture and saw it as racist, they remained positive but silent. This was shown by Parvina at her white placement school. She felt compelled to express herself through the majority culture because she "had to".

> *[The children] thought I was different because I wore a scarf.*
> *A lot of [pupils] came up and said, "what's that on your head…*
> *why do you talk like that?"…So I was really bubbly and tried to*
> *get on the level with kids, talking about Justin Bieber, stuff like that,*
> *just to make them feel like, 'oh, yeh, she's normal, and not different'.*
> *I felt like I had to.*

Zainab was in a class with only one Asian child and stated:

> *When I first went into the class, to be honest, I felt a bit weird …*
> *One girl said to me 'Do you speak English' and I said to her, 'Well,*
> *what language are we speaking now?'… They asked me, 'are you*
> *Indian. Are you Pakistani? One did, like an Indian dance…[in]*
> *assembly we were stared at, you know the whole school…well, I was*
> *being stared at. One kid was like twisting his head to look at me.*

Other students, at white schools, also faced challenging circumstances. Shaina, was asked, "Miss, have you been on the sunbed too long, you're very brown?" followed by a parent who said, in her hearing, "Have you had a good day with your Paki teacher?" Jacquline admitted to giving a "daft" response to the child's query, "Why are you brown?", stating that she had been on a sunbed for too long, because she felt embarrassed at the starkness of the question, but later said she "explained it all" to the child. This was an example of VCP students being silent and complying, but doing so in a more considered manner than MCP students because

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they talked about their race and ethnicity, albeit in ways they deemed acceptable to the white

majority.

5.2.2 Easy but considered compliance

The idea that the schools and classrooms were sites of unease due to their BME identity

(Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008) were understood by VCP students, but they were also

committed to being non-confrontational because, not only did they want to succeed, they also

had ideals that their culture was of value to the school and the pupils (Bhopal, 2015). They

were at times vocal and passionate about their racial and ethnic heritage and the influence this

had on them. They were also aware of the need for self-reliance due to their race and

ethnicity. Sara plainly stated, "If you're Muslim or black, it's about motivation, if you want

to be a teacher." This was echoed by Maria who said:

> *It is hard to be a black teacher or even student but regardless of all that I*
> *still want to be a good teacher…. You always have to make sure you are*
> *as high and as best as you can be, not giving anybody any excuse. That's*
> *the thing that annoys me, that I feel that I constantly have to do that.*

Jenny's sentiments showed a similar stance:

> *I don't like to think, oh race is an issue for me, but …I do feel I had to be,*
> *work a lot harder just to make sure you're on the same level. Just so that*
> *there's no excuse for them to see me in a certain way.*

Eve's testimony was more detailed about difficulties and showing a wider political awareness

about racism:

> *I know that I will change because I play safe …and if I end up in a school*
> *with mostly whites I need to know how to integrate. Life can be unfair*

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> *for a black person in this country. If you're a minority you are struggling*
> *to compete. No matter how good you are you are at a disadvantage or*
> *work extra hard to provide yourself against a white counterpart.*
> *You have to deal with stereotypes that you are aggressive or ignorant.*
> *I have worked so hard so that people do not attribute these stereotypes*
> *to me, but they still do simply because of my colour.*

Self-consciousness about race and ethnicity was shown quietly but with conviction, hence their characteristic in my Indicator of 'considered compliance'. They are silent, as discussed above, and they know that they must carry on, but they are willing to name race and are aware of themselves as raced beings (Warmington, 2009). They know that race doesn't happen elsewhere or is an illusion and while their expression of it is contained and careful they are willing to talk about their pain (Gilroy, 2004; Warmington, 2008). Again the notion of 'relationality' that developed between myself and them, may have helped (Gunaratnam, 2003) because my BME status may have encouraged them to speak about deeper thoughts and feelings.

Another way some expressed their compliance in ITE, was in the way some appeared happy to subvert their own culture to the majority culture. Shaina, was in a church school with some Muslim pupils. She said:

> *I wanted to say the prayers, and I encouraged the [Muslim] children*
> *too. I said 'it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands. You're*
> *speaking to the same God. If you're a Muslim, do this.' They were told*
> *[at the Mosque] if you're not a Christian then you don't pray at school.*

Jacquline, also at a church school, was equally happy to take part in the worship.

> *… I actually wanted to join in their praying, and do the whole thing.*
> *[In church schools] There's such a similarity to Islam… you feel human.*
> *Whatever they're saying and doing you agree with it. If you are*
> *teaching those children to be Christian, you are encouraging them and*
> *that is a good thing.*

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Another interpretation of this stance is that these students willingly engaged in the exotic 'other' game where they enjoyed being seen as the expert on religious or cultural issues and incorporating surface aspects of their culture into their teaching (Basit et al, 2007; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016). In doing this they were consciously complying with accepted white-majority norms, where racial difference is presented as an exotic add-on (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). However there was also evidence that VCP student teachers saw opportunities, on school placements, to educate all pupils, about their or another culture (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005; Basit et al, 2007). Aliya, a Turkish student who had never encountered another Turkish teacher during her education, believed that becoming a teacher would provide a necessary role model.

> *...we need to break that sort of barrier [of] mainly white teachers…*
> *Ultimately it's about ....raising [children] to be accepted and if we're*
> *not within the schools then, how are they going to learn?*

Sara statement echoed this:

> [BME teachers] *educate a generation about…things that maybe they're*
> *not taught…if they're taught about it by someone who's in that [ethnic]*
> *group, then they're more likely to listen, maybe have more of an understanding.*

Eve stated:

> *I thought when I came into teaching that it will be good for black girls*
> *to see me because that gives them a picture that black people can become*
> *teachers. I hope to empower black children. That idea wasn't at the*
> *fore-front when I began the course; it has developed.*

Eve's view was reflected in other VCP student teachers' expressions showing they had become more aware of their race and ethnicity while on the course and responded to

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racialised difficulties carefully and mainly by asserting positive images of themselves. They
are more keenly aware than MCP students that BME teachers are some of the most important
people in all children's lives because their special category means they know about and have
experience of other cultures and racisms (Maylor, 2009a).

5.2.3 Culturally visible

VCP students showed evidence that their strength of character, in the face of racialized
problems they encountered on the course, came from their cultural and religious values,
family support and that they were motivated and enriched by that heritage (Pole, 1999;
Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Jacquline asserted her racial and ethnic identity when
discussing the importance of white pupils accepting her:

> *even if they didn't accept me, I would try to make them…understand, and*
> *say, 'look, this is what it's about and this is what it is'.*

Jenny, on a mainly white PGCE course, echoed this sentiment, "I worked really hard to be
here… they have to take me on."   Jacquline added that as a Muslim, she was also conscious
of showing remorse for and the opposite side of Islamic terrorist acts to white people, in order
to show a positive aspect to her religion and culture,

> *…people are going to think that's what I think… you feel you are paying*
> *for mistakes that somebody else has made.*

Dealing with racial difficulties was shown in other stories.   Haifa, a Muslim, who wears an
abaya and hijab, suffered a direct insult which she called a "shocking incident". She was told
three times, that she looked like a terrorist by a man in the street. She did not challenge the

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perpetrator but believed this incident made her more aware herself as a raced being.

Following the incident she continued to wear her hijab and abaya because she sees it as a way

of expressing herself and being culturally visible.

> *I am thinking about who I am, so if a child came up to me with questions*
> *about my ethnicity I would try to respond to them openly and not hide it.*

Eve directly tackled a racist issue on school placement and like Haifa learnt some hard truths.

She reported a name-calling incident, between children, to a senior teacher.

> *when he heard it was a racial issue I saw his face tighten up. He didn't*
> *ask for many details and referred it back to the class teacher. A few days*
> *later I asked the children what had happened and they told me, nothing.*
> *I felt 'here we go again, no one is taking this seriously'. The teaching*
> *staff were all white.*

Eve's experience showed her the reality of hidden racisms that on the surface present an

image of equality and shared ideals (Gillborn, 2016). This chimes with research that shows

BME student teachers report that schools do not always take seriously racist comments by

pupils, despite clear policies being in place; and their reluctance to make formal complaints

for fear of not passing the placement (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005). In addition Elton-

Chalcraft et al (2017) note that schools are not politically or culturally neutral, but play a role

in the enculturation of pupils, by transmitting values, expectations and norms of behaviour.

Complacency by schools emerge, if there is a lack of reported incidents (Davies & Crozier,

2005) leading to hidden racism being embedded in its culture (Basit et al, 2006; Basit et al,

2007).

Some VCP students expressed their cultural visibility as openly navigating between two

cultures, behaving differently in each one and seeing both as forming both an appropriate

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teacher identity and being true to their home background. This mindset displayed an ability to read cultural codes and to gain from the capital of both (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Shaina, a Muslim, chose to wear western clothes outside of home and family events and calls herself an "oddball" because in her home area, most Muslim women wear a hijab and abaya. She is adamant, however, that she is serious about her religion: "it's the way you act…more than the way you dress". She believes in the importance of embracing Indian and British culture.

> *It's the best of both worlds actually. I think we* [BME students] *have more stories to tell about life. I can't say that they* (white, students) *don't have stories…but they do take* [life] *for granted. I constantly see the world from two points of view…You always have to question everything…you learn so much more.*

Jacquline added to this:

> *You're not just part of one culture…you're always two people.   I feel there is a big part of me that's Pakistani, and then a really, really big part that's English…You're in both.*

Earlier I noted that Saif, in the MCP category, similarly felt he straddled Indian and English cultures, but he did not offer exemplars from his life as Shaina and Jacquline did. Saif, in not elaborating on his cultural background, displayed how he had manoeuvred into and presented a white-majority outlook during his ITE course. Shaina and Jacquline spoke more volubly about their cultural background as they explained their feeling of being in two cultures.

VCP student teachers felt that their race and ethnicity were valuable to the children they taught. Jacquline's story expresses this and recognises that it is necessary to face challenges to her culture.

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> *Being a Muslim does affect how people see you…I am always trying*
> *to create a good image; trying to help people to understand…I spoke*
> *to a child the other day…and he goes, 'where do you come from?' I said*
> *…I was born here, but I grew up there. He said 'oh, Pakistan, is that*
> *where all the wars are going on?' I felt so gutted, I thought that's all you*
> *know, then I said, actually it's very beautiful.*

Her description of "very beautiful" is used to challenge and negate the child's negative stereotyping. She feels it is imperative to share positively about her culture as part of her growing teacher identity. Parvina too reported that she had inspired younger cousins to become teachers. She felt part of the problem of stereotyping was the small numbers of BME teachers in ITE and expressed an aspiration *"to break that"*. Aliya used the same verb "break", showing an awareness of the need to also re-model the status quo.

> *I want to break it because during my whole education... I actually haven't*
> *seen a lot of Turkish teachers. It makes me want to go forward and do that*
> *myself to show that… everyone's equal.*

The value of their race and ethnicity was shown in Zainab's declaration:

> *We know our identity...I know that I'm Asian and the majority of*
> *people are white…and there are differences.*

Being culturally visible for VCP student teachers did not appear to be a forced act (Givens et al, 1999). They offered examples from their family life and home culture without prompting from me as the researcher and showed that they were not ashamed to talk about their culture in university and at school because they saw it as part of themselves.

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5.2.4 Ambiguities observed of VCP student teachers

VCP student teachers' understanding of themselves as raced beings and 'naming race' in their lives (Warmington, 2008), sometimes gave way to something more forceful where some of them, put aside being overly contained and careful, to discuss more painful events. This may have occurred for a number of reasons. As the interviewer, my own BME status may have created a sense of acceptance which allowed them to articulate a deeper sense of disquiet about teacher education and share worries that they dared not speak about elsewhere (Maylor, 2009a). It may have been the safety of the research environment, made clear in the ethical arrangements, that there was no judgement, only a seeking of knowledge. It may have been a sense of security provided either by the focus group of like-minded people, or the individual interview, where it is only them and me. These factors all created a space where they felt they were given permission to lift their guard (King, 2004; Milner, 2007).   Less inhibited statements were shown by Maria who questioned whether:

> *I could really be strong enough to survive in a profession where*
> *I'm **always** (her emphasis) going to be in the minority…Black*
> *people are easily stereotyped.*

Her use of the term 'strong enough' and 'survive' suggests a fear that the system will stall her efforts. She also showed awareness that it is harder for BME people to succeed. Zainab was emphatic that she would not change her culture as part of becoming a teacher and showed a willingness to muster her courage to stay strong.

> *I think I'm strong enough, even if I was compared to other teachers,*
> * I wouldn't change…no. It's part of me.*

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Jenny's story began with denying the effects of her race and ethnicity, "I think you get knock-backs in confidence but I don't think it's got anything to do with colour", but later changed when she recounted an episode when it was very much to do with colour.

> *...in the school I just came from, my partner was white and I do*
> *feel I had to be...work a lot harder just to make sure you're on*
> *the same level. Just so that there's no excuse for them to see me*
> *in a certain way...On this occasion, I had said something that*
> *was wrong and my* [white] *partner had corrected me, I said,*
> *'oh, ok' and laughed about it, but the teacher told me to calm down.*
> *I wasn't excited; I wasn't shouting. All this time my partner's been*
> *getting angry and stressed. It made me feel odd and wonder why.*
> *It's my personality that sometimes, when I get excited about stuff, I*
> *do get loud, but in that situation I didn't feel that I was loud. I*
> *wasn't aggressive, I wasn't rude.   My smile stayed there quite a while*
> *just so that she didn't pick up on my real feelings because I didn't want*
> *any excuses for it to affect my placement. I just thought I want to get*
> *through this.*

Eve had a heightened sense of her BME status and admits to being worried about how she will be regarded in ITE due to incidents she had already experienced at university and in school (Givens et al, 1999). In the VCP mode of being positive and restrained about race and ethnicity, she states: "I will change because I play safe by keeping myself to myself … I need to know how to integrate." However, later in the interview, she became more open:

> *Life can be unfair for a Black person in this country. If you're a minority*
> *you are struggling to compete. No matter how good you are you are at a*
> *disadvantage or work extra hard to provide yourself against a White*
> *counterpart. You have to deal with stereotypes that you are aggressive*
> *or ignorant. I have worked so hard so that people do not attribute these*
> *stereotypes to me, but they still do simply because of my colour.*

These examples show that while the VCP student teachers are positive about their race and ethnicity at university and in school, they do show awareness of the difficulties and pain that they have suffered as BME people and of structural inequalities in ITE (Givens et al, 1999).

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5.2.5 Conclusion to the VCP group of student teachers

VCP student teachers showed the characteristics of being silent, culturally visible and showing an easy but considered compliance and like MCP students go along with the system to achieve success. They are buoyed by family expectations, a sense of their own merit and see their position as important for the younger BME generation. They acknowledge direct and indirect racisms at university and on school placement and like MCP students they choose to ignore or side-step them for the sake of their futures, but because they embrace their race, ethnicity, religion and culture more, they calculate when and how to insert these into their development as teachers. Positivity is their watchword. They are succeeding while maintaining pride in and understanding of their race and ethnicity.

5.3 Stagnant Cultural Position

The group of student teachers in a Stagnant Cultural Position (SCP) are: Taz, Nadia, Farzana, Osa, Connie, Hanima, Ruby and Deena. I have called their cultural position 'stagnant' because as stated in my Typology they,

> *Continue on their ITE course but demonstrate bemusement and some*
> *ambivalence towards the requirements and demands made by university*
> *and school tutors. They are disorientated in the ITE environment,*
> *due to personal problems and unsure about how to fulfil the*
> *requirements. They do not fit easily into the student teacher position*
> *and are underconfident. They value their cultural and religious heritage.*
> .

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I suggest that this group are more vocal in describing their perceptions and unhappiness of racial problems.   Some of them however were not voluble and offered short narratives. This presented me with challenges of being sensitive and careful when interpreting their stories. While I have described them as 'struggling' they continue on their ITE course but they demonstrate ambivalence towards the requirements and demands made by university and school tutors.   Their characteristics are described as: 'silent and culturally-invisible', 'disorientated' and 'compliant with reservations'. These will now be discussed.

5.3.1 Silent and culturally-invisible

Some students in the SCP category showed a lack of willingness or inability to talk about themselves as raced beings (Warmington, 2008).   This provided a different understanding of my research as providing a platform for "naming one's own reality" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p.57) with the idea of "uncovering and working through tense entanglements" to produce clearer knowledge about the effects of race which can also be construed as naming difficulties (Gunaratnam, 2003, p.22). Sometimes the views of the SCP students had to be inferred because their stories were either very short, lacked depth or avoided the focus of the research altogether, as in the case of Ruby.   Ruby performed what I can only describe as a sequence of silence and invisibility. She began by questioning the motives and procedure of the research.

> *Are you just… you're basically focusing on one area? You're sort of doing your research here? I thought you wanted us to do additional research so that is what made me totally confused. I didn't know that I was going to be recorded.*

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She then moved onto ensuring anonymity:

> *Is it Diane your name? So you'll be using what we've given, the name*
> *we've assumed? And the consent form, how would you want that*
> *signing then? Do you want us to sign with our real names or…?*
> *Our name won't be used?*

Finally she decided to withdraw with the promise to return later in the day to do an individual interview, although she did not turn up.

> *I don't want to be rude, but is it ok if I don't …because I've got enough*
> *on my mind and that sort of thing. I want to give it my full commitment*
> *but I don't think I will be able to…so I'm really sorry, but it's like…*
> *you're youngsters, I'm…and you know, that sort of a thing. Is that ok?*

Ruby's response is hard to interpret because of her range of reasons and avoidance devices. She presents herself as surprised by events; and hints that she is too old and has other preoccupations. Barbour and Schostak (2011) theorise that trust between researcher and participant is crucial in enabling information to be shared. Ruby may have been suspicious of the research motives or sensed negative outcomes that would impact on her progress on the course and was therefore unable to give her trust. Her obfuscations produced a vacuum of silence and invisibility. She does not tell her story, we only have her initial enquiring and withdrawal comments, but can possibly infer that there may be elements of denial and avoidance about her race and ethnicity (King 2004; Allard & Santoro, 2006), or other factors about being a student or a personal situation too painful to relate (Gunaratnam, 2003). Ruby's story is terse and difficult because she was in the focus group for about 10 minutes.

Terseness was also a distinguishing feature of Farzana's story in which she appeared to be struggling with ITE requirements. She displayed characteristics of silence and invisibility

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which is shown in her anxious, brief statements. During the focus group she spoke very little, offering responses only when asked direct questions. In discussing school placements she spoke of fitting in and the necessity of getting on with the teacher. "You can't just go in and do the things you want to do. You just try and be [a] part of it all."   Her view is compounded by revealing how she operated at university:

> [When I started the course] *I saw Z... was sitting at the back and I didn't*
> *want to go to the front…I wanted to stay unnoticed. We usually go and sit*
> *at the back but when we're in groups, we go with whoever's there.*

The final clause, suggesting a casual integration with white peers, did not belie her invisibilising strategies shown in the telling adverb "unnoticed".   Farzana appeared to be suspended in a fear of being swallowed by the hegemony of white ITE (Milner, 2007; Roberts, 2007, Gillborn, 2016). Her brief story tells of getting on with the class teacher, producing planning and carrying out the general class teacher duties, with which she struggles.   Her attention is focused on surviving on the course rather than being concerned about her race and ethnicity.

> *The key thing is how comfortable I am in that situation. Personally I have*
> *some issues that I need to deal with, but they're not about ethnicity.*
> [Race and ethnicity issues] *are just normal social skills, isn't* (sic) *it?*

Osa, too, was caught up survival mode and struggled to express her race and ethnicity on the course.   At university she noted how the other students created exclusive racial groups themselves which had the effect of reducing integration and embracing diversity.

> *On the course I have noticed how the students group together. We have a*
> *White group, two Asian groups and then the group I'm in, is more mixed.*
> *Now we're in these groups we don't mix and don't change our thinking.*

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Hanima also demonstrated elements of survival mode because, as a white Muslim, she perceived that she did not fit the stereotypical assumptions about traditional Muslims (Allard & Santoro, 2006). Although she wears a hijab and abaya, she feels she is open-minded and happy to mix with all cultures. This made it hard for her to settle into the course where she observed that other Muslim students tended to stick together. She said:

> *When I started at this university I felt I shared nothing with other*
> *Muslim students, even though they dress like me. I still feel like that.*
> *I have nothing in common with them. I have more friends who are*
> *white or black, but never feel fully accepted by them either.*

For Deena, while she suffered problems with the course, her silence and cultural invisibility also came from family members who believe the BME people need to aspire to higher professions than teaching. She said:

> *...my grandparents think teaching is not good enough. They asked me*
> *why I am not training to be doctor or to go into law….For me being a*
> *teacher, not a teaching assistant, means I have a degree and*
> *qualified status.*

The picture of survival is an apt one for this group of students who found difficulty in expressing how racialised difficulties impeded them. In some SCP student teachers' stories simplicity and naivety were examples of their silence and invisibility.   Nadia attempted to explain her motives about becoming a teacher and to introduce a personal philosophy, but it was limited:

> *I wanted to be a teacher since I was a little kid. I used to always play*
> *teacher games, mums and dads. Also in my Primary school - it was a*
> *multicultural school…but it's just [that] I felt left out because I was*
> *Turkish. I couldn't speak English.*

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Taz, who was less articulate than the other two student teachers in her focus group, was very aware of the poverty of her immigrant family. Her account, while heart-felt, demonstrates a surface understanding about raced position in ITE:

> …[my Mum] *had me when she was 20…She always wanted us to study. She always wanted us to have the opportunities that she never had. My family, particularly my parents pushed me to go into further education and do something to increase my prospects…If it wasn't for them I probably would have not had the strength to get into it... then I thought, ok I'll give it my best and here I am.*

Both Nadia and Taz came from families who suffered. Their parents were first-generation immigrants from Turkey and India, respectively and Nadia's story too did not frame a racialized understanding of herself as a student teacher.   This form of silence and invisibility was also apparent in part of Connie's story. While she recounted suffering from racism more than Taz and Nadia, she too condensed her philosophy of education to a simple and neutralised level:

> *A teacher has impact on children. You are playing a big role. Society recognises that.*

Osa however, was able to articulate at a slightly deeper and considered level, providing an explanation for her silence:

> *I am very quiet, especially when I am in a learning situation, like school or university because that is what I have learnt growing up, so I suppose I can come across as this quiet, meek person. But when I do speak I can be very opinionated because I'm trying to express what I think, but that might stereotype me as an angry black woman and I don't want to be stereotyped like that.*

She acknowledges that she follows her African cultural ideas which promote silence and lack of challenge to those in authority. She deduced that it buys her acceptance in a majority

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white setting. When she experienced a difficult school placement with a white teacher she closed down even more:

> [The teacher] *always had more negative things to say about my teaching,*
> *even though I had done everything she had asked, than to my fellow*
> *student who was white…I am very much on my guard now*.

Osa realised that it was better to keep quiet as a form of defence. These constructions of silence from these SCP student teachers are part of counter story against a majoritarian narrative they fear will over-whelm them with its requirements they find difficult to comprehend (Ladson-Billings, 2016).   As the researcher, I aimed to recognise and re-present their sometimes pared offerings by including as much as possible from their perspective, including difficult, almost non- stories, such as Ruby's and Farzana's stories.

5.3.2 Disorientated

There is evidence in the stories of SCP student teachers that they were bemused and disorientated when they suffered racism (Givens et al, 1999). While some were able to express and give details about these incidents in the focus groups and individual interviews, they all demonstrated difficulty in elaborating about the nature of them as resulting from structural racism (Pole, 1999). Some, such as Farzana, Connie and Deena showed that they did not assert themselves above these incidents such as reporting or discussing them with tutors (Davies & Crozier, 2005). Farzana, who worked as a teaching assistant before beginning the PGCE course, spoke of pre-course difficulties which showed her awareness of racialised difficulties. At the school she was the only Asian staff member and "felt a bit uncomfortable".

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> *But after two to three months a new member of staff came and she was the*
> *same age as me and the same ethnicity, so I never felt it [isolation] for*
> *too long.*

Farzana displayed agitation but an inability to articulate detail. Connie recounted experiences

of direct racism, both growing up and in her job prior to beginning her ITE course. While she

provided some detail, she did not analyse or extend her understanding of the racism she

sufferered; shown in her final sentence.

> *In my primary school I was called 'monkey' and 'black girl'. Even at*
> *work, I used to work in telephone sales, another worker, a white man, said,*
> *'oh you can use the phones to ring your family abroad can you'? I said,*
> *'but all my family's here!' There were many other Caribbean people working*
> *there, but no one supported me which surprised me. It was if it was*
> *accepted that people could say something like that. And in a way society*
> *enables those type of things to be said.*

This lack of developed articulation about structural racism, was also the case with Deena, a

Pakistani student teacher, who lived with her family in a white town. She said:

> *…it frightens me. I was bullied a lot in Primary school because I was the*
> *only one in my school who was not white. I felt like an outcast…It*
> *has made me much less confident in how I interact with people.*

This statement did not elaborate on the strong noun "outcast" and she only stated that she is

"less confident", rather than showing an understanding of racist stereotyping in a white

environment. To some extent Nadia did recognise racism in society and anticipated problems

by choosing her university accordingly:

> *I wouldn't have come here* (the institution in which she is training) *if it*
> *hadn't been multi-cultural…I think everyone should have an opportunity*
> *to become a teacher, not to be discriminated because of your race*
> *or who you are…your background.*

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But again Nadia did not elaborate and articulated the issue as a problem that she needed to address, rather than discussing it as structural racism (Givens et al, 1999).

Connie experienced hurt from the direct racist comments which she was able to see as endemic in society, but not elaborate on; while Nadia and Deena, perhaps aware of this too, avoided attending a white university and white troublemakers at school respectively, to pre-empt racialised difficulties. These incidents showed that these students' collision with racism did not achieve what Warmington (2008) conceives as, "shifts in learning [being] enabled by pointing to race as a problem space" (p.148).   Connie, Nadia and Deena show disorientation about being raced beings because they show a limited understanding about racism.

Conversely disorientation in some SCP student teachers, was shown in the way they voiced their hurts and shock at racism in their stories, more than MCP and VCP student teachers. On school placement they expressed disquiet about not being accepted as valid members of staff by adults and pupils, and consequently being treated as professionally inadequate (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Osa expressed her feeling of unworthiness due to an unpleasant school placement:

> *In the first placement school, the teaching staff were mixed, but in the second one the staff were all white and the class teacher I had, always had more negative things to say about my teaching, even though I had done everything she had asked, than to my fellow student who was white.*

Later in her story there is again evidence of learning from facing up to and examining the existence and nature of race (Warmington, 2008) when she states:

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> *Being in school has challenged me to think differently. I am very much on*
> *my guard now because I had never experienced teachers acting in a negative*
> *way like that towards me. I am worried about going into go to another*
> *placement where the teachers just don't take to me.*

Taz expressed a kind of racial battle fatigue causing her to doubt her worthiness (Rollock,

2011):

> *…if I felt like I wasn't happy in that place, I wouldn't stick it out. If*
> *they're not going to accept you they're never going to accept you.*
> *Why do you have to keep fighting? I always try to give a good*
> *impression, but I wouldn't keep doing it if I'm still not getting accepted*
> *for who I am. Why would I make the effort then?*

Taz, like Osa, felt "apprehensive" about placements and believed that she needed a "safe

context." in order to achieve emotional well-being and Hanima made a negative conclusion

about her future, "after placements I'm questioning myself asking 'am I fit to be a teacher?

…Am I ready?". Such comments display their on-going battle with racial microaggressions.

The role of microaggressions, acknowledged as subtle, pervasive acts, including ignoring and

overlooking BME peoples or making casual and lazy racist comments, are part of the

disorientation experienced by SCP students (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Allard & Santoro,

2006; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). Microaggressions emerge from a colour-blind, purportedly

meritocratic system, such as in ITE where embedded, yet hidden racisms beset the personal

and professional lives of BME student teachers (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Solórzano, 1997).

This was shown in Osa's loss of faith in a white-majority society and ITE system:

> *My Mum experienced institutional racism and is very aware that you*
> *have to be careful how you act as a Black person because of the way*
> *you will be treated differently.*

Connie displayed a collapse of her ideals. Despite being born in London, where she has lived

all of her life, she suffered racism from early childhood, as shown in her earlier comments on

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receiving racist verbal abuse at school and at work.   Now she is in ITE, her expectations of

being regarded more highly, are still low:

> *It saddens me because I am not represented in the classroom and as*
> *society becomes more diverse, we are not recognised in the profession.*

.

Microaggressions are the result of seeing BME people as less worthy, incapable and even

suspect, causing them to be disorientated about themselves and their capabilites (Solórzano,

1997; Rollock, 2011).

5.3.3 Compliant with reservations

As stated earlier SCP student teachers continue on their ITE course, despite displaying issues

of struggling, being culturally-invisible and disorientated.   Their ambivalence towards the

requirements of ITE means that they comply with but have reservations. This is unlike MCP

and VCP student teachers who believe in and work hard to fulfil the requirements.   SCP

student teachers' stories suggest that they are aware of navigating racial obstacles, which take

persistence and resilience (Roberts, 2007). At university they comply as necessary to help

their white peers feel at ease with them and to try demolish racial stereotyping. Connie said:

> *On the course I am one of a handful of black people and I did wonder*
> *how the others would respond to me… I make a point of joining a*
> *group and taking part by talking and joining in. If you're quiet and*
> *black you can get stereotyped as not very clever or just sticking within*
> *your cultural understanding.*

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Her acute awareness of being racially stereotyped as a child and as an adult, propelled her to take this step and do what it would take to be accepted.   However Hanima found her compliance was tested because she felt isolated and shunned by her peers at university. She was unhappy at how they had formed into cultural groups, none of which she felt she shared commonalities or found acceptance. She said:

> *I don't feel comfortable that I don't fit anywhere. I feel like an outsider.*
> *It's about your values…I don't think I feel valued by some other*
> *students so I have stopped saying things.*

Other SCP student teachers showed signs of complying with reservations due to feelings of discomfort.   Osa narrated a difficult compliance where the class teacher actually showed her displeasure:

> *I could see what the teacher thought by the expression on her face. At one*
> *point she went straight to the head teacher to complain about me and requesting*
> *that the head monitored me instead.*

Osa acted in a "quiet, meek" manner at first but then told the class teacher her views when she felt relations had deteriorated.   She felt unable to comply wholeheartedly and believed the placement was compromised by the teacher's actions:

> *Before my school experience I'd never been treated in that negative way*
> *which I believe was because I am black. It has made me think I will*
> *choose carefully where I work when I qualify.*

Taz's story shows she is adamant that on placement she will comply but in a way that she deems suitable and does not compromise her Muslim faith.   She maintains, "I've been pretty consistent in all placements" and while she dresses and amends her culture to fit in, she worries about being "accepted" and knowing "her role" in a white school.   She draws her

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own conclusions which show that compliance, for her, is not about doing so in a blind manner, but learning from the experience for the future:

> *In a full time job you'd make the right choice for you and once you're in*
> *there, you'd be accepted in…You'd make the choice that's right for you.*

Even with Nadia and Farzana, whose brief stories sometimes made it hard to draw out their perceptions, there were hints at compliance with reservations. Nadia reported avoiding applying to a white university and had only experienced placement in a multicultural school, by the time of the research:

> *There were practitioners…there's Indian, there's a Muslim lady and the*
> *main room leader she's English, a British woman, but they're fine with*
> *me, they accept me for who I am. The only thing they've ever asked me*
> *is, 'how do you say welcome in Turkish' and made me feel…like, they've*
> *introduced me to the children.*

Nadia stressed acceptance by the staff was important, suggesting she would find it difficult if they did not show this. She also noted that because they asked her to introduce some Turkish in the classroom, her first language, this helped her to comply; but without this environment she may have encountered more difficulty in complying.   Farzana's story included minimal reference to racialised difficulties, preferring instead to focus on her relationship with the class teacher:

> *What would affect my performance in teaching, is if I did not get on well*
> *the class teacher and if I know that teacher's looking for things where she*
> *can just criticise or whatever…The key thing is how comfortable I am in*
> *that situation.*

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Farzana's reservations are tied to her worries that she will struggle to fulfil her duties, such as planning, assessment and behaviour management. Her full compliance is reserved because of her expectation of being "criticised" and not trusting the teacher to provide an environment where she is comfortable (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005; Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). These SCP student teachers' experiences chime with studies revealing that BME trainees feel victims of racism in ITE, which can range from stereotyping and inappropriate expectations of being the cultural, ethnic or religious expert (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016) to feeling excluded by peers or being sent to white schools where they feel uncomfortable and unsure (Davies & Crozier, 2005; Basit et al, 2007; Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). Their vulnerability is palpably shown and affects their behaviour causing them to adopt coping tactics of doing enough to get by (Jones, Maguire & Watson, 1997).

5.3.4 Ambiguities observed of SCP student teachers

At times it was difficult to reconcile some aspects of the stories of these SCP student teachers with the thrust of this research, which is about giving a platform to marginalised and subjugated voices (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). For example I was surprised when Osa, who is of Black-African heritage, said on her fellow student teachers, "I've never had a friend who's worn a hijab, so it was hard to sit down with them". This comment, with the "hard to sit down with" clause, appeared to be racist in nature and sounded quite shocking. Additionally she admitted that at university she is entrenched in a chosen cultural group. She said:

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> *We have a white group, two Asian groups and then the group I'm in is*
> *more mixed. Now we're in these groups we don't mix and don't change*
> *our thinking.*

These comments did not tally with her distress about an extremely difficult placement which

she believed was racist-orientated. In it she said:

> *the class teacher I had, always had more negative things to say about*
> *my teaching, even though I had done everything she had asked, than*
> *to my fellow student who was white. When I was teaching I could*
> *see what the teacher thought by the expression on her face. At one*
> *point she went straight to the head teacher to complain about me…*

Hanima, a Muslim, also revealed what could be construed as racist attitudes:

> *On Placement the children thought I was of an Arab background then*
> *Pakistani. I felt the Arab thing was a compliment but felt offended that*
> *they thought I was Pakistani.*

This was a surprising comment because many of her university peers were from Pakistani

backgrounds, and in wearing a hijab and abaya, she shared their cultural dress form, but her

further explanation revealed that she struggled to find affinity with others. In addition despite

her seemingly racist tendencies, she still keenly felt any racism directed towards her. She

said:

> *I don't always think about being Muslim and a teacher so I am*
> *surprised that other people stereotype me. If I went for a job I think*
> *a white candidate will be preferred over me because they* [would]
> *see that I'm wearing a traditional dress.*

As a black researcher I found Osa's and Hanima's comments surprising and a little

disturbing. However they showed that BME people are real and contradictory and can

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harbour racist thinking and actions as much as white people (Islam, 2000).   Johnson-Bailey

(1999) speaks of the "added forces", those social factors which for black people intersect to

show that they/we are complex because we embody historical colonial and contemporary

factors that have shaped us and which promote hierarchical race structures in which we are

all in danger of subscribing (Sólorzano & Yosso, 2016). These added forces, shown in Osa's

and Hanima's comments, made me feel uncomfortable because I am reminded that racist

thinking exists within black people too.   Being self-critical and guarding against over-naivety

and assumed commonalities is imperative for BME researchers working with BME

participants alongside continuing to challenge the insider-outsider space as more fluid than

binary (Maylor, 2009a; Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

In the case of Taz, the ambiguity and unexpectedness that I perceived in her was her apparent

compliance with ITE requirements but this only went up to a point:

> *…but if I hadn't* [the experience of a church school] *maybe my thinking*
> *would be different…If I heard things or if a school was very anti…*
> *I don't know…I would be a little bit more apprehensive…*

From this point she planned that she would not suffer further racial indignities. She also

expressed deeper beliefs, stating that her compliance depended very much on the acceptance

proffered by the school.   However she appeared to thrive in a white church school on

placement:

> *…it was fine. The teacher said to me, 'You don't need to join in with*
> *prayers if you don't want to'. It was a really good school. I loved it.*

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Taz was compliant with the reservation that she could only take a certain amount of racism. Up to that point she would go along with it.

5.3.5 Conclusion to the SCP group of student teachers

One of the main challenges in analysing the stories of SCP students teachers was being able to read and interpret some of their stories, which were either short in length or not including a variety of examples which limited my conception of them. This placed a burden on my re-presentation because my efforts to give them a fair discussion were hampered by a lack of expression on their part which recalls the notion of some pain being too difficult to relate (Gunaratnam, 2003; Phoenix, 2004). Even though I edited all the stories in the study to enable a focus on key points and eliminate repetitions, the stories of Nadia, with its approximate 500 words and Farzana, with approximately 700 words, presented difficulties. They did not offer much information and examples about their experiences or views, so I struggled to gain a sense of their values. There was also Ruby's story, which was one of absence and from which I could only describe her actions in relation to the aims of the study. Nadia, Farzana and Ruby's stories pointed to an inability to articulate difficulty, pain and bemusement. It is valuable to note that while they may not have been able to express themselves as part of this study, the act of engaging in a counter-story activity provides an understanding of its power to re-balance majoritarian stories (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). Stories are owned by the tellers so this study delicately unpicks and re-presents these BME voices that are affected by history, culture, society and ITE that have systematically impacted on them (Delgado, 1989). Critical Race Theory identifies that working with counter-story is problematic and not a straightforward process because it is

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imbued with a legacy of racial aggressions, experienced by the student teacher, their families

and communities (Zamudio et al, 2011; Ladson-Billings in Lynn & Dixson, 2013).

5.4 Discerned Cultural Position

The group of student teachers, described in my 'Indicator' as demonstrating a Discerned

Cultural Position (DCP), show characteristics of 'struggling' with ITE requirements but are

'culturally-visible'.   They are: Mona, Suzanne, Ayanna, Layla, Toni and Michelle. I have

called their cultural position 'discerned' because as stated in Table 4.2 they have:

> *Strong, personal beliefs about themselves as racial and cultural beings*
> *and racial inequity. They speak emotionally about negative racist*
> *experiences and issues which have affected them, either before or during*
> *the course. There are very aware of negotiating around racial and*
> *cultural obstacles on their ITE course, which affect them socially, mentally*
> *or emotionally. They assess and discern the impact of their teacher*
> *education on their cultural identity.*

DCP student teachers, like the other student teachers, wanted to succeed on their course and

become teachers. However they projected a sense that they were waiting and suspending

their views and judgements as they assessed the impact of their teacher education on their

cultural identity (Basit et al, 2007). They openly shared experiences of personal racism,

encountered before or during the course, and their stories were often underpinned by personal

beliefs and ideologies about race and ethnicity (Jones, Maguire & Watson, 1997). They

spoke of managing on their course but also showed signs of struggling to accept ITE which

they understood to be white-dominated and therefore more oppressive to BME students.

Some of their stories indicated they may not choose not to teach after they qualify because of

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the many racial obstacles they forsee in the profession (Haque, 2017; Haque & Elliott, 2017).

Most of them wanted to succeed but did not want their race and culture to to be erased in the

process, suggesting resistance against this (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001).   The

characteristics I have identified in them are: silent and discomforted; cultural visibility with

strong, personal ideologies and resisting compliance to the requirements of ITE.

5.4.1 Silent and discomforted

The quality of the DCP student teachers' silence related to their acute perception and

response to racialised difficulties (Basit et al, 2007). They were aware of racism as pervasive

and destructive and, unlike MCP and VCP student teachers, did not see it as unintended or

unwitting. They presented a heightened racial awareness that made them more likely to

recognise personal and structural racisms (Vaught & Castagno, 2008). While they openly

shared examples during the research process, they stated that they were rendered silent and

are discomforted within ITE as a result of their understandings (Wilkins & Lall, 2011).

One of the ways they were rendered silent and discomforted was their shock and fear about

the racism in society that they had experienced. Toni, a Nigerian student, whose family left

an ethnically-diverse city to live in a white town, was warned of the consequences for BME

peoples.

> *I remember one of my cousins going, "I can't imagine being friends with*
> *a white person. I was like, 'what do you mean?' and she said, 'the thing*
> *is, we're just really different'.*

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Alongside a keen awareness of racism in life, for some, their discomfort was also ironically intensified by their families. This added to their complexity of obstacles to negotiate in their teacher education (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). While there were many examples where family support was cited as a motivation and support in the participants' stories, some DCP student teachers gave instances of negative family pressures. This intensified their silence by making it more difficult for them to manage issues. Toni said:

> *My parents pushed education. My dad was adamant that I was going to learn and be the top of my class. Going to university wasn't a choice; it was going to happen. They wanted me to be a lawyer and they didn't want me to become a teacher, at all. My mum doesn't really respect teachers at all, unless they own their own school or they're a headmistress. Then they've got a title; they've got status. It took me a while to persuade her. I had to show her that I was serious because they were like, 'you're going to be a Masters in Law, aren't you; you're going to be a university lecturer'?*

For Michelle, there was less hostility, but still a lack of appreciation of higher education. She told of the discrepancy between her and her mother's views of education:

> *… no one went to university in my family, although they knew that school was really, important. My Mum would say, 'you need to [learn to] count…She meant that in other words you didn't have a brain if you lost money because you couldn't count…But when I said I want to go to university, she thought I was being lazy… I've been controversial since the age of five so I just went [to university] to be different.*

These types of family pressures dismissed Primary teaching as either, a waste of time and non-synchronous with the working-class experience or for the aspiring middle-class family of Toni, as near the bottom of a professional hierarchy, which would provide insufficient social and economic capital for success in a white world. For Toni, needing to "persuade" her

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parents raised her level of doubt and added a destabilising element to her position (Allard & Santoro, 2006).

At university silence and feelings of discomfort was also shown in Mona's very painful account of a friend, the only black male on her PGCE course, who she believed suffered debilitating racism.

> *He went on a placement and his class teacher was racist, end of. She didn't want him alone with the kids; there were all kinds of issues going on and it really broke him down. The uni really wanted him to continue and try another placement but he was so hurt by it that he's left now; and you know, he won't come back and he won't even think about approaching teaching again. He wasn't someone either that forced his culture upon anyone, you know. He was just exactly the same as everybody else, but the teacher obviously had some issues.*

This incident calls ITE in England into question and challenges its deficiency in supporting BME student teachers (Davies & Crozier, 2005; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). Mona's response was one of disbelief that Primary ITE, which lacks black males, can allow this kind of withdrawal (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016).   While she identified the school as the instigator, she also felt the university tutors did not notice or engage quickly enough to contain the situation (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004).

Ayanna forsaw such problems in ITE and recognised that her journey would not be easy. In her story she used words such as "the system", "compromise" and "battle" denoting a strong awareness of racism and its effect on her (Hoodless, 2004). A lack of support and culture of inclusion and understanding in ITE reflects the continuing inadequate success rates of BME student teachers (Basit et al, 2006; Hick et al, 2011; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016).   Ayanna commented:

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> *When I started the* [ITE] *course, I was very enthusiastic about being a*
> *teacher, but being within the system, I'm thinking it's either going to*
> *be a compromise on my part or a battle which I'm realising is going to*
> *happen.*

Michelle's account of a white lecturer's jokey refusal to take race seriously compounded her

disquiet that white tutors do not understand the journey of BME students (Jessop & Williams,

2009). She said:

> *When that lecturer started joking about equality and diversity he was*
> *just playing the 'race' card because I was in his class again the other*
> *day when he brought it up… I was going to say that maybe they've*
> *lost the point because they've never had the thing* [racism] *against them.*

On placement these DCP student teachers also narrated indignities. Toni's description is

graphic:

> *On my placement my teacher was talking about polar bears and she*
> *was like, "underneath their fur their skin isn't black, it's white like ours."*
> *And I'm there like…(mock shock on her face and laughs) and the*
> *kids were like looking at me and you can see that even though they're*
> *only Y2s, they knew something's not right, but they're wondering*
> *whether to correct her.*

Layla's summary, after a problematic placement in which she felt she was never accepted,

said:

> *It's like, this industry's hard. Because in the university they talk about*
> *diversity and inclusive practice and then I'm sent to a place where I'm*
> *excluded completely. I mean you don't have to like me, that's fine, but at least*
> *don't show it to me. Be professional.*

These examples of being silent and discomforted led to critical reflections about themselves

and their status. It affected their perception of themselves and abilities to craft their personal

and professional identities (Jessop & Williams, 2009; Maylor, 2010).

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5.4.2 Culturally-visible with strong personal ideologies

DCP student teachers were strikingly open in the way they shared their personal influences and ideologies. Their attitudes demonstrated perceptive reflections and conclusions drawn from their observations and experiences of racism that led them in some way to never fully accepting the demands of ITE. They displayed a worldly-wise, somewhat rebellious and sometimes world-weary outlook as they negotiated ITE and projected a non-uniform way of seeing the course and fitting in (Connor et al, 2004; Bhopal, 2015). They had personal ideologies which both shaped and emerged from their raced identities and contributed to making them culturally-visible (Roberts, 2013).   This reflects the idea of counter-storytelling as providing 'contextual contours' involving considered viewpoints and information about the individual's family and cultural background (Ladson-Billings, 2004; Ladson-Billings in Lynn & Dixson, 2013).

A significant way their personal ideologies and cultural visibility was demonstrated surrounded their race and ethnicity.   This was clearly expressed by Toni:

> *I remember when I was little my Dad drilled it into me, 'you're not*
> *Black, you're African, you're Nigerian, you're Yoruba'.*

Layla, a Somali-Muslim who wears an abaya and hijab, told of resisting pressure to from her placement school about her clothes:

> *the first time I got to the school they said, 'um,is this how you're*
> *going to be dressing?' and I said, 'this is how I've been dressing all*
> *my life and I don't intend to change it.' Then I heard the main*
> *teacher 'I wonder how she's going to be moving around'. I was*
> *standing there and she knew I could hear her. I wanted to say, 'just*
> *because I have a scarf on it doesn't mean I can't hear you.' I played*

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> *football just to show them just because I'm wearing this, it's not*
> *going to stop me doing anything. [It] represents who I am.*

Michelle, a white, French student teacher, who had been in the UK for a few years before the research took place, also faced issues relating to her nationality. She had suffered ridicule and comment about her accent and grammar from children in her placement school (Maylor, 2009a). Her ideology also emerged from events when growing up:

> *I'm weird, because I feel I should have been black really because I feel*
> *black in a political sense...my friends were like a lot of different*
> *people: a lot of African people, Muslim people, many from North Africa.*
> *The only racism we ever saw was from White people. The first time I*
> *knew racism was when I was nine [years-old]. A friend I had, who was*
> *from Mali; they took her away in a police car to send her back. So you*
> *see that and think, yeh, I don't like white people. I'm always up for the*
> *minority.*

Another way DCP student teachers' cultural visibility and personal ideologies were shown was in their conception of racism in society (Roberts, 2013). Their stories showed they engaged in critical questioning and thinking as they journeyed through ITE exposed myths of personal inadequacy and understood the structural nature of oppression (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Gillborn et al, 2016). Mona understood that BME student teachers encountered pervasive hidden racism which rendered them powerless and inert.

> *Some people think [you have a place on the course] not necessarily*
> *because of your ability, but because you tick a box. But you can't take that*
> *on board, you have to know you're here because you deserve it. It's*
> (race and racism) *seen as such a controversial thing* [on our course].
> *No-one wants to talk about it, no-one wants to discuss it,* [and] *to be*
> *honest, when you're in a situation where you are a minority, you just*
> *kind of accept certain factors and you don't want to challenge that*
> *because that could be the person marking your paper.*

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Suzanne concurred:

> *England is a white country, so we* [BME peoples] *have to fit in whatever way we can…It's a battle you know.   I'm not clueless; I'm going in there with my eyes open.*

Suzanne's ideology was unapologetic as seen in the 'battle' metaphor, used to signify her conception of the difficulty of getting through ITE. It reflects studies which highlight the difficulties BME teachers face (Powney et al, 2003; Haque & Elliott, 2017).   This metaphor extends from an earlier statement in her story, "My struggles have shaped me".   These struggles also involved her rejection from a PGCE course and being offered an undergraduate course instead, despite having a degree.   It is clear that she was critically conscious of where she stood in her teacher education, reflecting Freire's (1970) call to oppressed peoples, that they should 'know themselves' as part of a conscientization process (Freire, 1970).   She understood how racism had defined and subjugated her (Hall, 1996b) but her "I'm not clueless" showed a resolve about continuing on the course despite the problems she had encountered.

DCP student teachers' had also developed personal ideologies about structural inequalities in ITE which made them more rebellious and less accepting than the student teachers in other groups.   Their vision for teaching saw the inadequacy of white-centric curricula and the side-lining of race and ethnicity and strove for a more moral standpoint in their teacher education (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Hick et al, 2011).   Ayanna, a mature African-Caribbean student teacher, had pursued teaching as a way to redress the imbalances she saw in society.

> *I've had experiences with my own children at their school which just…*
> *it wasn't a support. It was as if it was a constant battle all the time*
> *because they [teachers] didn't understand, and it's like…I don't know*
> *if it's the race thing…there was just something… I thought, you know*

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> *what, I need to get into a school so I can actually understand and see*
> *what's going on.*

Her conviction and consciousness of her beliefs were realised on placement:

> *There was a* [black] *boy in the school … and he always knew the*
> *answers … but I found the teacher, without realising, was trying*
> *to stop him so that obviously other children got a chance, but then*
> *by the end of my placement I realised he'd stopped putting up his*
> *hand, so I was thinking maybe that pulls him back … maybe*
> *that's why they're failing.*

Layla echoed this view:

> *Most teachers are white and the black youth cannot relate to them. So maybe*
> *if we do have more black teachers, then there would be more improvement*
> *in our children.*

Suzanne too showed understanding of the need for more BME teachers.

> *We have to be ready and understand that there are going to be barriers,*
> *as a student teacher, for those from a particular background…but if it*
> *means that you're going to make a difference to your child, your sister's*
> *child or it is, then it is worth it.*

In addition to these views Layla admitted that she gained a lot from her white teachers as a child, but as a student teacher had suffered hostility towards her Muslim values, such as her prayer needs and clothes, from white staff on placement. Suzanne and Ayanna also had experience of inequity in their own children's schooling. Ayanna did not start her course until she was in her early 40s because the idea of becoming a teacher was "way above our expectations".   Ayanna's, Layla's and Suzanne's personal ideologies were sharpened by their conviction that structural racism restricts and embattles BME student teachers who, they believe, are the ones who can actually promote equity (Hick et al, 2011).

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Acting as role models to children and young people, was also part of the personal ideologies of DCP student teachers (Bhopal, 2015).   Toni described it "as an opportunity to give back; to kind of support and uplift other students".   While her story showed that she was acutely aware of her race and ethnicity in white settings, she recognised the role-models from her own schooling which paved the way for her:

> *I've had black female teachers in my Primary school because of the area we lived in. Two of them were from a Nigerian background as well. So to me the idea of a female Nigerian teacher is not a weird thing.*

Layla picked up this theme:

> [children] *should see people out there and feel like,'yeh, if she can do it, why can't I?...but also [for] the parents because they [would] have people they could communicate with and they could relate to and like, sort of also help the child learn more.*

Ayanna also noted that the influence of BME teachers needed to go beyond the classroom and expressed disillusionment that the future not only appeared bleak for BME student teachers, but there appeared to be little prospect for career advancement after qualifying (Powney et al, 2003; Haque & Elliott, 2017).   She believed this glass ceiling would also have negative impact on promoting equity for BME children.

> *I'm also noticing that the majority in the establishment is not black female, in Primary. I'm not finding many where I've been* [on placement]. *That's surprised me in a way, especially within my area, because it's so predominantly black. None had any on a high level, like deputy heads, nor heads; or even middle [level], like a head of English. It's just not ...there.*

DCP students were consciously aware of an education system failing to educate and inspire BME children and reducing access to and movement within the profession for BME student

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teachers (Haque, 2017). They were aware that racism is "lodged deep within our institutional walls" (Mirza 2015, p.27). Their culturally visibility and strong personal ideologies formed an important part of themselves as student teachers, signifying greater consciousness and a certain amount of fearlessness (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001; Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). For them the process of becoming a teacher was circuitous because they resisted, challenged and asserted themselves.

5.4.3 Resisting compliance

I describe the compliance of DCP student teachers on their courses, as 'resisting'. While it may seem like a contradiction to place 'resisting' with 'compliance', the juxtaposition is to capture their acknowledgement that compliance is necessary to succeed but not at the expense of losing their racial and ethnic identities. 'Resisting compliance' denotes the brittle, on-going and defiant quality of their perceptions of themselves within ITE (Adams, 2005). This reflects the idea of a 'transforming resistance strategy' by BME students who have developed a raced consciousness about their position in education (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001). They understand how systemic structures relating to the curriculum, how their race and culture are ignored and how they are forced to act in accepted BME stereotyped ways are forces of marginalisation and oppression. The previous section, outlining their personal ideologies, recounted their developed politically and socially-aware personal agendas. These shaped their thoughts and actions and made them wary about being accepted and respected, but appeared not to diminish their resolve to teach and their insight into the type of teachers they aspired to be (Wilkins & Lall, 2011). Their wariness had taught them to tread cautiously and at times engage in a more combative role, such as Layla's stand

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against a school's suggestion that she did not wear her abaya and hijab for aspects of her teaching, such as PE. Their stories suggest that they do not totally accept the principles and practices of ITE, but they showed willing and a determination to continue on the course.

For Ayanna her resistance began as a teenager, uneasy with the demands of schooling:

> *I was labelled a rebel [at school]. My sister reacted differently... She*
> *did what she had to do. Whatever they said, she would just do. But I*
> *was more, 'this is how I am, so why am I doing it?'*

Learning to live with, and to some extent, accept the system, came with the support of her sister and a desire, which grew out of her spiritual convictions, to help her own children and other BME children, struggling at school.

> *... when you're a teacher you come from a place of love, if not, you're going*
> *to bring your prejudices to teaching and that's when it affects the child.*

Toni, whose experience growing up in a white town made her more resigned to being different, still felt the weight of that difference at her white university which made her wary.

> *I wasn't surprised when I came here and there weren't like a sea of*
> *brown faces staring back. It means that sometimes I feel awkward*
> *when we have stuff like the equality and diversity lecture; because I*
> *found it really interesting, but others* [white students] *were like,*
> *'What a load of crap! I've never been so patronised in my life!'*
> *Even another lecturer was disparaging about it. I thought do I say*
> *something or just sort of leave it?*

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She felt awkward because her values and ideals were being mocked, but she was not able to

speak out against her white peers (Jessop & Williams, 2009).   Her wariness was heightened

after an episode at her white placement school.

> *When I first turned up, god forgive me, I thought I'd never seen so*
> *many blonde-haired children. No diversity. It seemed a closed sort*
> *of community and I found it hard to have my differences pointed out*
> *to me. I got the kids coming up to me and saying, 'Are you from*
> *Africa?' and I didn't know how to respond to it. I was thinking*
> *my family's from Africa, but I'm from London.*

Layla also felt her ideals and values were ignored and belittled on a difficult placement.

> *I was refused prayer time, no-one spoke to me or helped me that*
> *much and I felt the staff room wasn't a nice place to be…The*
> *whole experience was negative. I would often go home crying.*

Michelle too, suffered on a placement where a series of destructive episodes pushed her to the

edge of her resilience.

> *On placement the [tutor] told me that I had no teacher presence and*
> *if I was not dealing with it I could leave the course, so that [has been]*
> *one of the many things on this course which made my confidence collapse.*

These incidents illustrated the debilitating effect of ITE on these DCP student teachers

because they appeared different from the majority (Roberts, 2007).   Their desire for

acceptance and equity tested their resilience; depleting reserves of hope for some and

hardening the resolve of others leading them to resist total compliance to the system. The

notion of battle fatigue and resignation is tempered with a prevailing persistence (Rollock,

2011). Ayanna exemplified this because her story shows she is aware of the on-going fight

against racisms but she clearly believes that teaching is an ethical and even spiritual vocation;

seeing it as valuable in its transforming processes for herself as the student teacher and for

BME children (Dixson & Dingus, 2008).   This made her become more compliant.

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*...if from the [start] of your degree you're taught to have that connection
with a child, regardless of whether that child is black, white, purple or
whatever disabilities it has, then they can learn. I know they mention
inclusion things, but they're not teaching it in the right way. They're
approaching it in a way that doesn't make sense to me. I feel the
subtleties of the negativities of the course; but I need to get the
qualification, be a teacher then I might be able to change someone. I
have conformed because there are certain things I don't say. It's a
necessity to do the course to be a teacher [but] if I could have done it in
another way; in a more natural, spiritual way, rather than a
conventional way, I would take it.*

Suzanne, like Ayanna, was motivated by a strong impetus to help her own children.

*My children have been my drive to the pathway I've taken now. Over
The years me and my husband have put in that support which has
been very difficult and upsetting to go through the various problems
with them. ... I will be able to do so much more because I have that
passion and that drive.*

For others their compliance grew from the support of their home and communities (Connor et

al, 2004).   Mona was positively influenced by the community Saturday school which she had

attended as a child and at which she later taught.

*A particular friend of mine said, 'you're going to be a teacher, I know
that you're going to do it'; and I think it was the Saturday school,
speaking to young people and mainly its director, who's from a
Caribbean background; she's one of the best teachers in the world.
I think it was her sort of encouraging me and saying, 'look you are
the kind of teacher that is needed in schools'... I think she was the* **key**
(her emphasis).

While their compliance is resisting, emerging from their ethical landscape which seeks

understanding about and equality for BME student teachers, they chose to name and face

processes in their journey that they found damaging (Roberts, 2007). Their response is laced

with a tenacity which pursues the greater good of being role models for BME children and to

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show society that it is possible for them to become teachers despite the odds being against

them (Hick et al, 2011).

5.4.4 Ambiguities observed of DCP student teachers

Despite DCP student teachers often vehemently denouncing racism and its effect on

themselves and BME children, Layla, who suffered racialised difficulties and spoke volubly

against racism, spoke about the value of white teachers, displaying a dichotomy in her

beliefs. She refused to homogenise all white teachers as racist and uncaring and said:

> *... I can't sort of say, yeh just because you're a white teacher you're*
> *going to be like that, no, because I've been among white teachers.*
> *They're not all like that.*

Suzanne displayed a resignation to the subjugations of racism, which was only shared to

some extent by Ayanna, not the other DCP students who remained hopeful. While Suzanne's

story included signs of hope and a determination to succeed, she felt there was a limit which

revealed despondency in her.

> *I can push myself as far as I can go but there will be limitations in this*
> *country. [Even though] you can get to a point where you're respected*
> *and seen as a professional person, but it does not mean that you're 'up*
> *there'. We're not given the opportunity to get to that level. You can have*
> *[black] people with equal qualifications and they're not pushed to*
> *reach their full potential. That's degrading but they want to keep it a*
> *certain way. In some ways there's an order going on. No matter what*
> *job you do there is a level you can reach and no higher.   If you're lucky*
> *to go past a certain stage where no other ethnic person has done, you're*
> *seen as high up in the black community, but that person is probably*
> *doing much more than a [white] person in the same position.*

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Ayanna too felt that the future was bleak.

> *I'm thinking it's either going to be a compromise on my part or a*
> *battle which I'm realising is going to happen.*

For DCP student teachers their fearlessness about projecting themselves as raced beings and in recognising racism (Warmington, 2008), was tempered by a view, such as Layla's, that they also valued white people who understood racial subjugation and provided support. In addition, despite determination to become teachers to redress social inequity, some, like Suzanne and Ayanna also felt restrained by the lack of hope (Satterthwaite, 2006).

5.4.5 Conclusion to the DCP group of student teachers

DCP student teachers present passionate and honest views about their experiences, expressed more frankly than student teachers in the other groups. They spoke of their internal and external conflicts and articulated personal philosophies that recognise structural racism and microagressions in ITE (Tomlinson, 2011; Huber & Solórzano, 2015). There was also a sense of trust that I, as the BME researcher, would take care of their stories and re-present them fairly (Parker & Lynn, 2002; Gunaratnam, 2003). Although student teachers in the other cultural positions, spoke of beliefs and understandings of the world, cultural and religious views, family and relationships, these areas were more pivotal for DCP students because, while they created points of conflict and despair for them, it helped them to comprehend how their race and ethnicity, in challenging the systems of ITE, is important in shaping them as teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).

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5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined how BME student teachers in my study have adopted varying responses to cope with and adapt to the challenges within ITE as they journey to become teachers.

MCP student teachers tend to separate their racial and cultural background from becoming a teacher because they see it as unalterable, as background information to the majoritarian narrative and, there are indications from some of their stories, that they see their background as culturally-unacceptable in white ITE.   They worry that if issues about their race and ethnicity are raised at university or on school placement, it will make them appear incompetent or be detrimental to their progress on the course because they would appear as trouble-makers and narrow-minded.   They have manoeuvred culturally to embrace and engage with the expectations of ITE, less questioningly than the other student teacher groups. They operate within a web of circumstances in which they are forced to seriously weigh the racial and cultural cost, in terms of how much they will be leaving behind the values of their background against how much they want to achieve and succeed.

VCP student teachers are mainly unwilling to challenge racism, preferring indirect references to and positive representations of their own culture as antidotes to negative white perceptions, including being the 'cultural or religious expert' and showing a willingness to join in and reflect back the majority expectations such as neutral pedagogical language and practices. They are also partially aware of themselves as raced beings, some of them less confident with their identities but others dexterously moving between cultures. They are beginning to see and name hidden, racist practices which have been normalised in ITE, such as presenting

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other cultures in an exotic, rather than real, way and they realise how they are expected to fit into them in order not to cause offence. They express their views with a careful consideration so their successful front is maintained but their internal landscape includes a level of reality about the existence of racism.

SCP student teachers' stories show significant worries and pain. They appear under confident and unsure of the processes of ITE. At university they find difficulty in working with their white peers and on school placements struggle with both pedagogical duties and, if they are in white schools, in understanding white cultural norms in the classroom. They were not always able to articulate their discomfort through developed descriptions, and in the case of one student teacher was so uncomfortable that she could not remain in the focus group. Their stories were characterised by absences of information and personal responses and feelings so I was challenged to listen carefully to their stories in order to grasp perceptions.   My re-presentation of this group of student teachers understands that stories are not neat or structured units but are perspectival and elastic in nature. This demands understanding the quality and significance of the power exercised by ITE, and how these student teachers relate to that power.

DCP student teachers' stories indicate that they were less confident than the MCP and VCP students about their progression on the course due to their resistance and challenges to ITE, shown in their deep comprehensions and at times outraged comments. Their personal ideologies took precedence over discussing the steps they had to take to achieve success. This shows a sense of rebelling against ITE rather than just following a straightforward compliance route. However, they were sure, even determined, that they would succeed to become qualified teachers. They show knowledge and awareness about their racial and

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ethnic identity; valuing it, asserting it and intertwining it with their vision of becoming teachers and understand that their heightened racial knowledge and awareness emanates from struggles they experienced on the course

My *BME student teachers' indicator of cultural position as they become teachers* (Fig. 4.2) shows a range of differences between attitudes, perceptions, understandings and actions. I have identified these responses as Manoeuvred, Vibrant, Stagnant and Discerned Cultural Positions. Within each one is a range of characteristics. The 'drivers' and 'limiters' shown on Fig.4.2, show the way student teachers respond to how they are moulded to fit ITE expectations during their course.   VCP students are managing and culturally-visible on their course. Conversely SCP student teachers are struggling and culturally-invisible. MCP student teachers are managing but culturally-invisible while DCP student teachers are struggling but culturally visible. Their stories show their feelings, perceptions and attitudes to their course, showing recognition that they operate within English ITE which has significant and pervasive requirements that reflect white-majority ideals.   Within this understanding they make varied responses to cope with and challenge these expectations but more importantly to make known how their race and ethnicity are a necessary part of their development, not aspects to be ignored or discarded.

The following and final chapter will draw together the outcomes of and reflect on the differing responses of the BME student teachers in this study to enable a better-informed and clearer understanding of how it may be possible to challenge and make recommendations on how ITE in England can respond sensitively and with perception to the needs of BME student teachers.

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CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This final chapter draws points together from throughout the study to illuminate insights gained from the counter narratives of the BME student teacher participants.- I will reflect on using Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a methodology to examine the experiences and perceptions of the BME student teachers' stories and to reflect on my position as a BME researcher.   I will also consider the limitations of the study and make recommendations regarding developing an informed and perceptive culture of support and inclusion within the institution that I work. This involves university and school tutors who have a direct impact on the positive progression of BME student teachers who study there and senior managers.

6.1 Reiteration of aims and main research questions

First I will reiterate the study's aims and main research questions within which to situate the conclusions, implications and recommendations.

Aims:

i. develop an in-depth understanding of the reasons why Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people choose teaching and analyse its effects on their racial, ethnic and cultural identities.

ii. critically map how BME student teachers negotiate obstacles to progress through Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

iii. provide a space for the voices and issues of BME student teachers to be expressed, using Critical Race Theory.

iv. inform those involved in the practice and development of ITE, of the racial and cultural experiences of BME student teachers and how this affects their thinking, progress and professional practice.

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Main research questions:

1. What are the variety of factors influencing and motivating people from BME backgrounds to enter teacher education and how do they overcome barriers?

2. How far do the BME student teachers in the study, acknowledge and draw on their racial, ethnic and cultural background and experiences as they develop into teachers?

3. How does the race and ethnicity of the BME student teachers in the study, impact on their practice during ITE?

4. In what ways do the BME student teachers in the study, perceive themselves in their training institution and how do they act and react as a consequence?

6.2 BME student teachers in ITE in England

Within education there are multiple discourses which consider and critique how race and ethnicity in ITE are subject to changing policy and how these can have an adverse effect on the progress, outcomes and general well-being and outlook of BME student teachers (Maylor & Ross, 2009; Bhopal and Preston, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2016).   To explore and examine the experiences of BME students within ITE in England I chose Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a methodology because it has the capacity to provide insight into and challenge hidden but pervasive racism in organisations such as ITE, understands how this impacts on BME student teachers and advocates change (Leonardo, 2005; Zamudio et al, 2011; Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).   In using the research aims and questions, identified above, my study has examined and defended the focus on race and ethnicity as defining factors affecting and surrounding the journey of 32 BME student teachers in ITE in England.

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The insights gained from the participants' stories, outlined and discussed in Chapters Four and Five, showed differing responses to their position as BME student teachers.   For some there were issues of appropriation of white culture to show their acceptance of the system, their willingness to progress and the need to be accepted.   This may have meant being inarticulate about the validity of their own race and culture.   Others showed how they valued their culture but focused on aspects of it that was acceptable to the majority white culture. Some did not know how to be overt about their race and displayed a distinct under-confidence and unhappiness, demonstrating a kind of stasis in their ability to project themselves. Some of the participants were outspoken about their teacher education, describing it as constraining and even a battleground.   There were many commonalities too, such as role-modelling for a younger generation and filling a desperate gap in the profession as teachers who understand the BME needs and being able to teach and nurture as appropriate.   They understood the role that their families played in pushing and supporting them and they were also acutely aware of being the success their parents envisioned.

BME student teachers face successive educational policy moves to minimise and downplay racial difficulties. This includes standardising ITE outcomes and curricular input, regardless of the race and ethnicity of teachers or children (Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson, 2008; Smith, 2013; Gillborn, 2016).   In addition there is no clear strategy in English ITE for the recruitment and retention of BME student teachers (Gillborn, 2016; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016), even though there is a shortfall between the number of BME qualified and practising teachers and the numbers of BME children in primary and secondary schools (DfE, 2016; BBC, 2017; Haque & Elliot, 2017).   This is compounded by the poor conversion rate from ITE numbers to actual qualified and practising teachers, due to withdrawals from courses (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016).   Alongside this are complicating policy moves to promote concepts such as British values in schools. These impact on the ITE curriculum which has to

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reflect what is to be taught in schools (Brown, 2006; DfE, 2014c).   This is complicating and ironic at a time when the reality of race and ethnicity in schools and ITE has been side-lined in curricula and education statistics have been manipulated to down-play race problems (Gillborn, 2005 & 2016). To add to the irony, the initiative to teach pupils about British values is out of step with the workforce, where the numbers of BME teachers in schools in England does not reflect the BME pupil population (BBC, 2017). In addition the initiative may actually work against itself because some research shows that the requirement to teach about British culture could actually raise suspicion and promote a lack of trust and blame between students and between students and staff (Hand & Pearce, 2009; Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2017).

6.3   Reflection on the use of Critical Race Theory and my position as a BME researcher working with BME participants

CRT is criticised as being limited in its scope and ability to challenge and change inequalities because of its focus on race as the main site of oppression (Pitcher, 2011; Litowitz, 1997). This separates it from other race research approaches that include other intersecting social factors. Such isolationism, Pitcher (2011) argues, could lead to greater separation in the form of cultural imperialism, from other social research and promote it becoming self-referential. Other criticisms against the centrality of race, argue that it is at the expense of other forms of subordination, such as gender and class (Cole, 2009; Hill, 2009). However the centrality of race in CRT is necessary to denote it as the key and unique oppressing factor for BME people, which would otherwise be subsumed among other social oppressions (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). There are also arguments that CRT is too broad and lacks boundaries in its methodology, which can mean a loss of focus and power to push for change, resulting

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in talk but little or no action (Carbado, 2011).   However this lack of boundaries can also be seen as a strength because it provides flexibility to challenge the complexity of racism and provide a range of authentic responses to complex BME experiences, unconstrained by narrow methodological rules (Hylton, 2012; Warmington, 2012).   CRT's use of counter story faces criticisms of lack of structure, depth and robustness and of being overly subjective and narrow (Litowitz, 1997).   Litowitz (1997) argues that stories are emotive, making BME people appear overly critical or innocent and stories divert CRT from using objective, academic debate to engage with the concepts they challenge, such as Liberalism.   CRT understands that stories will involve emotions but also that BME people are the only ones who can authoritatively speak of the realities of racism (Merriweather Hunn, Talmadge and Manglitz, 2006).   This, along with the variety and depth of BME experiences, refutes labelling them 'other' and confounds any simplistic duality of oppressor and oppressed (Delgado, 1989).   Delgado's conceptualization of counter narratives saw them as supremely human-focused, re-embodying, giving voice and raising confidence.   But his vision was also one of counter narrative as a vehicle to engage the white majority to listen and respond, thus promoting dialogue.   This is an opening-up process that requires stereotyping to be replaced by empathy and the conception of more mutual values and respect in place of racial hierarchies.

Another criticism of my study could be placed on the closeness of the participants' experiences with my own. As a BME researcher I consciously chose to observe and work with BME participants, but this position can have negative as well as positive effects (Johnson-Bailey, 1999).   First there is the danger of being overly subjective, leading to a lack of objectivity and distance in reasoning and drawing conclusions (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).   Second are dangers of over-simplifying racial and ethnic experiences which may inadvertently compound racial stereotypes (Phoenix, 2004; Milner, 2007).   Third is the

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danger of assuming racial and ethnic affinity (Constantine-Simms, 1995; Maylor, 2009a). Gunaratnam (2003) cautions that this poses the risk of the BME participants 'faking race' by saying what they feel is acceptable to the BME researcher.   A further criticism of my study was the problem of conducting the research as the tutor to some of the participants. This added another layer of ethics, so that the guarding of the boundaries, between myself and the participants, was raised (Piper & Simons, 2011; Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014).

To counteract and guard against such criticisms I employed a reflexive and transparent approach, explained and discussed in Chapter Three. I am open about the close affinity to the participants by virtue of our minority ethnic status and, stating in Chapter One, that I too, once occupied the participants' position of being a BME student teacher in ITE in England. I recognise that I am in a special position to see, hear and represent others who are close to my understandings and experiences (Maylor, 2009a). Openness and transparency are important in qualitative, critical research because the idea of objectivity and distance are replaced by research that is grounded and human; and in the case of using CRT, hidden and embedded racism in education can be made more visible, examined and challenged (Villenhas & Deyhle, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).   The nature of my research is necessarily subjective in order to allow participants speak about their experiences in a supportive environment and to honour their expression in a sympathetic way (Delgado, 1989). The data-collection process of encouraging, listening to and processing their stories, rejects the idea of over-simplifying and instead adds depth by giving status and importance to the research and shows commitment to and respects participants' offerings (Webster, Lewis & Brown, 2014). This built a level of trust and a safe environment necessary for narratives to emerge (Piper & Simons, 2011). I employed the research methods of focus groups and individual interviews as engaging and supportive environments for telling and listening but also as spaces to

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challenge their thinking through the questioning and follow-up questions (Barbour & Schostak, 2011; Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). The use of a semi-structured approach in data-gathering conveyed a clear sense of seriousness about the research but allowed participants, whom research has shown are often ignored and side-lined, to express themselves more easily (Ladson-Billings, 2016; Solórzano and Yosso, 2016). It also reduced the possibility of the notion of 'faking race' because the environment of openness and support promoted less inhibition and pretence (Gunaratnam, 2003). To counter the criticism of over-simplifying BME experiences which could then lead to further stereotyping, I recognised through the data analysis that participants' stories contain ambiguities and contradictions and brought these to the fore in both Chapters Four and Five. By doing this, my study recognises that they are human, not stereotypes leading to the understanding and practice that race research operates in layered and problematizing sites (Constantine-Simms, 1995; Gunaratnam, 2003). These are necessary steps to raise the self-esteem of participants and achieve a suitable tension of separateness and connectivity between researcher and participant (Gunaratnam, 2003; Bryman, 2012).   Also through presenting complexity and diversity race research recognises, and challenges racism in its many forms, grows in status and builds a respected presence in academic communities (Stanfield & Rutledge, 1993; Solomos & Bulmer, 2004). To counteract the criticism of conducting the research as the tutor to some of the participants, I emphasised anonymity and confidentiality in the data-collection process before and after the focus groups or individual interviews. This clarified that I would see them as research participants in a formal and organised study, not as my students (Bryman, 2012). I made it clear that I would abide by ethical requirements to be the gatekeeper of boundaries and that I saw them as important contributors to the wider educational research community (Robson & McCartan, 2016; Gill & Goodson, 2011). This reflects a CRT approach which advocates the importance of engaging in research that reduces

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researcher power and increases participant expression and presence (Leonardo, 2005; Hylton,

2012).

.6.4 The *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers*

My *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers* (Fig.

6.1) emerged from analysis of the student teachers' issues and experiences, as expressed

through their stories. The analysis of this data, outlined in Chapter Four: Data Findings and

Analysis, presented this collation of the varieties of their responses to experiences they

encountered as they journeyed through ITE.

Fig. 6.1

BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers

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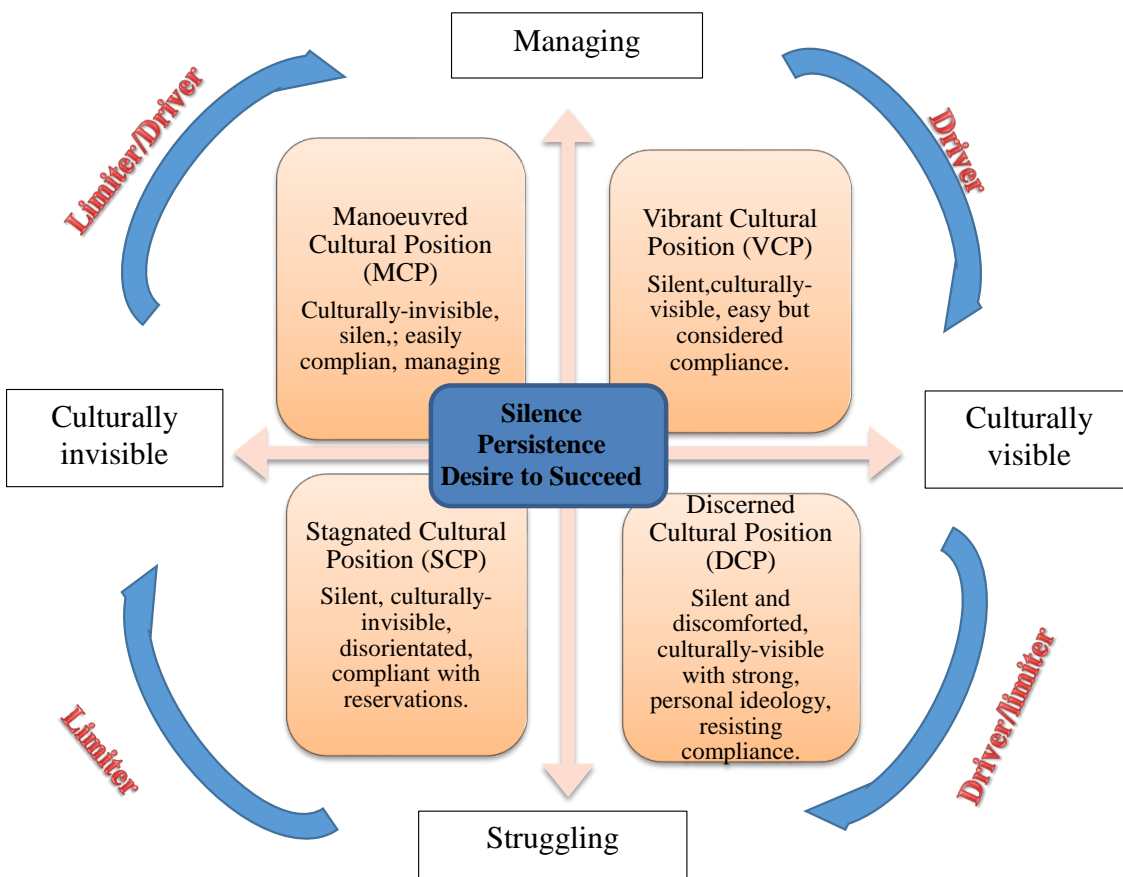
These four cultural positions of Manoeuvred, Vibrant, Stagnant and Discerned, demonstrated variation and nuance in how the participants saw and positioned themselves, how they managed the university course and school placements and how they attempted to combine these elements. The four cultural positions show commonalities and contrasts which are affected positively or negatively by what are shown on the Indicator as 'drivers' and 'limiters'. The positive drivers show the student teachers as managing and culturally-visible during their teacher education; while the negative limiters show them as struggling and culturally-invisible. The central overlapping area of the Indicator shows the commonalities expressed by all of the student teachers. They are 'silence', 'persistence' and a 'desire to succeed'. I will now present conclusions on these commonalities and contrasts.

6.4.1 Silence

The silence of the participants was varied, but was present in all four cultural positions of the Indicator. Those student teachers in the Manoeuvred Cultural Position (MCP) did not willingly talk about their race and ethnicity for fear of appearing as lacking in intelligence and skill. They also worried that they might be labelled as troublemakers, suffer lower grades or expose them to judgement and rejection by their white peers (Hoodless, 2004; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). Those in the Stagnant Cultural Position (SCP) were silent because they appeared to have little self-awareness of race and ethnicity and were unable to articulate their feelings about racialised difficulties. They also felt powerless to raise or challenge racisms and felt undervalued (Connor et al, 2004). Those in the Vibrant (VCP) and Discerned Cultural Positions (DCP) spoke willingly about their race and ethnicity during the

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research and articulated the importance of educating children about racial equality. In placements they only felt able to do this if it fitted into appropriate teaching. While DCP students were also concerned to challenge inequality or racism on the course, they too felt constrained about speaking out on school placement and at university among white peers and tutors. All students spoke about how white expectations of ITE significantly reduced confidence in their own culture and their ability to express it (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016).

6.4.2 Persistence

All of the participants in the research were at the mid-point of the course which demonstrated persistence. DCP student teachers' persistence was due to an established awareness of themselves as raced beings and of racism which they developed further while on the course and a vision that BME people need be successful as a way of challenging racism (Connor et al, 2004). This involved persisting in their initial applications to get onto a course and being aware of hidden racisms in the curricula or among university or school tutors, in order to cope with or pre-empt problems (Wilkins & Lall, 2011). VCP student teachers said they responded to racialised difficulties by remaining positive, showing that they understood and engaged with the white culture and by trying to teach about their culture in RE or PSHE lessons in order to broaden children's awareness. MCP and SCP students showed that they often ignored racialised difficulties as a way of persisting and getting through their course. For them it was part of a strategy of directing the gaze away from race and ethnicity onto generic, pedagogical areas (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). But they did this for different reasons: MCP students felt that if they focused on these difficulties they would be seen as inadequate, presenting a barrier to their success, but SCP students did this because they demonstrated less understanding about the nature of hidden and pervasive racism (Jessop &

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Williams, 2009). All participants stated that they needed to persist and succeed on their course to demonstrate that BME people could become teachers, help re-dress the imbalance of the lack of BME teachers and to be a role model for BME children (Adams, 2005).

6.4.3 Desire to succeed

Their desire to succeed and become qualified teachers was linked to their persistence. All of the student teachers spoke of their future success as providing role models for BME children and as a sign to society that they could achieve in a white system (Adams, 2005). MCP student teachers believed in the meritocratic idea of achieving success through hard work, aligning themselves to white values and avoiding being seen as inferior and incapable (Jones, Maguire, & Watson, 1997; Moore, 2004). VCP student teachers felt success was achieved by asserting their cultures appropriately in teaching and with peers at university, including playing the cultural and religious expert role in school which they felt would raise their profile and increase respect for them (Lander & Zaheerali, 2016). Family also played a significant part in the desire to succeed. Both MCP and VCP students stated that they had strong family backing during their course and SCP and DCP student teachers wanting to honour family expectations and gain approbation from their home communities. Some of their stories showed that they carried extended hopes and dreams of parents, most of whom were first-generation immigrants.

6.5 Contrasts between the cultural positions of BME student teachers

My *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers* (Fig. 6.1) also showed contrasts between the cultural positions shown as 'drivers' or 'limiters'. They were either managing or struggling and were culturally-visible or culturally-invisible.

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6.5.1 Managing or Struggling

The student teachers who were managing on their course were those in the MCP and VCP cultural positions. They were compliant with the requirements of ITE and spoke positively about the course (Givens et al, 1999). They saw teaching as an aspirational profession and part of their meritocratic right, believing that their place was earned through hard work and that they were the same educational level and quality as their white peers (Bhopal, 2015). MCP stories projected the idea that their progress and success might be compromised if they appeared to be too entrenched in or assertive about their culture or religion (Givens et al, 1999).   This reflects the idea of BME students adopting a majority-culture mind-set as a way of managing and succeeding (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016). VCP students however entwined their culture into their understanding and practice of becoming teachers. They spoke positively about their families and culture during the research, believing them to be their main motivators and sources of support (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007).   They too however recognised that they had to be circumspect in talking about their race and ethnicity during their course, but chose to do so when opportunities arose and chose to focus on the positive aspects of their culture. Neither MCP nor VCP students spoke about failing the course, made negative comments about their course, school placements or about ITE in general.

Student teachers, who displayed signs of struggling, were those in the SCP and DCP cultural positions. They spoke about the difficulties of being different due to their race and ethnicity. They did not feel accepted by white students and were dismayed by the cultural cliques formed at their campuses and in working with peers and tutors who had little conception of and seemed disinterested in minority cultures and issues (Jessop & Williams, 2009; Allard &

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Santoro, 2006). In placements, at white schools, DCP and SCP students felt they encountered humiliating questions and assumptions about their race and ethnicity from children and staff members that left them feeling vulnerable and exposed (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005). At other times they felt a lack of support from or over-scrutiny by tutors, which they felt was not experienced by their white teaching partners (Bhopal, 2015).   SCP students questioned their abilities to be strong enough to survive the course and become teachers (Givens et al, 1999) while DCP students felt a mis-match between their own race consciousness and ITE, believing the latter to offer little or no support and to ignore BME students' needs (Basit, Kenward & Roberts, 2005).   They also felt they could not raise issues about racialised difficulties at university or on school placement without being labelled as troublemakers and if they did, thought that little was achieved as a result (Allard & Santoro, 2006; Basit et al, 2007).

6.5.2 Cultural visibility or cultural invisibility

Those student teachers who appeared more culturally visible were those in the VCP and DCP cultural positions. VCP student teachers had a strong awareness of their home culture which they openly acknowledged provided a support web and springboard from which they operated (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). Some VCP students spoke of happily straddling their home culture and English culture and integrating the former within their teaching when they thought appropriate. DCP student teachers displayed strong personal ideologies that involved questioning and challenging racisms on the course when they felt able to do so, asserting themselves on school placement if they thought tutors were being unfairly harsh, reporting racist incidents by pupils, or by talking to pupils about racism (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007). They believed this was the moral and ethical way to be true to themselves as raced

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beings (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008; Warmington, 2008). In addition they saw their actions as providing a role model for all children and contributing towards a more equitable education (Connor et al, 2004; Hick et al, 2011). Both VCP and DCP student teachers showed a determination not to have their race and ethnicity ignored or downplayed but to find ways to be confident, visible and to steadfastly hold true to themselves (Achinstein & Aguirre, 2008). These behaviours of cultural visibility operated alongside the silence, discussed above and in 'Chapter Five: Discussion', and in the feelings of inadequacy they also felt.

Those student teachers I believed were more culturally invisible were the MCP and SCP cultural positions. They did not talk willingly or assertively about their race and ethnicity and could not easily align it with their teacher education (Haque, 2017). MCP student teachers' stories showed that they shifted away from their home culture in the projection of themselves as student teachers (Allard & Santoro, 2006). This involved speaking in a white mind-set about becoming a teacher; and choosing to present views on generic issues such as behaviour and assessment, (Solórzano & Yosso, 2016; Haque, 2017). This posed problems with skin colour and other difficult-to-hide racial and ethnic attributes, such as religious or cultural dress forms, like the hijab and abaya. SCP student teachers also appeared to be culturally invisible because they did not talk much about racial hurts or indignities and expressed self-doubt because they felt lacking in knowledge and confidence about themselves (Siraj-Blatchford, 1991; Jones, Maguire & Watson, 1997).

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6.5.3 Reflections on the *BME student teachers' indicator of cultural position as they become teachers*

By categorising the 32 BME student teachers in the study into four groups I am in danger of simplifying race and even compounding racial stereotypes (Constantine-Simms, 1995). I acknowledged in Chapter One that I was influenced by Basit et al's (2007) identification of BME student teachers in English ITE as 'Racializers', 'Disavowers' and 'Individualizers but note their belief that categorisation within race research should not be defining, but complex and diverse. Using the *BME student teachers' indicator of cultural position as they become teachers* (Fig. 6.1) I am able to locate and understand certain issues about becoming a teacher on a full-time, campus-based ITE course as a BME student teacher. One issue surrounds expression of identity, which I call 'cultural position' in the Indicator. The participants articulated who they felt they were, had become and would become as they journeyed through the course. Their families, knowledge of their culture and observation of their white peers all played a part in determining this. Another issue raised was the challenge to essentialism and stereotyping. The participants in the study did not appear simplistically as ~~solely~~ victims or victors in how they responded to the demands of ITE.   They presented different and complex responses as seen in the four cultural positions. The positions aim to represent how they saw their journey and how internal and external factors impacted on it. The Indicator also raises criticisms of my BME researcher assumptions of how BME student teachers behave and think leading to pre-empting outcomes in the research. As discussed in Chapter Three and Four the student teachers came from HEIs across the country, representing differences in region, ethnic background, age, parental status and from both under and post graduate courses. Individuals from the same focus group expressed differences and were placed in different cultural groups on the Indicator. Factors such as these reduced my BME researcher presumptions and enabled me to listen to each story with an open mind. The

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participants' stories showed commonalities and differences in the way they faced and spoke about significant obstacles arising from structural racism in ITE and this is shown on the Indicator.

6.6 Implications of this study

In 'Chapter One: Introduction' I justified the need for continued research into the issues of BME students in ITE so that new and further insights can be developed to meet evolving obstacles raised by systemic and embedded racism (Mirza, 2015).   My *BME Student Teachers' Indicator of Cultural Position as they become Teachers* (Fig. 6.1) shows that obstacles are raised in teacher education, surrounding race and ethnicity that cannot be ignored. Despite research in this field continually pointing to and examining the issues that BME student teachers' experience (Hoodless, 2004; Basit et al, 2007; Jessop & Williams, 2009; Bhopal, 2015) and the concerns over recruitment and particularly retention on ITE courses, these issues and problems persist (Connor et al, 2004; Basit et al, 2006; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016; Haque & Elliott, 2017). Progress is hampered by notions that teacher education is an equal and meritocratic endeavour making attainment achievable by all (Gove, 2013; Greening, 2017) and complicated by successive documentation and legal requirements to achieve a standardised system that pays lip-service to issues of race and ethnicity (DfES, 2003; DfE, 2010; DfE, 2012, DfE, 2013).   Such obfuscating moves threaten to destabilise race from policy and practice agendas, work against hard-fought for initiatives promoting race equality in ITE and negatively impact on the performances of BME student teachers (Cunningham & Hargreaves, 2007; Evans, 2011; Tomlinson, 2011).   Believing that equality has arrived in teacher education is short-sighted and mis-guided and research continues to

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challenge the unequal status-quo (Tomlinson, 2008; Maylor, 2010; Hick et al, 2011; Gillborn et al, 2016). Bhopal (2015) calls for ITE to positively acknowledge BME student teachers as insiders and valuable them as assets while Hick et al (2011) believe that positive subliminal messages are sent to staff and students when race equality issues are taken seriously in Higher Education Institutions. Roberts (2007) conceives that ITE should become more transformative and act as a change agent by critiquing and replacing exclusionary systems and practices with strong, sustainable and accountable systems of support that benefit student teachers, schools and pupils. These are fundamental visions and practical desires, borne out of sustained research which understands the need for ITE to be a fair, supportive for BME students during their teacher education and to provide a balanced workforce.

These have implications for ITE tutors in both university and school. It is their guidance, modelling and support that have an immediate effect on students' practice, understandings and outcomes. Through tutorials and additional support tutors can be a lifeline and have significant effect on retention of students. The academic curriculum can be made more inclusive by university tutors' constant monitoring of its content to ensure discussion and reflection on race and ethnicity issues. My study also has implications for Senior HEI and ITE managers who set the initial criteria for entry to their university that affects the nature and diversity of the student and staff body. They are responsible for initiatives to retain and support BME peoples through policy and bodies such as the Equality and Diversity department and the Student Union. They are also responsible for monitoring statistics and actions relating to applications, retention, support and post-course contact that promotes diversity. This sends out intentional messages to those within and without HEIs about their seriousness towards sensitive and authentic diversity.   My study challenges ITE in England to face change through the Recommendations presented below, because it emerged from

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listening to the voices of BME student teachers through their stories.   My response to the Recommendations can be achieved through informal and formal interactions with my students and tutor colleagues, when working on validating new degrees and in creating modules, in my work on committees on which I sit, in my work as an external examiner to two universities in London and the Midlands.   It is therefore a contribution to the development of knowledge in the field of research into race and ethnicity in ITE.

6.7 Recommendations

I make the following recommendations in response to the research aims, re-stated at the beginning of this chapter and based on the Critical Race Theory tenets that enabled the analysis of the student teachers' stories in Chapter Four and insights gained from these. Section 6.7.1 recommends steps focusing on teaching and support to negate negative racial experiences of BME student teachers during their course.   Section 6.7.2 recommends steps to recognise and address racism issues at campus level.

6.7.1

These recommendations are directed to ITE teacher educators. They respond to the study's findings, that BME student teachers experience on-going and unseen racial obstacles and microaggressions causing them to react in a range of ways. They may deny their race and culture and adopt white expressions and practices; or focus on parts of their race and culture they deem acceptable to the white majority. They may focus on the pain resulting from racial microaggressions; or speak out against racism in ITE. These recommendations reflect the following two CRT tenets, used as my tool of analysis of the data and outlined in section 4.3: first that racism is endemic and pervades ITE in England, particularly through

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microagressions at university and on school placement; and secondly that CRT understands that intersectionality means BME student teachers are not stereotypes with limited ways of thinking and acting, but embody multiple identities and are active and dynamic in their response to their course.

ITE teacher educators:

- should be aware of, challenge and monitor their own and others', including their students and teacher colleagues in schools, racist thinking and actions; whether these are conscious or unconscious. They should periodically undertake professional development training and other input from the Equality and Diversity unit or other appropriate internal or external body, to address racial assumptions and attitudes and raise their awareness of and promote good practice in sensitive anti-racism. University Partnership tutors should also take this forward and deliver appropriate input in mentor training sessions for schools and include information in Partnership paperwork. This will convey the extent of hurt and degradation that can be felt by BME student teachers and enable positive responses which sees them as valuable, not deficit.

- should provide and continuously monitor the ITE curriculum to ensure it includes intercultural understanding and expectations and equips all student teachers to sensitively teach their pupils about racial justice and equality that prepares them to uphold inclusion and diversity in their lives. This will occur at validations for new degrees or in recommendations for minor re-validations and in module design and resources. Programme and module leaders should ensure that content adequately includes critical thinking about race and

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ethnicity in teacher education and in teaching in schools, across modules, not just those focused on inclusion. This will build empathy, understanding and collaboration among all student teachers, especially those in the white majority.

- should deliver personal and academic support that encompasses specific support for BME student teachers, and provides suitable links to supporting university student bodies as necessary, throughout the course. This recognises that BME student teachers suffer from varying levels of racism, from daily microaggressions to specific incidents, and understands that through reluctance or shame they may not be able to orally express it or seek help. This will involve working with Programme Leaders to ensure it is specifically included in personal tutoring paperwork and training. This will encourage a more developed listening and empathetic approach.

6.7.2

These recommendations are directed to Senior HEI and ITE leaders. They respond to the study's findings, as outlined in Chapter Four, that BME student teachers experience difficulty, constraints and pain in the white-centric environments and expectations of ITE, from their peers, tutors, campuses and schools. This can lead to isolation and difficulty in navigating ITE. Cultural and racially-diverse outlooks and understandings are not wholly embedded into systems of recruitment and retention to achieve sustainable change and affect. These recommendations reflect the two following CRT principles: first that ITE operates liberal, colour-blind and neutral approaches that can have negative outcomes for BME student teachers; and secondly that race, is a social construct which in ITE, can be used to

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control how BME student teachers progress through different stages of their course. This includes having to adopt white views and behaviours that may mean leaving behind some of their racial and cultural heritage as they seek success. This increases BME student teachers' isolation or risk of failing their course.

Senior HEI and ITE leaders:

- should address and change structural and hidden racisms because ITE is geared towards white majority-ethnic students. This will involve working with the Equality and Diversity office, the Student Union and and other appropriate bodies, groups and committees to ensure representation of BME student teachers on university boards and committees and to develop the culture of equality and diversity across university life. This will open up understandings and build dialogue across institutional expectations and cultures.

- should develop the scope of the recruitment and marketing departments to ensure systems to promote courses, open days and interviewing target BME applicants systematically. This should include photographs and inclusive language used in promotional materials, visits to schools and colleges in culturally-diverse areas and adopting less conservative approaches such as social media and making contact with community groups, to show a serious and sustainable practice in eliminating racism and in promoting a diverse student body.

- should ensure programme leaders build retention initiatives into undergraduate and postgraduate courses to ensure that race and ethnicity needs and issues are

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addressed. This should include: periodic training for faculty staff and support staff who wish to undertake research into BME student issues and disseminate good practice to other faculties; work with tutors to provide support or consciousness-raising groups which provide safe places for BME student teachers to reflect and grow. This will demonstrate commitment to reducing damaging effects of racism and build sensitive, inclusive cultures.

These recommendations are offered to address the structural basis of on-going microagressions, subjugation and racism in ITE in England which are a barrier to lasting change and to move towards greater racial equality.

<p style="text-align:center">∗   ∗   ∗   ∗   ∗   ∗   ∗</p>

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Appendices

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APPENDIX A

REFLECTIVE DIARY EXTRACTS

Focus group held on 22/2/11 1-2pm in my office, Barbon 115.   Five PGCE BME student teachers from XXXX university, attended; one man among the group. One participant had been in the country since 2000 was more traditional in outlook and dress and was also married.

I had e-mailed the *Participant Information Sheet* (ETH09/04) to them a few days earlier and then explained it in more detail at the focus group, stressing their anonymity, confidentiality and the independence of the research from their course. For the purposes of this pilot activity the participants signed a less formal letter of consent of which I have hard copies. For the next set of Focus Groups they and others will sign the *Participant Consent Form* (ETH09/04a).

From this pilot activity these issues came to light:

Room/venue:
My office far too small, but originally chosen for easy availability. Participants said they felt cramped and would have liked some tables. There is a need for space and freedom to move. Bigger room needed in a café or lounge style. I will book the ???? Lounge and provide refreshments next time.

Method of recording
I used a video camera on a tripod. It was not ideally set up (on my desk to get the span of the room) so for next time in a larger room, I will erect it less obtrusively. On viewing the film I was pleased with the way it captured voice and faces making it clear to me who was talking. I then had it easily transferred to a CD-Rom which I labelled and stored.   I will use this method for future FGs because then I can focus on developing the discussion.

Content/questions appropriate for consecutive FGs:
This pilot activity was well-timed, but I was aware that I needed to ask them much more, so the idea of at least one more FG for each cohort, took shape in my mind. Also I was aware that individuals said very interesting things and I probed them when I could but did not want to compromise the nature of a group data-collection activity; however after a while I began to get in the swing of knowing how much to probe. I noted certain individuals who would provide very rich data and may be suitable for an individual interview. However I want FGs to form the backbone of my data.

In this pilot activity I explained to them that I would be seeking their views on the appropriateness/accuracy of the proceedings: these included a *Background Form* I devised to collect basic data. We decided to add 'religion' to the ethnicity part because all of this group were Muslim and they were explicit in how this affected their outlook and participation on the course (how they related to other students, what they wore and why). For future FGs I will give participants 5 minutes at the beginning to fill this in as they are coming into the room. It is essential information for later categorisation.

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My role:
I felt I was too much playing the formal interviewer because I felt nervous, not knowing the participants before and worried in case the video camera did not work. I will aim for a more discreet and less formal approach where possile, although I think this will have to be carefully planned. I felt I explained the process and reasoning behind the research because it seemed to make participants feel at ease.

<u>**Next steps**</u>**:**

1. Choose a bigger, more open room to make participants feel relaxed and at ease. Book and set up video camera.

2. Have e-mailed *Participant Information Sheet* (ETH09/04) before FG.

3. Participants complete *Background Form* in first FG, as they come in, over refreshments.

4. Know which questions to ask for each FG (there will be two FGs for each cohort). Plan for my role to start with high input and diminish for the first FG. In the second FG plan to be out of the room or 'not in the circle' to provoke the participants taking the lead.

<u>**Revised Focus Groups**</u>

1] Set up video
    Make a plan of where participants sit
    Ask them to fill in the initial form (see below)

    Participants put pseudonymns on name sticker

2] Introductions
  - Welcome and Thanks for coming.
  - Introduce self & research
  - purpose of FG to gather data of a range of experiences and views; outline time span and timetable;
  - Today we are going to discuss an issue that affects all of you. Before we get into our discussion let me make a few requests of you. First the session will be recorded so that I can refer back… Video – looked at and analysed by me. Parts of the audio recording ONLY may be used for academic purposes, e.g. paper .   Please say exactly what you think; don't worry about trying to please me or anyone else we're here to exchange opinions in an open and reflective manner. Why don't we begin by introducing ourselves.

3]   Researcher explains the ethics of the FG & the contents of the form.

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- Participants read & sign ethics form. Explain that this will form the Code of Ethics for the group.
- Explain it is voluntary; can take a break; explain if they find things too difficult to take part in then we can have a break and move on.

FOCUS GROUP 1 - Campus C; the North. Group 1

I tried to use an ice-breaker to settle people in: Autobiographical – aspects of life stories (tell another person two important things about yourself); but I was aware that I didn't have that much time with them so cut it short and stressed that I wanted us all to be aware of each other's backgrounds.

As a bit of an afterthought I thought I should have made it optional what they told us in case they felt they felt put upon and then they might have been a bit angry about it. When giving their responses they seemed keen and not lacking in speech, so may be the ice breaker was okay. I don't have much time with them though so ice-breakers will have to be short, if at all. However they need to feel at ease so I will have to do something.

The other thing that took quite a bit of time was going through the participant info. Sheet and getting the consent forms signed, but I may becoming quicker at doing this. I'm glad I set up the video and room earlier, which reduced my stress….

FOCUS GROUP 2 Campus C; the North – Group 2

- Group sharing -   Desert Island' or 'Sinking Ship' scenario (what would they take) . Have a selection of words in which they have to fill in something and put their pseudonymous name on the back. (Food, piece of music, book, film, object, clothing, car, memory of a place, childhood memory, etc.)   OR
- bring an object or family photo which represents something about themselves

The above two bullet points are what I had planned to do as ice-breakers, but after the first focus group this would have been far too long. Again I asked them to introduce themselves briefly and then went through my ethics parts.

This is a different group from the first PG group – just as chatty, but in a different way may be because, unlike the first PG group, they are not all Asian Muslims. Two are Muslims, an Indian and Pakistani, but the other two are British Nigerian and French. The dynamics are lively. Their experiences of the course are quite different. The two Muslims are quieter and more compliant in their responses to and descriptions of their course. The other two are more vocal about the their difficulties and experiences of racism….

This has made me realise that facilitating the focus groups will be unique to each group. I was a little worried that I might not be able to ask all of my questions in today's group.

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APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Decision to become a teacher

- What made you decide to undertake a teacher training course?
- Describe how influential is your family in influencing your decision (other teachers in the family, aspirations of parents, etc?)
- Describe how much support did you receive from school/college in achieving this ambition?
- Does the fact that around 7% of teachers in Primary schools, in England, are from BME groups affect how you think and feel about the profession?

Undertaking teacher training

- Why did you choose your teacher training institution?
- Describe the ways the fact that it is a mainly white or multicultural institution affects how you think and feel while on the course?
- Do you go round with/actively seek out any other BME students on the course/campus? Why/why not?

Being a black/minority ethnic student teacher on campus

- How much do you think about your ethnicity during the course?
- How far do you feel being a black student teacher affects your responses & performances on the course?
- Do you ever feel different or isolated on the course?
- What do you feel about the provision for BME students on campus?

Being a black/minority ethnic student teacher on placement

- How much do you think about your ethnicity while on placement?
- What differences in the children's responses to you have you notices in a mainly white school? What do you think/feel about that?
- What differences in the children's responses to you have you notices in a multicultural school? How do you think/feel about that?
- How far do you feel being a black student teacher affects your responses & performances?
- Is there specific provision in the school or in policies for any additional needs you might have as a BME student, e.g. religious or cultural needs, like food, place to pray?

Community Influences

- How would you describe your ethnic/racial heritage?
- How would you describe the ethnic make-up of your home community?
- How far do you think this influences how you think, feel and act?

- How influential are your parents & other older family members (uncles, aunts, grandparents, older cousins, etc.) in supporting you in your decision to become a teacher?
- Is there any lack of support from your family?

<u>Personal thoughts</u>

- Is your racial or ethnic heritage acknowledged in any aspects of the course? (E.g. teaching, assignment requirements, grouping of students)
- Would you recommend teacher training to any other BME family or friends? Why/why not?
- How comfortable do you feel as a BME student teacher both on campus, in school and back at home/community?
- Are there small or unusual feelings or thoughts, linked to your minority ethnic status and being a student teacher, which you may feel are too unacceptable to share with others on the course?

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APPENDIX C

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Our Ref: █████

19th January 2011
Diane Warner
Faculty of Education
███████

Dear Diane

Request for Ethical Clearance – Ref 10/12
Project: Development of black Primary trainee teachers within predominately
white/multicultural training institutions

Thank you for replying promptly regarding the issues that required addressing. The Panel are now able to give approval for your project and wish you well.

As an aside I did notice some spelling errors in the PIS (e.g. **Complaints** sub-heading, final page, 'paritipants'), could you please proof reading the document before sending to participants.

Yours sincerely

███████████

Chair
Ethics Sub Committee

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APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

ETH09/04

About the study

This research, will aim to provide an in-depth understanding of the reasons why black and minority ethnic peoples choose Primary teaching and negotiate their way through the system of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). It will focus on the development, professionalisation and transformation of black student teachers, training for the Primary and Secondary school sector in the UK. The goal of the study will be to inform ITE policy and practice based on 'inside' accounts of the social and cultural reality of transforming self to become teachers. Its four aims are to:

   v. Develop an in-depth understanding of the reasons why black people choose Primary teaching and negotiate their way through the system of Initial Teacher Education (ITE);

   vi. Critically map the way that 'race', as a powerful political 'construct' impacts on the identity of black student teachers, a phenomenon largely unacknowledged in ITE policy, in the UK;

   vii. Provide an analysis of the effect on black student teachers being educated in a white institution and compare this to black students in a multicultural institution;

   viii. Inform ITE policy and practice based on 'inside' accounts of the social and cultural reality of transforming self to become teachers.

It will therefore ask:

   1. To what extent do Black students' past experiences influence their choice of ITE setting and their subsequent professional development?
   2. How do black student teachers perceive their developing professional identities in a majority white setting and profession?
   3. In what ways does a predominantly white ITE setting impact black students' sense of self and?

Some questions you may have about the research project:

Why have you asked me to take part?

As a person of black or minority ethnic status in the UK you are part of a minority of peoples training to be teachers in ITE. You therefore have a helpful and important story to tell or experiences to share about your journey in, and desire to become a teacher.   Each person who takes part in this study will come from differing minority ethnic backgrounds which will celebrated and understood to represent a breadth of experience.

This is an under-researched area in the field of higher education and professional training so the study aims to listen to, recognize and communicate the sense black students teachers have of their teacher education, both of the study at university and their placements in school. This

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will involve you discussing/sharing your reasons for undertaking teacher training and they way you negotiated your life, including problems and barriers you had to overcome, to make it a priority.

What will I be required to do?
Take part in some data-gathering focus groups and/or taking part in individual interviews. These occasions will aim to be between 1 – 2 hours in length, so that you are not over-burdened with questions or have too much of your time used up. The questions will be:

Decision to become a teacher
- What made you decide to undertake a teacher training course?
- How influential is your family in influencing your decision (other teachers in the family, aspirations of parents, etc?
- How much support did you receive from school/college in achieving this ambition?
- Does the fact that around 7% of teachers in Primary and Secondary schools, in England, are from BME groups affect how you think and feel about the profession?

Undertaking teacher training
- Why did you choose this institution?
- Describe the ways the fact that it is a mainly white/multicultural institution affect how you think and feel while on the course?
- Do you go round with/actively seek out any other BME students on the course/campus? Why/why not?

Being a black student teacher on campus
- How much do you think about your ethnicity during the course?
- How far do you feel being a black student teacher affects your responses & performances on the course?
- Do you ever feel different or isolated on the course?
- What do you feel about the provision for BME students on campus?

Being a black student teacher on placement
- How much do you think about your ethnicity while on placement?
- What differences in the children's responses to you have you notices in a mainly white school? What do you think/feel about that?
- What differences in the children's responses to you have you notices in a multicultural school? How do you think/feel about that?
- How far do you feel being a black student teacher affects your responses & performances?
- Is there specific provision in the school or in policies for any additional needs you might have as a BME student, e.g. religious or cultural needs, like food, place to pray?

Community influences
- How would you describe your ethnic/racial heritage?
- How would you describe the ethnic make-up of your home community?
- How far do you think this influences how you think, feel and act?
- How influential are your parents & other older family members (uncles, aunts, grandparents, older cousins, etc.) in supporting you in your decision to become a teacher?
- Is there any lack of support from your wider family?

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<u>Personal thoughts</u>
- Is your racial or ethnic heritage acknowledged in any aspects of the course? (E.g. teaching, assignment requirements, grouping of students)
- Would you recommend teacher training to any other BME family or friends? Why/why not?
- How comfortable do you feel as a BME student teacher both on campus, in school and back at home/community?
- Are there small or unusual feelings or thoughts, linked to your minority ethnic status and being a student teacher, which you may feel are too unacceptable to share with others on the course?

Where will this take place?
At your university campus in a seminar room. This will provide you with ease of access and enable you to feel more settled.

How often will I have to take part and for how long?
One or maybe two times either in focus groups and/or individual interviews You will always be at liberty to refrain from one or more of the activities.

When will I have the opportunity to discuss my participation?
I will be willing to discuss any issues you may have about your participation and any worries you might have about what you will be asked, information you gave in a previous session or your participation in the future. I would be available by phone, in person or e-mail, before or after the data-gathering activities, or at any other time.

Who will be responsible for all the information when the study is over?
I will be responsible for writing up the study and submitting it for various re-drafts before final submission. I will also be responsible for secure storage of the data and deciding, if opportunity arises, for publication as journal articles or in book format. Two supervisors have been named to work alongside and guide me and with whom I will discuss in detail the course of my work up to submission to examiners.

Who will have access to it?
Yourself, as one of the participants; the named supervisor(s) as they study progresses through various drafts; and members of the wider academic community, who may read articles which emanate from the study or in its final published form. The latter two will have access, as part of good academic practice, but all participants will be anonymised.

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How long will data be kept and where?

In the researcher's computer files (password-protected), for a period to cover the interpretation of the data and write up of the ensuing thesis. This could be 5-10 years or more if researcher and supervisors deem this to be necessary.

What will happen to the information when this study is over?

Following submission and publication, data will follow ███ guidelines about how it will be stored after a period of five years.

How will you use what you find out?

As the study progresses various aspects will be written for publication in peer-reviewed journals. I will use various findings to inform the practice of myself and other teacher educators as we work with students from BME groups to improve and support their practice.

The study may also inform policy and practice at teacher-training institutions from which the data was gathered. This may include revising the way support systems cater for individual academic and personal student need; the type of teaching content of programmes e,g PGCE and under-graduate to include greater input on the need to teach about the needs of minority ethnic pupils; developing and updating anti-racist policy for the institution and for students on school placements; and promoting greater cultural awareness on campus.

Will anyone be able to connect me with what is recorded and reported?

Focus groups may be videod as the best way for the researcher to match the information to the correct participant, but if doubts or objections are raised then audio recordings can be made.   Videos, but not participants names, may be shared with the supervisor, as the only other person. All other information, including real names, will be confidential to and stored by me, only.

How long is the whole study likely to last?

For a period to cover the interpretation and write-up of the thesis, which could be 5-10 years or more if I am unable to complete during this time.

How can I find out about the results of the study?

Participants can contact me to find out the results, or read parts of the written study. Any published work will be in the public domain and will therefore be available to any participant.

What if I do not wish to take part?

Your participation in the study is entirely voluntary therefore you may indicate to me if there are parts of your data in which you may not wish to be included or refrain from taking part in any of the data-gathering exercises. I would be happy to discuss any of these issues with you at any of the points in which you take part.

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What if I change my mind during the study?
You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without having to provide a reason for doing so. In addition you will have certain editing rights during the recorded interview, for example if you wish to retract something you have just said, it will be taken out of the recording. By discussing the issue with me, certain fears or worries you might have, could be clarified to make you feel more confident about staying in the study.

Will I need to sign any documentation?
You will be asked to sign a consent form before participating in the study, which both you, I and the University of ███████ will keep a copy for further reference.

Whom should I contact if I have any further questions?
Please contact the researcher directly (details below).

Complaints
All complaints from the participants are in the first instance to be directed to the Secretary to the Dean for Research, Research Office, University of ███████████████████████████ ██████

Researcher Contact Information:
Diane Warner

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APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Please answer the following questions by circling your responses:

Have you read and understood the information sheet about this study? YES/NO

Have you been able to ask questions about this study? YES/ NO

Have you received enough information about this study? YES/ NO

Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from this study at any time, and without having to give a reason for withdrawal? YES/ NO

Your responses will be anonymised before they are analysed.

Do you give permission for members of the research team to have access to your anonymised responses? YES/ NO

Do you agree to take part in this study? YES/ NO

Your signature will certify that you have voluntarily decided to take part in this research study having read and understood the information in the sheet for participants. It will also certify that you have had adequate opportunity to discuss the study with an investigator and that all questions have been answered to your satisfaction.

Signature of participant:... **Date:**................

Name (block letters):..

Signature of investigator: . **Date:**................

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the Participant information Sheet together.

Researcher Contact Information:
Diane Warner

APPENDIX F

FROM FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS' STORIES

This appendix is taken from one of the focus groups I conducted with three undergraduate student teachers. It includes two extracts taken from the whole transcripts but are intended here as exemplars of the process of constructing individual stories from the transcripts. The extracts are followed by the constructed individual stories .

<u>Campus C: the North. Three undergraduate student teachers</u>

<u>Extract 1</u>

Int. = Interviewer   Z = Shaina   T = Taz   U = Jacquiline

00.30.17 mins of recording (pp. 9-10 of transcript)

Int: You're moving into an area that I'm intensely interested in because it affects me as well as I try to make sense of the sort of journey am I going through as an educational professional. How much do you feel that you are having to adapt yourself in different settings.

Z: I had to adapt to a church school, like to their prayers, like three times, they do morning, lunch and all that; so you get used to that. Then the children that didn't want to do the prayers get used to… / **Int:** Did you have to say the prayers?

Z: Yeh, like I wanted to say the prayers, yeh. The [Muslim] children in Year Five, where I volunteer here at St. G…., they were shy, like…I said 'come on then pray like…at the end of the day it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands… / **U:** It's the same God. / **Z:** …you're speaking to the same God…So I told them why are you all doing this, as if you're not involved? If you're a Muslim, do this …because they were told if you're not a Christian then you do that. So I asked the teacher, is it alright if they pray. They said 'Yes, 'course it is', but they're shy to. So then they were like really shy in front of all the other children, then by the end of play time / **U:** they didn't know if they were allowed to… / **Z:** But I said at the end of the day you're praying to /**Z & U:** …same god. / **Z:** and it's a prayer… / **U:** the same prayer… / **Z:** thanking him [God] for the day… / **U:** but said in English.

Int: Are there other things that you're doing that you think… Do you ever feel… think that I want people to accept me if it's in a more white setting, say? That I want people to accept me either by going out of my way to do certain things or I'm going to change certain things about who or what I am.

Z: No, I don't change. No, I don't change myself. I don't think I need to…/ **U:** I don't. / **Z:** …so I just go in and be myself and…I've never had a problem. The only problems I've encountered, I was in …I went in my first year [placement] to quite a rough estate and umm…and it was really bad…there was like guns…and in the evenings I had children

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circling me on their bikes, while I was waiting at the bus stop. / **Int:** Was that quite a white area? /**Z:** It was a very…and the first remark I had on the first day from a Reception child was 'Miss, have you been on the sunbed too long, you're very brown?' And then when the parents would pick me up because they used to come to the [classroom] door and say [to the children] 'have you had a good day with your Paki teacher?' / **Int:** They would have said that slightly kind-heartedly or think it was being half getting on your side because they were trying to be jokey… / **Z:** I don't know what it was. / **Int:** ...but how did that affect you then?

Z: It did slightly affect me, but then I thought why should it? They're just ignorant and they're uneducated. They don't know I'm from India and [I'm] not Pakistani. / **U:** [Who is from Pakistan] There's nothing wrong with being Pakistani, you know [laughs all round] / **Z:** I'm just saying… they don't know…I know.

Int: Were all the teachers white?

Z: Yes.

Int: What about the teaching assistants?

Z: One black teaching assistant. She left actually. But they said in that area the chippy man [chip shop owner?] he was a Muslim, but he got bullied; in two months he had to leave. So that's how it is down there.

Int: So that was quite an experience.

Z: But I loved teaching them. By the end of it the children had learned a lot about different places and things. I don't know if I'd particularly like to go back and teach there because I did find it challenging at some points.

Int: T… did you have any placements, or volunteering experience in school where you felt you sort of had to think a lot about your ethnicity or had to change things slightly in the way you came across, or what you wore or anything like that?

T: No, I think I've been pretty consistent in all placements. I think I've been the same. I think at first one I was a bit like 'oh, it's a church school like…what am I going to do? Am I going to do something that I don't know, but it was fine like. The teacher said to me 'You don't need to join in with prayers if you don't want to'. It was a really good school. I loved it. / **Z:** Church schools are more accepting towards us [Muslims] aren't they? **T:** They are, yeh.. / **Z:** The children are quite knowledgeable of other faiths…/ **Int:** …because of the knowledge of religion. / **Z**: …because they do a lot of RE. They have to do RE, if it's a Church school.

U: They're quite shocked as well, if one of you [a non-Christian] want to join in though…When I went to a school, they were doing the prayers, and I joined in, and they look at you just like… / **Z:** I noticed that. / **U:** …I actually want to stand in and er…, as long as I don't have to drink the [Communion] wine I'll be fine [laughs all round] and they're praying, and the whole thing… / **Z & T**: Yeh…

00.35.06

<u>Extract 2</u>

(pp. 11-12 of transcript)

Int: All of you, you are quite liberated to give it a term, if you like and you know each other and presumably your friends are a similar age and are similar to you. You mentioned what Z. was wearing, a head covering... Do you think you represent a particular type of young Asian woman…young Muslim woman, of your generation; in that, it seems to be, you've gone half way to being part of this society in the way you dress and in your outlook on life…and also training to be a teacher, as well, is possibly part of that. Do you feel that you're… that in order to play a full part in life you have to have some concessions to the culture that you live within…and does that occur to you at all… a hard question, I know.

U: It's a really, really good question…because you're not just part of one culture are you…you're never just part of just the one…you're always two people. You're always either...like what I am here in England…

T: I think **l**ike, maybe if I was living in a really…if everyone around me were strong Muslims or had headscarves on then maybe I would kind of adapt to that… / **U:** Would you really? / **T:** Maybe… I think I would, yeh.

Z: Everyone around me does it [wears a head covering]. I'm an oddball in this community. / **Int:** In this community? / Z: …and my friends…no my friends don't. In the community, if I set out now, you'd see most women in veils and scarves…So I'm really odd to not have it on round here.

(00.41.26 mins of recording)

Int: You do it [not wear a scarf] because of your own family…/ **Z:** That's right. / **Int:** It's accepted.

T: My mum always worn one, but she's never like forced us to wear …she's just like…she's never forced us…or said, 'oh you have to wear one'.

U: You know it would have been so, so much easier…but it would have been worse off for the world if we had just been born in our own countries and stayed there all of our lives…or if we'd been born here and never gone to those countries… / **T:** In Saudi Arabia you have to wear one [head covering]…you can't be outside and not have a scarf on… / **Z:** …it would be a crime wouldn't it… / **T:** …it would be a crime…

U: Would it really? / **T:** even little kids have little like…not tiny [ones], but when they're four or five [years-old] they start making them wear headscarves. Then when you go there you think this is what it's supposed to be like…this is what [being] a Muslim means, do you know what I mean?

U: But it's not all there is to being a Muslim though… / **Z:** …and it's got really complicated as well…and how extreme… / No, it's not all about wearing a headscarf or about wearing your dress in a certain way. I don't… Yes, I do believe it to a certain extent. I think you do have to dress modestly, you do have to do that…I don't do it [laughs] but it's not all there is to it; it's much, much more than that…/ **Z:** Act…yes, act…everything you do it's the way

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you act…more than the way you dress. / **U:** It's more than what you speak, it's more than what you say, it's what you do isn't it? (Murmurs of assent from the others).

T: I know girls that wear it [head covering] just like a fashion statement, that doesn't mean… / **U:** sometimes when you look… / **T:** …they wanna look a certain way…you might think 'oh, like they pray five times' [a day] but behind closed doors they're probably the same as us, they don't do anything religious…it's just like a fashion statement. / **Z:** Did you say fast then?

T: Yeh, I fast. / **Z:** Yeh, I fast an' all.

Int: Yeh, okay; U…'s brought up this idea of '[being] two people'; how much do you feel you're straddling two cultures then?

U: I do. I feel that a big part of me that's Pakistani, and then a really, really big part of that's English, and then to a certain extent…not just British I mean English in itself. When you go to Pakistan, you're an English person, you don't feel Pakistani; but then when you're in England you don't feel completely English; you feel Pakistani. In both places they're always reminding you of it. They're always telling you 'you're like this', then in Pakistan they say, 'you're English, or whatever. You're in both.

Z: There's nothing wrong with it [being of two cultures].

U: There isn't anything wrong with it. /**Z:** It's the best of both worlds actually. / **Int:** You're quite comfortable? / **U:** Oh, Yeah. / **Z:** Best of both.

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Constructed participants' stories from focus group transcript with observations and annotations.

These stories are constructed from the whole focus group transcript and have my annotations following multiple readings.

Shaina

Shaina's story

The way my Mum was brought up is very similar to the way I've been brought up so there hasn't been that change.   She was born in India but she came when she was two, so it's the same as if she was born here. She dresses in a Western way as well. My Dad he was brought up in a religious family but he has his own views. He's very liberal minded. My parents aren't so religious…I'm like my parents basically. [*My brother*] *went to a different school and college[from me] and that had an impact [on him]. I went to a school where it was 99% Asian and my brother went to a Catholic school which was like children [of other faiths] in each year. This has influenced the way he views culture and tradition and the values. It started last Ramadan, when we were fasting and he said it didn't want to go to mosque and that was a big shock for [our parents] because he'd been going for years. Then on Fridays; you know that Fridays is our holy day right, well he has a break of two hours at college, so my Dad says "if you have a break go to mosque on Fridays and pray" but he was like, "I don't want to do that".   He's just got different values and I think my parents are like accepting it; and maybe he'll change.* *But I am very similar to my parents.*
I have been on a school placement where about 60:40 are the Asian majority. I guess, that's quite a lot and I've done volunteering at D.... (High-density Asian/Muslim Infant school) but when I was in a church school I had to adapt a lot, like to their prayers, three times a day. They do morning, lunch and all that; so you get used to that. I wanted to say the prayers, and I encouraged the [Muslim] children in Year Five too. I said 'it's a prayer; no matter how you hold your hands. You're speaking to the same God. If you're a Muslim, do this.' They were told if you're not a Christian then you don't pray at school. They were like really shy in front of all the other children.
I don't change myself. I don't think I need to.   I just go in [to school] and be myself and I've never had a problem. The only problems I've encountered, was in my first year [placement] to quite a rough estate and umm…and it was really bad…there was like guns…and in the evenings I had children circling me on their bikes, while I was waiting at the bus stop. It was a very White area…and the first remark I had on the first day from a Reception child was, "Miss, have you been on the sunbed too long, you're very brown?"   And then when the parents would pick their children up, because they used to come to the [classroom] door and say [to the children] "have you had a good day with your Paki teacher?" I don't know what it was [they were thinking]. It did slightly affect me, but then I thought why should it? They're just ignorant and they're uneducated. They don't know I'm from India and not Pakistani. There was] one black teaching assistant.. She left actually. But they said in that area the chippy man (chip shop owner), was a Muslim, but he got bullied; in two months he had to leave. So that's how it is down there. But I loved teaching them. By the end of it the children had learned a lot about different places and things. I don't know if I'd particularly like to go back and teach there because I did find it challenging at some points.

Comment [d1]: Strong influence of parents on religious and cultural outlook.

Comment [d2]: Accept family's religion and culture more than sibling.

Comment [d3]: Repeat of phrase in d1

Comment [d4]: Adopt ways of another culture to fit in.

Comment [d5]: A role-model for Muslim children.

Comment [d6]: Liberal, open-minded about other religions and cultures.

Comment [d7]: Uncomfortable in a White school.

Comment [d8]: This placement had a negative effect on her shown by the words: *slightly affect, theyre just ignorant and uneducated;* and by her rhetorical questions in lines 31 and 32. She answers the second question (line 32) by making the distinction of her family's country of origin, to show her knowledge against their ignorance.

Comment [d9]: BME people do not easily fit into White schools.

Comment [d10]: BME teachers teaching about other cultures.

Comment [d11]: BME people do not easily fit into White schools

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Everyone around me does it [wears a head covering]. I'm an oddball in this community. In this area, if I set out now, you'd see most women in veils and scarves…So I'm really odd to not have it on round here. No, it's not all about wearing a headscarf or about wearing your dress in a certain way. I think you do have to dress modestly, but it's not all there is to it; it's much, much more than that.   Act…yes, act…everything you do it's the way you act…more than the way you dress. Yeh, I fast an' all.

There's nothing wrong with it (being of two cultures).   *It's the best of both worlds actually. If you look at my photos (of her time in India), I didn't wear jeans because it was hot but I wore trousers, tops…but when it was really hot I'd wear [items of traditional Indian dress]. I wear Asian clothes in the house because they're comfortable. I would have been in my Asian clothes today, but we're going out after. … but I don't know if I'd wear it out because maybe… not a lot of people wear them out…I don't know…You do feel a bit odd. I wouldn't step out in them, unless I'm going to a party.* (Discussing another Muslim student's traditional clothing on placement) *…is she accepted to wear it in the school? I've seen TAs, [wearing traditional Asian clothes] but I've never seen a teacher…You've got to be authoritative and look the part. You've got to look like a teacher…(traditional clothes) not very professional, they're kind of flashy…*

My ideal job is in a church school. From my experience, I loved the space, I loved how disciplined the children were. The atmosphere was so serene through the school. There was no bullying in that school. The anti-bullying policy was fab, you know from all the things I'd experienced in different schools. So my ideal is a church school, but like I say, when it's job time I'd apply to any…but if I had the choice I wouldn't go into the area I was in last time, the really rough area.   I'd try and avoid it, but beggars can't be choosers. I think the reason I wouldn't face it, was my transport issue. I was waiting at the bus stop and the buses were like, only once every 40 minutes. I was waiting and I was being 'circled' and it was late and it was dark and my Mum was worried, so she'd try to pick me up as much as possible. As long as she was bringing the car into the gates and I was getting into the car, then getting home was all right.

I think we (BME students) *have more stories to tell about life. I can't say that they (White, students) don't have stories…but they (White student teachers) do take it [life] for granted. I constantly see the world from two points of view, not just one. There's never just one way of seeing a thing. You always have to question everything. I think it really helps. It's interesting for life, not just for teaching because, you learn so much more.*

Comment [d12]: More liberal and open outlook than the traditional Muslim views.

Comment [d13]: Faith and culture mean something to me.

Comment [d14]: I will adapt culturally to fit in.

Comment [d15]: Church schools are good.

Comment [d16]: Use of idiomatic phrase to describe her position.

Comment [d17]: Rich cultural heritage. Different from White peers.

Comment [d18]: Two cultures

Jacquline

Jacquline's Story

My family is very liberal in the sense that Education is important and that everybody has to have a go at it. You don't really hear about Muslim girls being kept back, only the odd case. I knew of someone, back five years now, where the girl, she said to me 'Oh I want to get married. No I don't want to study; I don't want to go onto college, I just want to get married.' I couldn't understand that. I said 'Why do you want to do that?' She said 'Well my Mum said that you can get married and have kids; you can have that life, you don't necessarily have to do this [further education]'. She was happy with that. I couldn't fathom that at all. I thought why would you want to take your life away?

A lot of my cousins have married white ladies and everybody's accepted them. It was more people on the 'outside' [of the religion] who had a problem with that. They'd [White

Comment [d19]: Strong influence of parents on religious and cultural outlook.

Comment [d20]: Modern Muslim women do not just get married, without an education.

Comment [d21]: Acceptance of other cultures.

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partners] go to Pakistan regularly. They'd fast. They're fully converted. For the white ladies that have been married into our family, what they like about it is the fact that to a certain extent they feel protected, if that makes sense? There are difficulties I'm not going to lie, there are… It shocks me more to see a group of just one sort of ethnicity. I get a lot more when there's different ethnicities and then you can learn more I suppose. Not the way you think, 'oh my god…they're all different ethnicities'.   You think, well, that person looks interesting and you kind of speak to them and learn about them.

Comment [d22]: Multi-cultural

Being a Muslim does affect how people see you. Even when I go to work; sometimes I work at nurseries and schools [during the holidays], *I am always trying to create a good image; trying to help people to understand because there's so much wrong stuff going on…there's so much bad that you're hearing about. I spoke to a child the other day. He was about nine years-old. I fell in love with that child. There was something so genuinely intelligent about him. I was speaking to him and he goes, 'where do you come from?' I said well I grew up in Pakistan. I was born here, but I grew up there. He said 'oh, Pakistan, is that where all the wars are going on?' I felt so gutted, I thought that's all you know, then I said, 'actually it's very beautiful. There are lots of rivers and mountains and that's what it is, that's genuinely what it is, but you don't know that, you've never heard of those…*

Comment [d23]: Adapting and fitting into majority culture.

Comment [d24]: Being a role-model for non-Muslim children,

When I went to a [Christian] school[on placement], they were doing the prayers. I joined in, and they look at [me] just like… I actually wanted to join in their praying, and the whole thing. As long as I don't have to drink the [Communion] wine I'll be fine [laughs all round]. I think it's curiosity because it's something out of the ordinary. If tomorrow I decided to wear a scarf, full-time, the children would go 'wow'. They would want to know what's up with me [we all laugh] because you wouldn't normally wear one'. The first time I met Z. [another student], you know she wears a headscarf , and I said, 'have you always been wearing a headscarf?' She said, 'no, I started in primary school and that's mainly because I wanted to'; and I was like' all right, okay' and ummm… it's not very… It is unusual in the sense that now in Pakistan, when I was there, not many women wore a headscarf, unless they're out in public in which case they would wear it differently and they cover their faces just a little bit and it's not the whole other way [fuller face covering] and they wear different coloured clothes…very different to how they do it here. Here it's all completely black… It's not all there is to being a Muslim though. No, it's not all about wearing a headscarf or about wearing your dress in a certain way. I think you do have to dress modestly [but]it's much, much more than that… It's more than what you speak, it's more than what you say, it's what you do isn't it?

Comment [d25]: Adapting and fit into majority culture.

Comment [d26]: She is validating her religion.

Comment [d27]: See d12

You're not just part of one culture are you…you're never just part of just the one…you're always two people. I feel there is a big part of me that's Pakistani, and then a really, really big part that's English, and then to a certain extent…not just British I mean English in itself. When you go to Pakistan, you're an English person, you don't feel Pakistani; but then when you're in England you don't feel completely English; you feel Pakistani. In both places they're always reminding you of it. They're always telling you 'you're like this', then in Pakistan they say, 'you're English, or whatever. You're in both. They have to take me as I am or that's it.

Comment [d28]: Being of two cultures

Comment [d29]: Not changing culture

I think it's something to do with the contact hypothesis, something about being exposed to different cultures [in order to] learn more about each other. I went to C…. school which has all white children and they asked me 'why are you brown? I had never thought about that…but what a good question!...and at the time I answered it really daftly and said, 'oh, I've spent far too long in the sun, outside'. Anyway the next day I went to them and said that's a really interesting question and explained it all…but, yeh, I would go out, I would actually try to find an all-white school and perhaps get a placement there, and even if they didn't accept me, I would try to make them…try to make them understand, and say, 'look, this

Comment [d30]: Dealing with children's remarks about her colour and culture.

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is what it's about and this is what it is'. I don't know what it is about church schools. There's such a similarity to Islam…and you feel quite…you feel human. Whatever they're saying and doing you agree with it. if you are teaching those children to be Christian, you are encouraging them, that is a good thing.

Comment [d31]: Difficulty of being in a White school.

Comment [d32]: Church schools are good.

When I was talking to my Grandma, because I was telling her about this study and I've been asking her about her life, education and all this sort of thing; and she told me that there was a social, a type of pressure to fit it. She said, 'when I came [to the UK] I had to take off my…[indicates a salwar and kameez style of dress] *I wouldn't wear it all the time but the headscarf… I stopped wearing it completely; and I tied my hair up smartly and I would wear a brooch and I got a smart coat' to fit in'…She didn't want to look like…you were completely away [different] from the place, you wanted to look like you fitted in and you wanted to look smart…and now there's more of a freedom if you want to be religious, then go ahead, go and do it, even though whatever's going on in the World, you can still be religious or non-religious as you want. There's not that pressure anymore to be a certain way, so people are pressurised to think, 'why are you wearing this or why are you not'; even though there'll be questions, there won't be that pressure.*

Comment [d33]: Fitting into the majority culture. See d24.

Comment [d34]: you can be who you want to be culturally. See d19.

I feel as though I have a responsibility to Pakistan as well. I feel as though…I've not deserted it, you know left it…I feel as though I should go back and try and help develop the country. In England you have to play a role to try and develop the country here, but it's pretty developed (laughs); there's no shortage of teachers, there's no shortage of anything. Everything is going well. Whereas if you look at the state of Pakistan, it's a bit of a mess…in fact it's a…no it's a mess and we have try and develop that. If I could I would like to be a lecturer here for a few years, then go back to Pakistan, and help educate people there. I feel it's a responsibility for me.

Comment [d35]: family and community responsibility.

(Discussing being a Muslim) *It all depends on world events and it's horrible to think that if tomorrow somebody decides to say or do something wrong, people are going to think that's what I think…what's even worse is that you feel you are somehow paying for mistakes that somebody else has made. I think they* (White trainees) *should get the chance to experience being in another country, being the other person..to go out and just try and make themselves accepted. To try and see someone else's point of view. That'd really help.*

Comment [d36]: White peers do not know other cultures.

Taz

Taz's Story

My Mum never studied; like after school. Basically, like the year she left school, she went to get a visa, the following November, in India. But the visa failed so she had to wait a year, otherwise she would have been married by then (laughs)…She had me when she was 20 and I'm 22 now. She always wanted us to study; she always wanted us to have the opportunities that she never had. She always says that, 'I'm glad you had the opportunities'. I'm Indian, yeah. In Islam men are allowed to marry outside, but the women aren't allowed to go out and marry a non-Muslim man.

Comment [d37]: Influence of mother on cultural outlook.

Comment [d38]: Knowledge of and adherence to own culture.

I don't think I have [been in a mainly Asian school on placement]. In the first year it was all white. Then the second year it was [in] London, that was mixed, but there wasn't that many Asians; it was more African, Black children…it wasn't really Asian. Oh there was white as well, but it was quite mixed. I don't remember if there was that many Asians. There was a couple definitely. I was again in a predominantly white school in the third year. I think I've been pretty consistent in all placements [in the way I dress and how I come across]. I think I've been the same. I think at the first one, I was a bit like 'oh, it's a church school

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like…what am I going to do? Am I going to do something that I don't know, but it was fine. The teacher said to me, 'You don't need to join in with prayers if you don't want to'. It was a really good school. I loved it. [She agrees with another Focus Group member that Church schools are more accepting towards Muslims.]

Comment [d39]: Church schools are accepting of other religions and cultures.

[I wear a head scarf] when I have to….if you're in Pakistan. My Mum, she sometimes says that when it's Ramadan, I should wear a headscarf. I always comment saying, 'if I wore a headscarf, why would I only wear it in Ramadan; why aren't I wearing it all the time?' Lots of women only wear it for Ramadan, then they don't wear it. I don't like that…no. I think like, maybe if I was living in a really…if everyone around me were strong Muslims or had headscarves on, then maybe I would kind of adapt to that … I think I would, yeh. My mum always wore one, but she's never like forced us to wear …she's just like…she's never forced us…or said, 'oh you have to wear one'. In Saudi Arabia you have to wear one. You can't be outside and not have a scarf on. It would be a crime… even little kids have little like…not tiny [ones], but when they're four or five [years-old] they start making them wear headscarves. Then when you go there you think this is what it's supposed to be like…this is what [being] a Muslim means, do you know what I mean?   I know girls that wear it [head covering] just like a fashion statement, that doesn't mean…They wanna look a certain way…you might think 'oh, like they pray five times' [a day] but behind closed doors they're probably the same as us, they don't do anything religious…it's just like a fashion statement. Yeh, I fast. You see if I was in India, I don't think I'd dress like this…I'd be more towards their… I wouldn't wear English dresses…I think I would be like… [In school I wear] formal pants [trousers] and a blouse. But in London there used to be Asian teachers that used to come in their traditional Asian clothes…with a cardigan on top.   I think if you wear clothes like that you kind of represent your religion, maybe…culture? But I wouldn't have felt comfortable in a church school. I feel bad saying that because that's my… Maybe in my local primary school where there is a mix of Asian teachers and pupils…I would have thought in a church school, wearing Asian clothes… I would never have done it. One day I did, where there was like a Hindu Day going on and I wore traditional clothes. All the teachers were like, 'oh, you look really pretty' and stuff; and all the teachers were dressed up in saris and stuff.

Comment [d40]: More liberal and open outlook than the traditional Muslim views

Comment [d41]: Influence of mother on cultural outlook

Comment [d42]: Knowledge of and adherence to own culture.

Comment [d43]: Fitting into Church schools is important.

Comment [d44]: Adapting and fitting into majority culture.

You see my Mum's never owned a pair of jeans   She'll wear English dresses with like black pants, coloured pants… In a full time job you'd make the right choice for you and once you're in there, you'd be accepted in. You'd be full time; you're not there five weeks and that's it. You'd make the choice that's right for you. I always say that I'll do my NQT [year] anywhere. At the end of the year, if I felt like I wasn't happy in that place, I wouldn't stick it out.   If they're not going to accept you they're never going to accept you. Why do you have to keep fighting? I always try to give a good impression, but I wouldn't keep doing it if I'm still not getting accepted for who I am. Why would I make the effort then? If I hadn't had that experience [of a Church School placement , then maybe when I'm applying for jobs, I might have avoided church schools because I wouldn't know if I'd be accepted or not sure about what my role would be. But because I've had that experience I would definitely go for it, but if I hadn't maybe my thinking would be different. I'd want to be in a safe context. If I heard things or if a school was very anti…I don't know…I would be a little bit more apprehensive…diversity [is important because of] where I'm from and things like that as well. It's like…like EAL children, helping them as well…

Comment [d45]: Difficulty of being in a school as a BME student

Comment [d46]: Church schools are good.

Comment [d47]: Difficulty of being in a school as a BME student.

APPENDIX G

THEMES AND ISSUES FROM ONGOING ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANTS'STORIES

Campus C: The North. Group 1. Three student teachers

1. Faith/culture important part. Knowledge of and adherence to own culture; responsibility to own religion and culture.
2. Parents a strong influence on religious adherence and cultural outlook.
3. Feeling unsafe in some White schools – area, parents, teachers
4. Being of two cultures
5. Church schools promote similar values to Islam and are inclusive to Muslim student teachers.
6. Being Liberal, open-minded about other religions and cultures.

Campus D: The South. Six student teachers
1.
1. Disorientated about religious and cultural identity – feeling of not fitting in at university. Lack of racial mixing.
2. Being stereotyped on school placement as a traditional Muslim, "angry Black woman", "not very clever"
3. Shocked at children's racist comments
4. Confidence knocked by working with White teachers in a White school
5. Importance of becoming a teacher as a BME person.

Campus C: The North. Group 1. Three student teachers
1. Parents a strong influence on religious adherence and cultural outlook.
2. Faith/culture important part. Knowledge of and adherence to own culture; responsibility to own religion and culture.
3. Shocked at children's unsureness about BME people while on placement.
4. Disorientated about religious and cultural identity – feeling of not fitting in at university. Lack of racial mixing.
5. Want to return to home community to be a role model for children.

Campus C: The North. Group 3. Four student teachers
1. Parents a strong influence on religious adherence and cultural outlook.
2. Want to return to home community to be a role model for children.
3. Shocked at children's unsureness about BME people while on placement.
4. Importance of becoming a teacher as a BME person.
5. Felt campus was very white and were disconcerted that white peers did not sit with them in seminars.

Campus E: The Midlands. Five student teachers
1. Adapting and fitting into majority culture on school placement
2. Importance of becoming a teacher as a BME person.
3. Multicultural schools offer a more supportive environment. Share same values.
4. White schools are harder to settle into.
5. Worried about expressing their culture too much in school for fear of being stereotyped.

Campus A: The South. Five student teachers
1. Worried about expressing their culture too much in school for fear of being stereotyped.
2. Importance of becoming a teacher as a BME person.
3. University more interested in raising its BME ITE numbers, than welfare of BME student teachers.
2. BME student teachers have as much to offer as white peers.

Campus B: The South. Six student teachers teachers
1. Being a role-model for Muslim children and non-Muslim children on placement
2. Confidence knocked by working with White teachers in a White school
3. Being stereotyped on school placement as a traditional Muslim, "angry Black woman", "not very clever"
4. Importance of becoming a teacher as a BME person.
5. It is much harder for a BME person to become a teacher than a white person.

I amalgamate these issues, note similarities in responses and begin to give titles.

A] Effect of racism in individuals
I'm Black but… This involves attempting to put aside one's ethnicity and make it appear as though it is not ethical or desirable to see one's race as having anything to do with teaching. They saw this 'colour-blind' approach as more professional, anticipating university and schools' expectations. Their talk only used general educational terminology about being a good teacher, who is concerned with assessment, behaviour and so forth. They only mentioned personal racial references when probed by the research questions.

I am wary about acknowledging I am in the racial minority. I will not talk in 'Black' terms for fear of repercussions on my future progression. Participants were aware of their place on the course, both in securing it in a competitive interview and in maintaining and succeeding on it. There was some wariness and unsureness of making any comments about being Black and how they really felt, in case it was passed on to the course tutors. As the interview took place in one of their teaching rooms and one of the teachers had facilitated the interview in the first place, this produced an uneasiness in some participants. This was somewhat mollified when my complete detachment from their course, lack of relationship with their tutor and total anonymity of individual and institution were stressed and re-stressed.

My Mum and Dad are the main motivators for me becoming a teacher. Participants were the first to become teachers in their family or in their community. For those who did have closer

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or wider family members in professional roles, they felt they had the modelling and expectation that they could succeed in the white world of teaching.

Most things are against me and people around me, wouldn't expect or believe in me to become a teacher. For those who did not have closer or wider family members in professional roles, they felt the weight of a non-expectation that they could succeed in teaching and some even had their motivations questioned, with the suggestion that they considered themselves above their social level.

B The Teaching Profession is white-centric and blind to BME issues
*We have to break the mould because we're not really being represented. P*articipants draw on their negative past experiences as pupils at school which made them unhappy and bemused. Their school experiences also helped them to see deficiencies in the school system, including school policies and staff attitudes.

For the sakes of BME children, we BME trainees have to go into teaching because our children are labelled and left there. Participants felt they would provide difference and hope for BME pupils. They saw these problems as stereotyping these pupils as non or low-achievers and being disruptive. They saw themselves as providing role models with the potential to both positively affect school policy and have a direct impact in the classroom. Their 'insider' knowledge' would allow them to understand and provide interventions and communication that a non-BME teacher could not.

It's an uphill struggle…"this industry's hard". They saw the ITE course as difficult and possibly unachievable if they did not push all of the way. They felt in danger of being unsuccessful, citing family commitments and having to adopt schools' [white] cultural ways of dressing, speaking and conduct. When coupled with an awareness of their race and culture, in what they see as a very white world, this gave them an under-confidence which they believed would be yet another obstacle to overcome as well as the other general professional standards and behaviours they had to adopt. They saw themselves as having to overcome much more than their white peers.

C] Racism constricts and stereotypes
I am most comfortable working in a multicultural school
all of them spoke positively about being in multi-cultural schools, particularly if a significant proportion of the teachers, were from BME groups. To them it showed that the school was willing to commit to equality and diversity and that there would be less racism. They felt less inhibited and more at ease in these schools. Some were careful to point out the good aspects of being in a White school.

They see me as the TA They felt that while they were trainee teachers on placement they had to continuously work against perceived assumptions that they were TAs because they were black and therefore not of higher professional status. These assumptions came from other staff, pupils and parents.

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They perceive me as loud and excitable and fitting a Black stereotype. This included not taken seriously and being seen as a lower status in a mainly or all white school. In these situations they had to work hard not to be seen as more of a Teaching Assistant or less skilled than their white partner.

Own ways of being are subsumed by majority thinking and culture

We appear to be in a multicultural setting but everyone sticks to their own group. They were shocked that the white students had racist views and that BME students stayed in their own groups. As some participants chose their university because it was close to their home and because of its multi-cultural population, they felt they would be unquestionably accepted, but as this occurred in what should be an accepting, anti-racist environment, it made them feel de-stabilised and uneasy.