

"No Seat at the Table": A Mixed Methods Analysis of Black Faculty's Experience at British Universities.

By

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This dissertation is submitted in partial fulfilment of the Master's of Science in Social Science Research Methods qualification at Cardiff University.

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These issues have not gone away, they exist, and continue to affect our everyday existence. Just know, that your experiences, feelings and voices are as important as you are, because we matter.

For Thelma.

I hope I've done you proud.

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The presence of Black people in UK Higher Education (HE), especially Russell Group institutions, continues to be minimal. Both students and faculty are grossly under-represented, despite claims that institutions are actively combatting racial inequality and inequity (e.g. through Equality, Diversity and Inclusion [EDI] policies). However, we know very little about the experience of People of Colour (PoC) in academic spaces and, especially, how they navigate institutional policies and practices ostensibly designed to confront matters of inequality.

In this study, I review EDI policies from 10 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). HEIs used almost identical phrasing and discourses within these policies, with a prominent emphasis of the institutions desire to be seen as 'diverse' and 'inclusive'. Despite this, institutions fail to deliver coherent examples of actionable measures that could be realised to better the experience of PoC on campus.

Moreover, I carried out 5 semi-structured interviews with members of Black faculty, detailing the barriers they faced in their working lives, along with their reasonings as to what, institutionally, may contribute to these barriers being produced. Participants discussed the concept of 'student mentorship' – in which staff suggested they possessed a moral responsibility to assist Black students in their navigations of HE – as well as their own experiences of microaggressions and discrimination, detailing an environment that is hostile and unwelcoming. In addition, they discuss their experience of exclusion from decision-making policies, senior leadership discussions and other faculty exchanges, especially as they attempted to introduce their own 'decolonisation' practices to aid in their navigation of the space.

This study illustrates the stark failings of university EDI policy when dealing with race relations and the combative environment this constructs for Black staff members who, I argue, are rarely offered a meaningful seat at the table.

Introduction

In 2020, a student at the University of Manchester, was filmed being held against a wall by campus security whilst they demanded he produced his Student ID. Zac Adan, a Black first-year student, was accused of 'looking like a drug dealer' by accommodation staff as he made his way back to his university accommodation from a local shop (BBC, 2019). This is one of a plethora of troubling examples in which students and staff have experienced racial profiling, microaggressions and general discriminatory behaviour at British Universities. This is in spite of universities commitment to 'equality, diversity and inclusion' which is peppered throughout easily accessible policy documents, action plans and even prospectuses.

According to a recent BBC study, non-white students make up less than 20% of the entry cohort for Russell Group Universities, with nearly 14% of this group being from Asian backgrounds. Students from Black backgrounds made up less than 5% of this grouping (BBC, 2019). Whilst detailed statistics on individual racial groups are scarce, statistics from lower within the education pyramid suggest that Black students are at greater risk of negative stereotyping and microaggressions 'compounded by lasting effects of colonialism effecting the discourse of the diaspora' (Patterson et al, 2000). Perhaps then, it would not be remiss to suggest these same issues may manifest themselves at the summit of the education pyramid.

In 1994, Glendora Johnson-Cooper produced one of the first pieces of academic literature which recognised the 'colonised nature of academia.' *Building Racially Diverse Collections: An Afrocentric Approach,* not only demonstrated issues with the way in which race is taught within large-scale institutions, but also provided a workable framework from which institutions could begin to navigate the complex processes needed to decolonise the curriculum. Despite this, 27 years later, many of the observations presented by Johnson-Cooper are unmistakably still observable within large-scale educational institutions.

Elijah Anderson (2015), in his work *The White Space,* discusses how People of Colour (PoC) often feel pressured to 'outwardly display their right to belong' in spaces historically occupied by white individuals. For students at universities, this may include; visibly wearing a student ID card, wearing university-branded clothing or carrying books, folders or any other item that would outwardly convey one's belonging to the 'university bubble.' For non-white students, failing to engage with this practice can have seriously dangerous consequences, as the aforementioned case demonstrates. Incidents of this nature are occurring despite all UK Higher Education institutions (HEI) having Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policies, mission statements and action plans, as well as many having dedicated departments tasked with tackling these issues (Begum & Saini, 2019).

This is perhaps unsurprising when considering the work of Matute et al (2018). In their work *Identities Across Borders: Legitimising or Challenging Stratifications,* Matute et al (2018) eloquently deconstruct the concept of the 'legitimising effect.' This concept, refers to the notion that PoC must 'legitimise their presences in all facets they occupy,' not just historically white spaces as Anderson (2015) suggests. When asked in a small-scale survey conducted as part of the '*Driving While Black, Flying While Brown'* project, 53% of regular 1st Class airline passengers – who identified as white - said they would 'question how a person had afforded a ticket if they were a PoC. 14.6% of this sample even suggested that they would be willing to go up to the individual(s) in question and ask them directly (Sharma, 2003).

In the facet of academia, particularly within the faculty, we know that the uptake from non-white students into staff positions is drastically low. Of the percentage of Black students that attend Russell Group Universities, less than 2% go on to occupy roles within the faculty (e.g Post-

Graduate Researchers (PGRs), Readers etc.) with less than 1% making up 'leadership roles' (Burke, 2018). For many potential Black academics, it is an 'uneasy fit {…} into the constraints of a system designed to support whiteness,' (Sutherland, 1990).

As previously mentioned, this is despite HEIs having publicly available Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy(s), diversity action plans – and for some – the controversial affirmative action policy, used to 'alter entry tariffs required for individuals from "underrepresented backgrounds"' (Gamson et al, 1994). This clearly demonstrates a fundamental structural problem in the way in which HEIs comprehend the issues facing Black students, as well as the ways in which we are able to progress to positions within the faculty.

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, current academic literature concerning this topic will be outlined, aiding in the contextualisation of the debate within the academic context, as well as highlighting the gaps within the discourse and the need for this study to be undertaken. Following this, in Chapter 2, the methodology of this study will be outlined. The research design will be presented in detail, including both practical and ethical difficulties associated with researching race as a Person of Colour (PoC). In Chapter 3, split into Sections A & B, the findings of this study will be presented. Section A consists of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy analysis, which reviews the accessibility and effectiveness of 10 randomly selected British Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Section B presents the findings of semi-structured interviews, conducted with members of the Black faculty from multiple institutions including; individuals involved with the creation and design of EDI policy, as well as those involved with Steering and Action groups within the university. Finally, Chapter 4 will present conclusions drawn from the data collected. This section will also provide a detailed collation of measures this study recommends to better the experience of Black staff and students on campus.

Literature Review

Whilst there have been plentiful amounts of academic research conducted interrogating the concepts of 'race' and identity politics within the Social Sciences, the subject of inquiry often follows similar themes including; conceptual analyses of structural barriers, analysis of past historical events or observing examples of discrimination or microaggressions within a given context (Perez-Huber et al, 2015). Whilst many academics may wish to analyse other concepts and ideas, Perez-Huber et al (2015) cite a lack of funding available from research bodies to dissect 'concepts that fall outside of the established and accepted concepts.'

Despite this, there are still many notable examples of writers and academics discussing copious examples of the nuanced nature of navigating overwhelmingly white spaces. Within this chapter, these sources will be discussed, allowing this study to be framed within the wider scholarly context.

Framing the Policy Issue

David Gillborn (2001), discusses the changing government approaches utilised to manage issues faced by non-white pupils in mainstream education. From 1945 to the mid-late 50s, a policy of 'ignorance and neglect' was permitted. Gillborn (2001) suggests this was largely in response to 'a large-scale public uproar' in response to the number of non-white citizens travelling from the Commonwealth to answer the call to Britain's Labour shortage after WWII. It has been well-documented that at the time of the arrival of HMT Windrush in 1948, Attlee's Labour government were actively encouraging 'white immigration' from Eastern European countries in a hope that they would 'assimilate' better with 'our way of life.' The influx of non-white bodies, who were promised citizenship, labour and a better quality of life within the 'motherland' was both unexpected and vastly underestimated (Hewitt, 2020). Those who arrived via HMT Windrush, were greeted with 'colossal distain' from many white Britons and were forced into 'low-paid, high labour jobs {…} despite many of them having qualifications that far surpassed their white counterparts.' (Hewitt, 2020).

The abuse and discrimination experienced, as well as continued prevalence of 'colonial ideals' towards supremacy led to an Assimilation policy approach. Gillborn (2001) discusses how through the late-50s to the late-60s, non-white individuals were made to feel – and often 'actively told' – that they must join the 'British way of life.' Cultural practices that fell outside of 'established British activities {…} particularly culinary and social' were considered to be examples of 'disrespect' towards the country that had 'brought them in.' For many people who had lived their whole life in another country, being told to change their practices was both upsetting and practically difficult. Surviving members of the Windrush generation have discussed the difficulties in 'learning to cook new food {…} work with different ingredients {…} especially when people wouldn't even help you (sic) learn' (Belcham, 2014).

Post 1966, the emphasis on integration became prevalent within politics, particularly within policy. The Race Relations Act - passed in 1965 and then redrafted and passed again in 1976 - was the first acknowledgement from the government that there 'may be some disparities {…} largely dependent on one's racial background' (Schaffer, 2014). The establishment of this act also led to the first government committee, the Commission for Race Equality (CRE), set up to investigate issues regarding race in wide-scale institutions such as schools and colleges. Gillborn (2001) argues this was the first 'acknowledgement by the government that inequalities may have existed,' a notion that was almost unthinkable 10 years prior.

This is also the first time we see a UK government applying a policy approach to mainstream education. Issues regarding race were taught in schools, however, this was often done in a 'patronising' or 'exoticised' manner. Gillborn (2001) suggests that whilst race was considered to be a 'concept people could identify' it was not considered something 'British,' not effecting the 'British student.' A wider pedagogy of 'life styles' over 'life chances' led to a reproduction of stereotyped ideology which continued to exoticise non-white students within the classroom, as well as singling them out for activities not required by their white counterparts. An example of this being the Compensatory Programme, introduced in 1969 in an aid to 'assimilate Black students to British life.' The emphasis of these compulsory extra-curriculum programmes were to 'make good' the 'cultural deficits of minority students,' teaching content such as; British history, language and popular culture to allow students to 'become more British.' (Comer et al, 1991)

From the late-70s onward, the concepts of Cultural Pluralism and Multiculturalism dominated the political discourse. During this time, an official committee was set-up to analyse the education of non-white pupils. The Rampton & Swann report, despite being commissioned to investigate issues regarding race, sporadically mentioned race, choosing to focus more on the issues of class and 'life style.' (Parekh, 1988). The report was also heavily criticised for continuing to support the 'IQist' notion of non-white students innately being less intelligent as well as failing to consider whether teacher's own implicit biases may lead to a reproduction in inequality.

Gillborn (2001) suggests that it is perhaps a result of this 'laisse faire approach of government' which led to a more overt rejection of multiculturalism during the Thatcher years. Coined New Racism, Gillborn (2001) discussed how Thatcher's government put great emphasis on 'strong cultural homogeneity {…} whilst ignoring the needs of minority communities.' An emphasis on 'Colour-Blind' policy meant that many of the issues facing non-white students were not considered as 'valid reasons for failure.' Gillborn (2001) discussed how students were often seen to be 'not working hard enough,' which aided in the production of certain stereotypes towards students from particular backgrounds, which we still see reinforced today.

Gillborn (2001) provides a comprehensive analysis of policy changes over time. Understanding how policy has changed – and the ideology behind it – may aid us in our ability to comprehend the reasonings behind issues that are still prevalent within the education system to this day. One of the most poignant discussions we can take from Gillborn's (2001) work is the underlying colonial definitions that characterise the construction of UK government policy. Where successive government's failed to engage with issues of race, policy has failed to develop in a conducive manner. Whilst Gillborn's (2001) analysis does not stretch past the early years of New Labour, the fact that many of his observations can still be seen in mainstream UK education demonstrates the importance of this piece.

The Changing Faculty Landscape

Of course, whilst changes in governmental policy have an impact on policies enforced by HEIs, they are not the sole factor behind their construction. Andrew Pilkington (2018) in his chapter *The Rise and Fall in the Salience of Race Equality in Higher Education*, directly challenges the established dichotomies that create university policy and asks why more is not being done to support a change in 'student populous.' Stemming from the work of Gillborn (2001), Pilkington (2018) discusses how under Blair's New Labour government, HEIs were encourage to review issues of 'race, diversity and inclusion' within the institution, paying a large amount of attention to the 'attainment gap between non-white students and their peers.' Pilkington (2018) suggests this falls in line with the general policy approach for the New Labour government focussing on

‘boundaries, barriers and {…} other obstacles which could halt one’s progress.’ Pilkington (2018) adds that this ‘mantra’ was applied heavily to education over other public sectors.

Whilst New Labour’s policy approach may have had good intentions, its application – or lack of – demonstrated how important tackling issues of race and integration fell within the hierarchy of the policy agenda. Pilkington (2018) suggests ‘the state exerted considerable pressure on universities to address race equality’ but that this only lasted ‘{…} for the first 2 years of the new millennium.’ Despite the initial pressure on universities from the government, the scheme was overlooked once ‘more pressing political requirements arose’ most notably the British involvement in the conflict in Iraq. As a result of this, HEI inspection was relaxed and institutions were afforded greater freedoms towards the design of their policies, so long as they ‘promised to continue to counter issues of discrimination and harassment on campus.’ Pilkington (2018) argues that it is this general neglect – particularly the ability for HEIs to navigate their own epoch with little to no regulation from government during the design and implementation of policy – that has contributed to the overall ‘ineffective(ness) and tokenistic policy(s) we see implemented today.’

Academic Retention

This is deeply problematic when considering the entrenched issues and negative experiences for PoC within academia, largely before ‘race equality’ was considered the ‘in thing.’ Carter et al (2000) conducted an in-depth report into the recruitment strategies of HEIs as well as discussing the experience of ‘minority academics’ once they occupied their role. They found a ‘deep-rooted and systemic neglect towards minority academics {…} especially when confronted with issues regarding race.’ Another concerning takeaway from this report noted large disparities in retention of non-white staff compared to their white counterparts.

Table 4 Proportion of staff at professor grade by ethnicity/nationality group and length of service (%)[5]

Length of Service	Minority British	Minority non-British	White British	White non-british
4 years or less	2.0	1.0	4.0	3.0
5-8 years	3.0	1.5	8.0	6.0
9 years and over	9.0	9.5	16.0	18.0

2.1 – Carter et al (2000).

For non-white academics at ‘professor grade,’ the years of service at one institution are sometimes less than 50% of their white counterparts. This is in spite of both candidates having identical qualifications. This is a trend that is particularly concerning in ‘historical institutions,’ many who occupy the Russell Group of universities. Carter et al (2000) determined that the largest contingent of non-white students who attended HEIs often attended a ‘Post-92’ institution – the term coined for former Polytechnic institutions. Despite this, white students still continued to out-number their non-white counterparts at both Pre and ‘Post-92’ institutions.

2.2 – Carter et al (2000).

Table 3 Distribution of ethnic/national groupings within HE sectors (%)

	Pre-1992 Universities	Post-1992 Universities	Colleges	Medical Schools
White British	57.0	29.0	11.0	3.0
Minority British	54.0	33.0	5.0	8.0
White non-British	76.0	16.0	4.0	4.0
Minority non-British	73.0	20.0	3.0	4.0
All	59.0	28.0	10.0	3.0

Throughout the data from this report, the only time that non-white students outnumbered white students were within medical schools. Writers such as Brown (1992), suggest this could largely be down to the 'grand-expectation model of minority families.' Brown (1992) discusses how 'minority parents' are more likely to see educational attainment as a route towards societal betterment. As a result of this, 'minority parents' may push their children towards studying subjects with a 'defined and respected career path,' which also can provide financial stability. Brown (1992) argues that 'minority parents' see this as a way to 'combat the struggles of navigating (society) as a minority.' Interestingly, Brown (1992) cites how this model of 'aggressive success' could be used by some to reinforce implicit biases and stereotype, suggesting this could be a contributing factor to non-white students undertaking certain subjects/topics at school, Further and Higher Education.

Negative Staff Experience

The 'opening of Higher Education to students from non-traditional backgrounds' (Goduka, 1996) is not a new 'phenomena.' Since the introduction of the Race Relations Act – particularly the revised version release in 2000 – HEIs and other institutions have taken an 'active effort' to both 'engage and recruit' individuals from 'non-traditional backgrounds.' (Roberts, 2011). Despite the 'active recruitment drive,' some argue the effort is largely tokenistic and both pedagogy, curriculum and academic structure have failed to reflect this change in consumer. Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury (2018), dissect how not recognising the 'change in consumer' can lead to the production of microaggressions and other forms of covert discrimination. Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury (2018) connote that HE sees itself as an 'imagined utopian space, beyond racial inequality' and it is this 'superiority complex {...} which gives rise to racial tensions.' Both Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury identify as Academics of Colour and throughout their piece, give plentiful examples of incidences where they have experienced microaggressions within the work place.

> *'Having arrived early to work on a Monday morning, I keyed in the security code and entered the staff room. I photocopied the papers for the seminar sessions I would deliver later that day. As I stood waiting for the final copies to print, a member of the cleaning staff entered the room. 'Are you supposed to be in here?' she asked in an accusatory tone. Slightly stunned, I simply responded 'yes.'*

2.3 – Excerpt from Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury (2018).

In the above excerpt, Joseph-Salisbury recounts an example of micro-aggressive behaviour experienced within the faculty from a white member of the cleaning staff. Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury (2018) suggest these types of encounters – namely constantly having to 'legitimise your presence' through 'legitimising icons' such as IDs (Anderson, 2015) – lead some Academics of Colour to 'question whether academia {…} is really suitable for them.'

It is experience such as these which can produce an emotional strain on PoC, leading them to question whether they 'belong' in the institution, balancing this with the mental health strain of 'internalised trauma from discrimination' (Kuey, 2015). Hood (1992), suggests this 'emotive strain' is seen within the retention statistics of Black academics within majority white universities. Unlike the aforementioned Carter et al (2000) report, Hood (1992) analyses the complex reasonings why Black academics – particularly Black men - leave academia, for some, it is not a choice. Black academics are often curtailed into modules focussing on 'race,' identity or migration politics and are restricted from teaching on other modules. Hood (1992) argues that universities 'perhaps not intentionally,' see these staff as an 'approach to dealing with diversity issues.' HEIs, they argue, take on 'diverse members of staff, to 'demonstrate an outwardly diverse campus {…} in an attempt to mirror wider society.' Of course, HEIs being businesses, this is only possible when budgets allow. Hood (1992), discusses how Black academics are overwhelmingly more likely to be cut from roles, with 'diversity-led modules' the most likely to be removed from the curriculum if budgets are tight.

The Policy Response

Some writers have argued that cases like those presented by Johnson & Joseph-Salisbury (2018), are indicative of the way in which 'racism navigates around the parameters of policy.' (Gillborn, 2014). Robert Miles (1994) in *Racism after 'race relations,'* concludes that policy is still conditioned to see non-white bodies as 'aliens.' Miles' (1994) argues that governmental policy fundamentally still has colonial undertones which sees those who do not 'visual appear as white Britons {…} to be invaders in our home.' In contrast to the United States, the British attitude towards race has been to 'ignore and neglect the needs of communities seen as alien' (Favell, 1998), encouraging policies that actively encourage assimilation to the 'British way of life.' Writers such as Professor Kehinde Andrews (2019), argue that this policy attitude is a 'veiled attempt to prioritise the needs of white Britons over those of Colour {…} this is, in essence, government-sponsored white supremacy.' The policy utilised by government directly manipulates the policy constructed by large-scale institutions, including HEIs.

Issues Researching HEIs

Despite the plethora of examples listed above, the amount of research that has been undertaken within Higher Education is rather lacking. Whilst there are plentiful discussions surrounding race within large-scale institutions, HEIs seemingly get missed. Harper (2012) discusses how current research concerning topics of race and identity often focus on how race intersects with other societal constructs. In doing so, research neglects the impact that racism and institutional racism has on individuals within these large-scale institutions. However, as HEIs are often listed as 'registered charities,' not publicly listed companies, they are under no obligation to allow researchers to conduct study on their practices, particularly if it concerns issues of 'wellbeing or student support {…} which may affect an institutions reputation' (Tight, 2012).

In addition to this, writers have suggested that some HEIs actively encourage against research topics which may be seen as 'inflammatory' or 'provocative.' Naturally, as universities have become more accepting of individuals from "non-traditional backgrounds," topics of inquiry for student-led research often reflect this. Castle (1993) discusses how non-white students may be

more likely to wish to include concepts related to race, identity or discrimination within their projects, as this is a reflection of their lived experience. Castle (1993) suggests that despite this – in line with many HEIs HR policy(s) – students may be 'covertly encouraged to follow other lines of inquiry.' This may be reflected in students receiving 'lower grades for projects that challenge the faculty,' as well as being encouraged by tutors, lecturers and other faculty members to 'tone down their projects.'

The above may lead some to question how this type of practice could happen when most HEIs have a set EDI policy framework that encourages 'diversity on campus.' Tlili (2007) attempts to shed light on the complexities behind this. Tlili (2007) suggests that whilst HEIs are 'statutory obligated to include an equal opportunities policy,' what they choose to include on their curriculum is up to them. Concerning university curriculum, many universities have a set of 'protected characteristics' which are deemed 'off-limits' for modules to discuss. These include topics such as 'Islamic extremism, trans issues {…} and issues of race' (Hosein & Rao, 2020). It is argued that this is included to 'discourage lecturers from discussing topics that may be alien to them {…} (as well as) not offending the students etc.' (Tlili, 2007). Tlili (2007) argues that it is precisely the 'cleansing of the curriculum,' which causes some in academia to feel like their voices are 'not warranted' and, as a result, can lead to the lack of retention of those form 'protected characteristics.

Methodology

In this chapter, the design of this research study will be discussed, including; the sampling methods used, the ethical considerations, validity and generalisability of future research. This chapter also notes the unique difficulties one may experience when researching 'race' as a Person of Colour, detailing the measures utilised to address these.

Research Design

To effectively answer the research questions posed, a qualitative approach was applied to this project, using a combination of a thematic analysis with semi-structured interviews. Writers such as Milner (2007) advise researchers discussing topics of 'race and identity' to employ a qualitative approach if the research allows. Milner (2007) argues this allows researchers to elicit data that would normally be 'devoid of context.' This is important for issues that affect participants personally, especially when investigating how they navigate certain contexts in relation to this 'personal construct.'

In addition to this, Milner (2007) also stresses the importance of 'researcher positionality' when researching issues which can elicit 'emotional responses.' Milner (2007) provides a researcher framework, which unlike other frameworks within Social Sciences, encourages the researcher to 'be aware of their positioning {…} and where we are framed within the wider debate.'. This differs from other widely used research frameworks which often encourage the researcher to be 'impartial {…] to elicit a more empirical study.' (Niemi & Young, 2017).

As a Person of Colour researching race, it is almost impossible to detach from the wider debate. However, employing Milner's (2007) framework allowed me to collate valuable data, in times gaining responses that may not have been able achieved had I not occupied my social position.

The qualitative approach of this project allowed me to utilise a previous sample of HEIs when choosing which institutions policies would be reviewed in my document analysis. I used random sampling software to select 10 HEIs from the larger sample size of 18 HEIs attended by participants involved in a previous research study. *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee,* which I conducted in 2020, discussed non-white student experience(s) on campus, as well as their attitudes towards their institution's EDI policy. The documents included in this study were identified by the key words or phrases; *'EDI', 'Equality', 'Diversity', 'Inclusion', 'Race'* and '*Identity'* and were limited to 2 per institution.

For the second section of this research, the work of Taylor (1997) was utilised to considering the need for 'context to be applied to policy.' As a result, I decided to undertake semi-structured interviews with staff members, who identified as 'Black,' 'Of Black Heritage' or as Person/People of Colour (PoC).' Unlike other constructs, the relative infancy of 'race research' within social sciences makes it difficult to recruit participants without access to 'gatekeepers' (Warren, 2000). Thus, snowball sampling was deemed the most appropriate method to use for recruitment in this study. Participants came from a variety of roles within the university context including; module conveners, faculty staff, policy makers and steering group leads.

Sampling and Data Collection

Documents sampled were randomly selected from a sample of institutions attended by student participants involved in a piece of my previous research, entitled *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee.* In total, 20 student participants from 18 institutions were involved in this study, which was undertaken in 2020. These 18 institutions were entered into a random sampling software in which 10 were outputted for review.

A limit of 2 documents per chosen institution was enforced. This cap was used in an aim to counter the effect of higher university budgets, which allow some universities to have a specialist EDI department within their HR sector (Kaufman, 1999). Documents were only included if they were 'publicly available.' This meant that the documents had to be available through the university's public-facing website, or within prospectus material, and not only accessible through staff or student intranets.

Once the documents were collated, a thematic analysis was undertaken. A thematic analysis is a method used within qualitative research to collate 'themes and patterns' from a researcher's data which can be used to create a 'comparative and analytical review' of said data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method was utilised within this study primarily to denote similarities between the language used within policy(s) and to allow discussion as to whether these were consistent dependent on the size and budget of an HEI.

Following this, participants we recruited to undertake semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews refer to interviews that utilise predetermined 'stem questions,' which allow the interviewer the ability to 'gain a response to a question from participants {…} whilst maintaining some control of the structure and content' of said questions (Longhurst, 2016). These were used to ensure answers received related to questions regarding university policy, whilst still having the structural freedom to allow participants to discuss facets of their experience that may not have been considered prior to the interviews taking place.

Where possible, participants were selected from different institutions to reflect the number of HEIs involved in the policy review. Participants self-identified as 'Black' 'Of Black Heritage' or a 'Person of Colour,' someone Blackwell (2017) refers to as 'Black, brown {…} anything visibly non-white.' Interestingly, Blackwell (2017) also supports the notion that PoC 'need spaces white people don't occupy' to counter the 'expectation of non-white people to explain race to white people.' This ratified to me that I would still be able to obtain quality empirical data whilst occupying the group of study.

Utilising professional connections made during a placement undertaken within the EDI department at Cardiff University, I obtained access to participants from other HEIs whom occupy roles such as; senior lectures, faculty support staff and teaching PGRs. In addition to this, through the snowball sampling technique, I was able to gain access to 2 participants who are actively involved in steering groups within their respected universities. Steering groups are designed to actively analyse the experience(s) of individuals occupying a particular 'protected characteristic' and response to the wider institution on 'policy matters that need changing {…} to better suit those effected.' (Burchartd et al, 2008).

All participants worked, or attended, one of the 10 HEIs selected to conduct the document analysis. This meant I had 8 participants in total; 3 as part of an initial pilot study done to assess the validity of my questions, and 5 to be included in this piece. Once participants were identified through professional connections and contact was formed, I provided each participant with a detailed overview of this current project, my previous project – which informed the selection of the institutions involved – as well as the 'stem questions' which would structure our interview(s). This read as follows:

Dear (x),

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to you in the anticipation that you may wish to take part in a piece of research I am currently undertaking as part of my MSc in Social Science Research Methods at Cardiff University. (name of professional contact) provided me with your contact details and believed this may be of interest to you.

I am conducting a qualitative study into the experience of Black staff members within the British Higher Education context. The first part of this piece, which I conducted in 2020, focused heavily on the student experience as well as analysing some of the policy in place within these Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). For this section, I am focussing on the staff perspective within the context, as well as conducting a more detailed analysis of university Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) documentation, informed by my discussion(s) with previous participants.

If you have the time and are willing, I would greatly appreciate your involvement in this project through conduction of a semi-structured interview. These interviews are scheduled to last for ***1 hour*** *but of course can run longer if you wish. Do to the current COVID-19 guidelines, these interviews will have to take place virtually through a video conferencing software of your choice. Interviews will be recorded via Dictaphone and transcribed at a later date. All participants will be provided a pseudonym to protect their identity and any other information you wish to be removed from the interview can be at your discretion.*

If this is something that would interest you or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in contact.

Kind Regards,

Jack

(Email)

(Mobile phone number)

In total, 3 'pilot interviews' and 5 semi-structured interviews were conducted. These involved 5 set stem questions which participants were sent prior to the conduction of our interview. Further 'unstructured' questions were asked if/when participants mentioned 'topics of interest' that would not have been covered via the stem-questions. Interviews were conducted between 2nd June – 10th August 2021. Due to the UK government regulations regarding COVID-19, all interviews were conducted remotely utilising video-conferencing software such as; Skype, Zoom or Face Time.

I conducted 3 'Pilot' interviews with individuals who fit the sample population, but were not part faculty at the universities involved in this study. I conducted these interviews to allow me to 'fine tune' my questions, knowing that I would have limited time with participants due to their busy schedules. Pilot Participant 1 (PP1), mentioned that asking how participants felt 'being in' British Academia could be misconstrued as me asking how they felt within their institution and could miss discussions on the wider context of British Academia, particularly if participants had/have taught at more than one British HEI. As a result, I reframed this question to 'How have you found **navigating** British Academia?' to reflect this feedback.

In addition to this, PP3 mentioned the need to address the effects of the pandemic to the study. Prior to this Pilot Interview, I had considered a cursory mention of the pandemic within the content of the publication, but had not included this within my stem questions. PP3 argued that

COVID-19 may have had an effect on both the way 'modules could be delivered' or 'whether they were delivered at all.' Furthermore, PP3 stated that EDI policy may be 'difficult to enforce' when so much of university life had moved online. As a result of this, I made sure to include a full set question on the effect of COVID-19 on both policy-making and its implementation. After I had conducted my second interview of the study, a further stem question was added in which we discussed whether participants had a greater or lesser experience of overt/covert discrimination due to COVID-19, and the fact that participants spent less time with colleagues and students in-person.

All interviews were recorded on my Dictaphone, as well as being recorded using an in-built voice recorder on the laptop that the interviews were conducted on. Upon the completion of the interviews, they were transcribed on a personal laptop using Microsoft Word, and were coded in accordance to a set of 5 variables; policy, teaching, discrimination, support and improvement, to aid with the thematic analysis conducted once all interviews had been completed.

Research Evaluation

Ethics

All interviews were conducted by myself and participants were kept anonymous using pseudonyms used throughout the study, including in all conversations with my supervisor. As the above email states, all participants were aware that they must consent to being involved in this study. If participants agreed to take part, they were sent an informed consent form, which detailed the nature of the study, outlined the stem questions and detailed the likely way their responses would be utilised, using a small exert my previous research. Participants were asked to read this form, sign it, and return it before the start of their interview.

Before the start of each interview, participants were reminded of the likely structure of the interview, their right to refuse to answer or skip a question without reasoning and their ability to end the interview if they felt uncomfortable. They were reminded of this again at the end of the interview, as well as their right to contact me up to 3 weeks after the completion of our interview if they wished to redact/delete anything. Participants were provided with the opportunity to attend a 'debrief focus group' in which all participants would be invited to discuss their experience. In addition to this, they were also provided with a list of support associations, most notably Race Cymru, who provide pro bono counselling resources for individuals effected by racial discrimination.

Upon the completion of the thematic analysis, and assuming participants had not contacted me to change anything from their account, interviews were deleted from my Dictaphone, Laptop and back-up storage devices.

Validity, Reliability and Generalisation.

Following a strong qualitative approach, it was important to make sure that questions were not framed to be leading in any way. Using semi-structured interviews places a heavy emphasis on personal detailed responses so this needed to be as reliable as possible. Of course, we have to consider the impact of response bias in which 'participants may attempt to provide an answer that they think the researcher desires.' (Furnham, 1986). To counter this, where appropriate, I provided my own personal examples and/or anecdotes to responses from participants where there were similarities. Kanuha (2000) suggests the complexities attributed to researching race can produce issues when obtaining data. Contrary to other topics, Kanuha (2000) encourages an application of 'being native' rather than 'going native.' – a term often used to suggest a researcher has aligned too much with the participant's position (Evans, 2015 et al). Kanuha

(2000) states that being a Person of Colour means you have a unique perspective and shared experience which other researchers will not possess. As a result, it is important to demonstrate to participants how 'your insider knowledge belonging to the group' means that they will not be exploited and you will have an understanding of their experience, providing a unique position to obtain encouraging data.

As using interviews produces incredibly personal data, it would be difficult to both replicate and generalise the responses from this study in their entirety. Generalisability was attempted to be addressed through a wide-ranging recruitment policy, aiming to recruit participants from a variety of geographical locations within the UK. This policy was slightly limited due to the straw-poll nature of the institution selection for the policy analysis. I aimed to recruit participants from these 10 institutions to provide responses to notions found within the thematic analysis, however, this was not possible. Ultimately, due to a number of factors including many participants being on academic/research leave, I obtained participants from less of a geographical covering then I would have liked.

Despite this, the general structure of the interviews, including the set stem questions, meant that this study could easily be conducted again in the future, in an attempt to obtain a larger sample size. Whilst the response is unlikely to be clearly replicated, it would be easy to obtain similar, or larger, sample of data.

Undertaking research as a PoC provided unique insights that may not have been elicited if this research had been undertaken by a white researcher. The shared experience I had of some of the challenges participants discussed allowed me to build rapport and, I believe, made them feel comfortable to share experiences that for many, were traumatic. Whilst some may consider this a negative due to questions of objectivity, participants relayed how cathartic these discussions were and, in one particular case, I was asked by a participant to be involved in the review of a 'decolonisation' module at a HEI, as a result of an interview I conducted.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is the sample size impacted, in part, by the COVID-19 pandemic. For many participants, the impact of the pandemic meant they had many other more pressing concerns then conducting online interviews. For one of the participants, they were still in the process of teaching due to some HEIs enrolling another intake of students in January. For individuals working with EDI departments, they often occupy the same office space. Normally, I would have been able to conduct a number of interviews within their workplace, perhaps even employing another research method such as focus groups to obtain a large amount of data in a short amount of time. Due to the remote nature, many of the participants spoke to me on their own 'personal time' and for some, time may have put them off from engaging in the study.

In addition to this, the nature of the research, meant that some potential participants did not feel comfortable discussing their role within the production of university policy. This topic is very sensitive and some potential participants cited professional backlash as a concern, despite the fact that both themselves and their institution would be anonymised.

As previously mentioned, it is likely that some may question my objectivity as a researcher and, therefore, my ability to produce relevant data. Despite this being seen by some as a limitation, I feel my positioning as a Researcher of Colour allows me to obtain data that others may not be partial to. Whilst the stem questions aid in their ability to both structure the interview and break up the responses for analysis, a significant amount of my data was obtained from 'off-shoot questions' – questions that I asked in response to what participants had replied to the stem

questions. I do not believe this data would have been elicited if the researcher was not a Person of Colour.

Another limitation perhaps was the online nature of the interviews. Interviews conducted in person allow the researcher to clearly see the expressions of the participant, including utilising their emotional intelligence to determine whether the participant is feeling uncomfortable. This is difficult to comprehend when conducting virtual interviews. The experience of 'lagging' with internet connections also made it difficult for some interviews to flow in the manner one would expect when interviews are conducted face-to-face.

Findings and Discussion

This study was conducted in 2 parts; a document analysis which produced a thematic analysis, followed by 5 semi-structured interviews with faculty members of staff. For the purpose of this study, participants are referred to as 'Black' unless explicitly stated otherwise. This chapter has been separated into 2 sections in order to reflect the above dynamic, the first of which is evidenced below.

Section A - Policy Analysis

In line with wider UK government policy, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are required by law to have in place an 'equal opportunities policy.' (Hoque et al, 2004). This policy is required to provide 'support and protection for individuals {...} from protected characteristics,' ensuring that their background will not unduly affect their 'chances within the institution.' Despite the requirement for large-scale institutions to have these policies, in practice, incidences of overt discrimination, microaggressions and wide-scale institutional racism are still evident and wide-spread. Writers such as Holroyd (2015) have suggested that this may be to do with the 'implicit racial biases' which they argue are evident within large-scale institutions. Without PoC involvement in the production of these policies, they still 'represent the interests of the white majority.'

Within this study, 16 'EDI' documents were reviewed from 10 British HEIs. These HEIs were chosen based on this writer's previous research – entitled *Wake Up and Smell the Coffee,* which in part, discussed students' understandings and attitudes regarding university EDI policy. Of course, the benefit of 'multiple perspectives' is considered essential to the conduction of valuable 'race' research, particularly when institutions are considered to be 'hierarchical' (Posselt, 2012). As such, this study focuses on the staff perspectives of Black academics at UK HEIs.

Institutions were chosen via straw-poll from the sample of institutions attended by participants from previous research. This study incorporated the use of Howlett and Ramesh's (1993) *Patterns of Policy Instrument Choice,* in which they outline the manner to best conduct a policy analysis, to aid in the design of the approach utilised to analyse documents. Howlett and Ramesh's model identifies 5 stages one should follow when conducting a policy analysis. These are as follows:

Howlett and Ramesh's (1993) Model for Policy Analysis

- **Agenda Setting** – What is the policy designed to do? What terminology is utilised to inform the reader of this?
- **Policy Formulation** – What potential policy implementations can be considered to assess the issue? Are policy-makers bound by certain legislation when creating policy for the chosen area?
- **Adoption** – Based on the previous stage, what ideas will policy-makers adopt to introduce their policy? What school of thought will influence their ideas?
- **Implementation** – How has previous policy documentation dealt with the issue? Does it need to be drastically changed? What should inform these changes if needed?
- **Evaluation** – Is the policy working? What can be done to improve this? Are there discrepancies between what was set out within the policy and the actualised results?

Whilst Howlett and Ramesh (1993) present a clear and simple model to follow for policy analysis, this largely relies on one having access to the 'production stage' (Feldman, 1989) of the policy i.e. being involved in its creation. As this study reviewed policy that had already been created, the implementation of a thematic analysis was used, rather than a traditional policy review. After careful review, the 3 main themes from this analysis included;

- Racial Stereotyping – Does the university acknowledge that this is a problem and address it within the policy? Is this included with other 'protected characteristics?'
- Reporting Procedures/Applications - Does the university provide support measures for staff/students and does the policy outline how people would report issues? Does the policy address how the institution deals with applicants from 'non-traditional backgrounds' (both staff and student)?
- Decolonising the Curriculum – What is the university doing to decolonise the curriculum? Are there active measures in place to tangibly change aspects of the curriculum i.e. reading lists?

Recognising Racial Stereotyping

According to Solorzano (1997), the prevalence of racial stereotyping, microaggressions and discriminatory behaviour is still evident within large-scale institutions. Solorzano (1997) cites Pearce's (1974) quote 'the withering effect everyday racism has on the Black minority' as the major issue non-white individuals face when navigating white majority spaces. Daily experiences of microaggressions and discrimination, coupled with a curriculum that often 'fails to challenge established stereotypes,' leads to non-white individuals feeling a sense of 'isolation {…} and a lack of belonging' in which one's 'intellectual identity is questioned.'

Solorzano's (1997) observations came in 1997, 13 years prior to the reformed Equality Act 2010 which governs the manner in which large-scale institutions operate (Wadham et al, 2010). Since large-scale institutions, of which HEIs are classified, are required to operate with some measure of Equality and Diversity Framework (Tlili, 2007). For this study, I wished to review whether HEIs alluded to these problems within these frameworks.

For the vast majority of institutions included in this study, policy failed to explicitly mention issues of race and identity when discussing equality and diversity on campus. The overarching response was a 'listing' of the 'protected characteristics' covered by the policy. Institutions were keen to stress how policy was introduced in response to the Equality Act and that they acted in the required manner by a public body.

> '*This policy has been created in response to the Equality Act (2010) and earlier equality legislation for which the University is required to follow'*
>
> *'The Policy builds upon the foundation(s) of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance'*
>
> *'As a public body, the University has formal duties under the Equality Act to promote Equality {…} the institution has a duty of care to all students under the Equality Duty'*

In addition to this, HEIs also stressed the reasoning behind their policy(s).

> *'This is an over-arching policy designed to outline the fundamental principles of the University's commitment to equality and diversity'*
>
> *'The purpose of the* {redacted for confidentiality} *Policy is a commitment to Equality and Diversity, as is the University's legal duty'*
>
> *'The University is firmly committed to the promotion of equality and diversity {…} and will not tolerate discrimination in any of its forms'*

Despite this, only 1 of the HEIs reviewed, actively mentioned the existence of racial stereotyping, let alone considered the role their policy(s) could play in developing an environment that could counter these issues. However, this was only evident in a specific document - focusing on race - and was not prevalent within the wider EDI framework. For the other HEIs reviewed, a list of protected characteristics was provided to demonstrate which 'identity concepts' (Woodward, 2018) were expected to be covered by the policy. In some cases, the lists of 'protected characteristics' were accompanied by a definition or appendix which briefly identified some of the terminology within the piece, as well as how certain 'discrimination practices' could manifest themselves.

The potential ignorance towards the needs of non-white students is not just enforced by policy, it many instances, it may be a manifestation of the view in which HE as a sector, approaches 'race.' Hiraldo (2010), suggests an absence of Critical Race Theory (CRT) within HE curricula neglects the 'counter story-telling' of marginalised groups. Neglecting this school of thought, Hiraldo (2010) suggests, leads the 'centring of whiteness as normative.' Non-white individuals work is then only discussed within 'facets of pain and suffering,' rather than including celebrations of the successes and achievements of People of Colour within the curriculum. Positioning non-white individuals as outside what is considered 'normative,' Hiraldo (2010) argues, leads to a 'neglect of the issues affecting People of Colour.' These divisions are most obviously seen when observing 'student affairs and the interests of the academy.'

Reporting Procedures

At an institutional level, there seemed to be a reluctance to actively acknowledge the existence of implicit biases and stereotype. This does not mean that HEIs do not have procedures in place to allow victims of discrimination to report instances that occur on campus, but rather that their policy(s) did not active acknowledge this as an ongoing issue for some students.

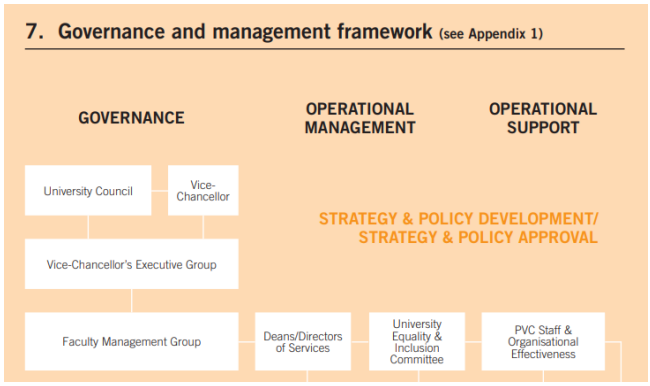
Only one of the reviewed institutions actively outlined the procedure both staff and students should follow if they have been a victim of discrimination or hate crime. The document, entitled 'The Hate Crime Reporting Document' (amended for 2018), details the identity groups that the institution considers to be 'protected characteristics' and would support were a member of the university to make a complaint of discrimination based upon them. In addition to this, there was clear outlining which details support groups, as well as avenues to follow to submit a complaint, for both staff and students.

> '*If you have been the subject to a hate incident/crime then you may require emotional support and/or support to report the incident/crime {…}* {University name} *offers several sources for support for students and staff'*

Interestingly, stemming from some of the concerns raised in the previous section, this university was the only HEI to recognise that being a victim of discrimination could be emotionally taxing

(see above, line 2). Brown et al (2000) discuss the importance of recognising the trauma and mental health effects navigating majority white spaces can have on Black individuals. In their work, *"Being black and feeling blue": the mental health consequences of racial discrimination,* Brown et al (2000) argue that there is a direct correlation between experiences of racial discrimination and depressive episodes. Within a longitudinal study conducted between 1987-1990, participants who identified being victims of racial discrimination reported strong levels of psychological stress up to 3 years after they initially reported the incident, coinciding with the conclusion of the study. Institutions not recognising these complex needs could lead to victims of discrimination 'becoming reluctant in their desire to report incidences.' (Noh et al, 2006).

Whilst other HEIs reviewed did suggest that complaints of discrimination and harassment would be 'taken seriously,' the lack of transparency and detail on the procedures that would be followed to deal with complaints of discrimination was incredibly concerning. Whilst most HEIs lacked both a comprehensive discussion of their reporting structure as well as the procedure complainants would follow, one institution did provide an extensive analysis of the structure that they wish to implement using their 'Strategic Action Plan for Diversity and Inclusion,' first implemented in 2014. This visual outlay is presented below:





Appendix 1 – Roles and responsibilities

The University's corporate responsibilities, together with the responsibilities of individual members, to promote and adhere to the Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Policy, are set out below.

The Council

The role of the Council is to:

- hold ultimate accountability for the Equality and Inclusion Policy
- assure itself that mechanisms are in place through which the University's Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan can be delivered
- receive regular reports from the University Equality and Inclusion Committee

University Equality and Inclusion Committee

The role of the University Equality and Inclusion Committee is to:

- raise awareness of the Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Policy across the University
- provide governance and management support to the implementation of the Equality and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

Writers such as Shaw (2005) argue that 'transparency of policy design' is incredibly important for those affected by it to 'trust the policy.' Shaw (2005) states that in making an institution's 'governance design' public, it allows for measures of Equality and Diversity policy to be seen as 'mainstream within the sector.' Considering all large-scale public sector institutions are required to have an Equality and Diversity framework in place by law, Shaw (2005) argues that the only reasoning institutions may refrain from publishing their 'governance policy' is because they are '{...} not confident in the policy(s) ability to rectify the issue in which it was created (for).'

Others have argued that EDI policy may often be created by individuals not from the backgrounds in which they are writing policy for. This could mean that writers do not feel 'comfortable or knowledgeable when discussing topics not effecting them.' (Colgan et al, 2007). We are acutely aware about the 'whiteness of higher education' (Cabrera et al, 2007) which some have argued leads to a 'tokenistic and content-lacking {...} policy' which makes it more difficult for individuals from 'marginalised groups to navigate the space.'

'Decolonising' the institution

Diagnosing the reasoning behind these issues is an exceedingly difficult task. With difficultly identifying the problems, some may argue this makes it difficult to produce worthwhile solutions. Boliver (2015) discusses how 'Highly Selective universities' – later defined as universities that occupy the Russell Group of universities – still 'overwhelmingly accept students from white backgrounds.' However, 'ethnic minority' students are still 2x more likely to attend university than their white counterparts (Modood, 1993). Despite 'ethnic minority' students being 'more likely' to go to university, non-white students are still overwhelmingly represented in 'Post-92' institutions in comparison to their white peers (May, 2008).

Whist the term 'ethnic minority' is problematic in our attempt to solve this issue, categorising all non-white individuals devoid of our cultural differences, does demonstrate fundamental problems with the recruitment of universities and the reasonings why non-white students may choose to attend 'Post-92' HEIs instead of those institutions within the Russell Group.

Peters (2015) suggests that the sheer 'whiteness' of the curriculum at many HEIs may be a contributing factor for Students of Colour in their decision to attend certain institutions. Peters (2015) suggests institutions rely too heavily on the 'established school of dead white men' when considering theories/theorists to include in their modules. Whilst there is no suggestion by Peters (2015) that this has/had been done intentionally, his discussion of the historical effects of 'Negritude' demonstrate a long-standing issue for non-white individuals navigating majority white spaces.

'Negritude' was a term coined by French-Speaking African and Caribbean writers in the early 1930s as a 'philosophical terminology to establish the {…} fact and value of Black selfhood and identity.' This school of thought brought attention to Black writers, such as William Du Bois, who had been marginalised from mainstream social science theoretical discussions. This movement was partially responsible for what is considered modern-day 'Black Studies.'

Here, Peters (2015) argues, is where the problem lies. Research and resources written by non-white authors are not considered to be 'research that happens to be written by Person(s) of Colour' but is seen through the lens of a '{…} Person of Colour who happens to have written research.' As a result, non-white research is seen as just that, 'non-white,' somehow different from that which white researchers produce. Peters (2015) argues this encourages HEIs to limit non-white research to discussions of 'race, racism and identity-works (sic)' rather than including it in the wider curriculum.

In recent years, HEIs seem to have taken more of an active interest in 'decolonising the curriculum.' Below is a small example of the number of 'mission statements' put out by a few of the HEIs included in this study, concerning how they believe they will deal with this concept.

> *'{…} the project is at the heart of making the curriculum at {the institution} more inclusive. The project involves working with module leaders to make changes to their curricula to decolonise reading lists, case studies and challenge the hidden curricula.'*
>
> *'An inclusive curriculum design framework, including a toolkit, case studies and baseline standards {…} will be published in 2021'*
>
> *'{the institution} values decolonising the curriculum through inclusive projects, initiatives and links to the diverse, local community'*

'Our staff support the need for decolonisation {…} and use the legislation of the Equality Act (2010) to inform the ways in which we can do this'

'Diversity brings a dual challenge for teaching staff {…} how to maximise the benefits such diversity brings to the learning environment whilst meeting individual student needs'

'Our decolonisation project aims to produce a universal design principle which can be applied to all learning and teaching {across the university}'

Within all of the 'Strategic Action Plans' analysed in this study, some note was made of 'decolonising the curriculum' as a way to greater develop diversity and inclusion on campus. Despite this, it could be argued that implementing 'decolonised practices' is more difficult then stating that an institution is going to do it. One institution reviewed in this study presented their 'Race Action Plan' to the Race Equality Commission in an attempt to receive their 'Charter Mark' – given to institutions that create a 'framework to identify the structural and cultural barriers for Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Staff' (AdvanceHE, 2021). This application was rejected, under the basis that 'it was deemed that their Action Plan was both robust enough to 'achieve real and lasting change' whilst also citing a 'lack of understanding of Race Equality at the University.'

'*The University was recently informed that is was unsuccessful in its bid to achieve the Race Equality Charter Mark Bronze Award. Despite the Self-Assessment Team working on the submission for more than two years, it was deemed our Action Plan was not robust enough to achieve real and lasting change in Race Equality at the University'*

The introduction of questionable policies, particularly in regards to decolonisation, is not just unique to this institution. Writers such as Lin (2005), note that 'established discourse' may be one of the reasons behind the ineffectiveness of these policies. Lin (2005) states that policy terminology is 'reflective of those who produce' them. As previously discussed, the number of non-white individuals who are located within the faculty, as well as within the wider university structure, is 'minuscule' (Modood, 1993). In response to this, Lin (2005) makes the suggestion that 'as whites wholly occupy higher education' what is produced and published by the institution is 'wholly reflective of those whom occupy (it).' Therefore, it could be suggested that as universities lack in non-white representation and involvement, it is unsurprising that what is produced may be somewhat lacking in its effectiveness.

This is not to say that all HEIs policy(s), particularly in regards to decolonising the curriculum, are poor. In fact, an example from one university did demonstrate some of the positive production that can occur when PoCs are directly involved in the design of policy. This university's document was written as a direct response to student concerns regarding the events around George Floyd's death at the hands of white Police Officer Derek Chauvin and the subsequent Black Lives Matter protests that followed. For some students, the university's 'lack of a stance' when it came to calling out instances such as these, combined with incidences that had occurred on campus which students felt the university did not deal with effectively, led to the university issuing this response.

The document is suggested to be used as a 'resources guide' for 'university members' (suggested to be faculty, considering the Student's Union has their own statement not reviewed in this piece), to aid in the deconstruction of 'colonial and imperial ideals within higher education.' Within this study, this was the only HEI who actively acknowledged issues

surrounding race – particularly the trigger points of recent years – and produced an active and employable approach to 'counter the issue.' Whilst some of the terminology included within the document could be considered to be problematic, e.g. the use of the definition 'BAME' to define non-white individuals, the recognition of a need to change things within the institution is quite refreshing.

> '*{…} many staff and students reported racial harassment doesn't only happen overtly {…} we can no longer afford to seek safety in historical beliefs where rhetoric and denial remain the main drivers'*
>
> *'Meaningful communication and involvement with the community {…} should be at the heart of change'*

However, despite this document being produced, measures to practically decolonise the curriculum – including changes to reading lists, introduction of more non-white sources outside of 'race' studies etc. – are still lacking. In addition to this, some individuals felt that, despite this document's creation – as well as involving non-white writers in its creation – it could still be considered by some, as 'tokenistic.'

Section B - Interview Analysis

Within this chapter, data obtained during the interview section of this study is presented. These interviews were conducted in compliance with the government's COVID-19 guidelines – meaning they were conducted remotely using video-conferencing software. Participants were asked to select a pseudonym before taking part in the project to protect their identity and shelter them from any professional backlash. Their responses have been structured in the subsequent thematic analysis. A warning that this section contains language some readers may find troubling or offensive.

The Burden of Responsibility

Utilising the work of Richards (2013), amongst others, we know that the representation of Black and other non-white academics within UK academia is staggeringly low. According to Richards (2013) statistics, '1 in 14 academics is from BME backgrounds' with '36% of Black staff being on temporary contracts' (Richards, 2013). For those Academics of Colour occupying these spaces, this can pose unique challenges and obstacles.

An example of this is raise by 'Jessica,' a senior lecturer at a Russell Group University, in which she discusses her interactions with non-white students on campus.

> Jessica - *{…} it is a little bit of a burden, obviously, because, you know, sometimes like I said, it's not my personal tutee. I don't, I said, it's a burden, I don't feel burdened by it, but sometimes I feel like {…} why don't students of colour feel that same ease to approach one of their white lecturers as they might feel to approach me?*

Jessica highlights a unique phenomenon experienced by many Black academics. Well documented research by Cabrera and colleagues (1999), discusses how Black students felt 'alienated' within the higher education environment. When asked to clarify why this was the case, many students highlighted a lack of faculty staff who 'looked like them.' Cabrera et al (1999) goes on to cite how some of these students suggested they 'actively sought out Black academics' in the hope they could engage in a 'shared experience within the faculty.'

This extra onus on Black staff, which is often not compensated in the manner in which staff would be if they formally took on a personal tutee, can lead to underlying stress and anxiety. 'Malcolm,' a senior lecturer from another Russell Group university in the North of England, says;

> Malcolm - *{…} in other countries, we have no issue talking about race, in fact we might talk too much about it sometimes. In the UK, people don't do that, they find it uncomfortable. If a Black student has an issue, they're not going to seek out a white staff member because they won't understand. It doesn't always have to do with 'race' (the issue raised by a student) but our unique positioning makes us aware of its effects within a given situation*

This is a sentiment also echoed by 'David,' a junior lecturer at a post-92 institution in the South West;

> David – *{…} it is difficult. It's not necessarily something I would change. {…} It's not the students' fault at all. I'm glad they feel they have someone to come to, to discuss their issues, but I can't help but feel like it's something my white colleagues don't experience*

Scholars such as Lynch-Alexander (2017), have discussed how many Black academics feel a need to provide 'mentorship to YBAs (Young Black Academics)' to demonstrate there is a 'clear pathway to academic success for these students.' Lynch-Alexander (2017) goes on to suggest

that Academics of Colour believe this type of mentorship for non-white students is their 'moral responsibility' to protect students navigating a space 'institutionally designed to exclude them.'

It is clear then, that whilst Black academics are lacking in their presence within HEIs, the extra onus they experience in comparison to white colleagues is ten-fold. For many, the unique positioning of being 'another Black or brown face in a sea of whiteness' (Ahmed, 2007), leads to a need to shelter others from the storm of discrimination, microaggressions and other experiences of everyday racism.

Staff experience

In my previous research, student participants noted a plethora of examples of both overt and covert discrimination experienced on campus. Whist many cited the ineffectiveness of university policy in dealing with these issues. Participants also cited the lack of non-white staff members within the faculty as reasoning why they felt a 'culture of discrimination' continued to exist on UK campuses. I asked participants of this study what they thought about students' responses and whether they themselves had been victims of discrimination. Here's 'Laura,' a Post-Graduate Researcher (PGR) from a Russell-Group University;

> Laura – *{…} I'm on a staff group {redacted for confidentiality}. I'm one of the only Black people on it, actually I might be the only one. I overheard some colleagues once before a meeting, talking about me. One definitely said the coloured girl, and the other was like, no {redacted for confidentiality} you can't say that and laughed*

This type of experience was echoed by 'Malcolm';

> Malcolm - *{…} I used to have my office on one side of the building and lots of the bigwigs shall we say, they had theirs on the other side. I used to walk round there to go to the vending machine and people asked me if I could vacuum their office or take out their rubbish. On more than one occasion. Different people too. I have to explain that I work here. Then they either shrug it off or their mortified. Either way it doesn't get away from the fact that a bunch of academics, they still see a Black body in this space as not normal.*

For other participants, the experience of overt discrimination was all too clearly visible. Here's 'Jessica,' recalling an incident that occurred at a local nightclub, frequented by students and staff:

> Jessica – *{…} he was really rude to my partner, and then asked if I would speak to him alone. I said, yeah, I'll meet you at the bar in a second {…} he proceeded to call me a fucking coon, because I was cooning for this fucking white man (participant's partner) {…} I remember thinking, I don't even know what happened. I didn't say anything bad to him. I didn't. I was so polite. Its somewhere I felt safe.*

For scholars such as Wittrup et al (2016), examples of non-white academics experiencing discrimination within the workplace is not out of the norm and is, in fact, indicative of the 'wider societal response to Black bodies in white spaces.' For Wittrup et al (2016), Black and other non-white academics experience discrimination because their presence is not 'normalised.' In some cases, Wittrup et al (2016) argues that academics may have been the unwilling recipients of affirmative action schemes. Affirmative action refers to schemes in which large institutions 'scale' their recruitment strategies to obtain staff from underrepresented backgrounds (Kellough, 2006). Applying these programmes, Wittrup et al (2016) argues, leads to large-scale institutions

believing they have 'done their bit to aid an issue' but largely fails to 'acknowledge or combat {…} the issues that create the problem in the workplace.'

In addition to more overt examples of discrimination, participants noted their concerns surrounding stereotyping, particularly when navigating situations where they may have had to challenge a perceived 'status quo.' 'Sophie,' a PGR (Post Graduate Researcher) at a Russell Group university explains;

> Sophie – {…} *I always find it really hard to speak out in meetings, because I talk quite loud and quite pointed and use my hands. I feel like some people would be like oh my god, she's so angry about this, don't listen to her. It's the angry Black woman again.*

Wendy Ashley (2013), discusses how the archetypal 'angry Black woman' is continually perpetuated within mainstream culture. For Black women within the workplace, 'challenging, questioning {…} or being perceived as "difficult" leads many to feel they are stuck between challenging a 'culture of misogynoir' and being able to keep their jobs. In addition to this, Ashley (2013) argues that Black women are most unlikely to receive support from white female colleagues, with their concerns not being covered by 'mainstream feminist thought.'

The intersectional nature of navigating HE as a Black woman is not lost of Jessica. She remarks about an incident she had with campus security:

> Jessica – {…} *I showed him my ID, it's a staff one. Not only did he say that it wasn't valid, he also questioned why I'd want to be there {*a student bar}. *When I told him I worked here {*the university}, *he was in shock but he continued questioning. Very coded language, I don't think he was expecting what he saw, for me to be a lecturer. White men are still very much the norm.*

Whilst policy implementation may have been put in place in all of the institutions attended by participants, both personal and second-hand anecdotal examples were given of interactions with campus security, admin staff and other gate-keepers who conducted what participants deemed 'coded behaviour.' Jenkins et al (2021), deems this type of behaviour 'common-place' at many historically white institutions. For Jenkins et al (2021), the 'existence of Black bodies within these spaces {…} makes individuals uncomfortable {…} whether they consciously feel this (or not).' Black male students in particular are 5x more likely to be stopped and asked to provide ID on campus whilst Black female students are 2x more likely than their white female colleagues. This number increase 'ten-fold when students are travelling in groups.' To note that these stereotypes effect staff as much as they effect students is of great concern.

Policy Failings

To some, it may seem shocking that members of staff could be directly affected by discrimination whilst working within institutions that have clear policies regarding equality and inclusion. As previously mentioned, student participants within my previous research cited university policy as a major obstacle in tackling onsite discrimination. These comments where in spite of what was discussed in the previous chapter – in which HEIs both stated, and in some cases actively promoted, support mechanisms available to both staff and students – to aid in 'assimilation on campus.' Despite this, how these policies work in practice do leave something to be desire, as 'David' discusses here;

> David – {…} *they* (the institution) *want to make the policies so inclusive of so many issues that they miss the nuances. Another thing that goes unnoticed often is who makes up the staff who decided on these. It's very often white women, maybe every so often you have*

a brown woman but it's definitely a white female dominated space. I've worked in 3 institutions in the UK and they've all been the same.

'Jessica' echoed these points;

> Jessica - {…} *In terms of the university, it's always tokenistic. Unless I can see that it isn't, I don't want to be involved. I don't want my name associated with it. I don't want to be anywhere near it. Not at all.*

Here's 'Sophie,' another PGR:

> Sophie – {…} *I remember they were doing stuff in the student's union, together with the university to get their Race Equality Charter Sticker. The VC (Vice Chancellor) was involved and there was a big fanfare talking about all the safe spaces and stuff {…} loads of pictures of Black student and other students of Colour about the place. As soon as they got it* (the charter) *it was all gone.*

As previously mentioned, Richards (2013) work highlights the distinct lack of non-white bodies within the Higher Education Sector. One of the stark observations from this work amongst some rather alarming statistics is the lack of Black involvement in senior leadership roles. According to a recent BBC report, only 155 Black academics hold professor positions within UK HEIs, out of a possible 23,000 faculty members (BBC, 2019). The lack of presence of Academics of Colour within the epochs of decision making and policy analysis leads to this perhaps unsurprising attitude held by participants above.

Decolonising the Curriculum

A long-held belief by many academics in the field of 'race-studies' suggests that HE curricula holds a euro-centric lens when it comes to teaching race and identity within the faculty. Le Grange (2019), notes that whilst 'universities suggest they are moving forward {…} they continue to reflect a past society' which many 'do not wish to acknowledge.' 'Decolonisation' refers to recognising this 'imbalance of knowledge' and implementing procedures to counteract the white dominated lens of education (Moncrieffe et al, 2018). However, the way in which this is done and how this impacts the wider university structure is contentious. For some, like 'David,' decolonisation is problematic:

> David – *{…} for me it's a buzzword, the thing that's in at the moment. 5 or 10 years ago we had Athena Swan (award), the push for gender equality on campus. Decolonisation just seems to be the new one.*
>
> I – *is there are reason you feel this way?*
>
> David – *{…} here I suppose they've not been the most receptive to the idea. When they have been they don't, no they won't, ask the people that it effects. How are you supposed to go about changing things from within without involving the people the issue effects?*

For others, a direct involvement with the university's approach to decolonisation was noted. Here's Jessica:

> Jessica – *{…} I recently developed a module on decolonisation but the piloting sessions, I've had to pilot the module myself. The university have been supportive of me doing it, but they haven't really provided me with any support to do it*.

'Jessica' was asked why she thought this may have been the case;

Jessica - *I think they expect me to know. Other stuff I teach {redacted for confidentiality} I'm comfortable with because it's my field. I've done it for years. The decolonisation stuff, even though it affects me, it's not my expertise. I feel like I've been bringing non-white sources, Black sources into my teaching for years. I'm not 100% comfortable with how I'd tell others to do it. But I'm Black, so of course they think I've got the answer.*

'Sophie,' surmises a similar reasoning for the ineffectiveness of policy;

Sophie – *'{…} we're supposed to be experts on the issue right? That's how they treat us. Like some all-knowing being that knows everything about being Black. But all our experiences are different, for you, for me, for all of us. I have colleagues who are very much middle-class. Who grew up with privilege. Their experience of Blackness is going to be different to mine, right? So how can you write a policy that doesn't consider these nuances? It's almost like suggesting we're all the same. All Black people are the same. That's certainly how me and some of my colleagues feel { …} we're never invited to the discussions. We're never asked to be involved in decision making, yet they're making these policies to "help" us. It's like there's no seat for us at the table.'*

For Black academics, the added pressure, and often workload, of advocating for issues that affect the Black community is burdensome. The conduction of these interviews coincided with conclusion of the trial of Derek Chauvin, the Police Officer who was found guilty of murdering unarmed Black man, George Floyd. This event, of course, sparked many protests, as well as debate, within many facets of society, effecting how many Black individuals were viewed when they navigated their daily societies. This was not lost on participants of this study, here's Laura:

Laura – *{…} I remember when it happened, just being absolutely devastated. Shocked. It was shocking. But can I say I was surprised? Not at all {…} I told one of my senior colleagues that I needed a day to process, to understand, to grieve almost. She was supportive, but told me it needed to go to my line manager. I sent the request and he sent back an email {…} questioning why I would even need it at all.*

I – *That's really troubling.*

Laura – *I was trying to protect my mental health, to protect myself somewhat. If I told them I was going to commit suicide, self-harm or harm myself, I would have definitely got more support. The thing is, those in power here (the university) don't get it. They don't understand what it's like to be in this world as a Black person, day in day out, just seeing this shit. They don't understand the pain or the struggle. It's no wonder really because we don't learn about it; not at school, not at uni. Nowhere.*

For Sophie, it was both the assumption that she would be affected, as well as the disregard for her response that really affected her:

Sophie – *{…} they asked if I was alright and when I said yes it was like "what haven't you seen it the news?" I don't know what they expected from me. Maybe they thought that I would break down and cry in front of them? Or maybe that I would be so amazed by colleagues asking me if I was, OK?*

Finally, for 'David,' this event reaffirmed his concerns in navigating society as a Black man;

David – {…} *it shows how society looks at us. I really thought for a moment, does it matter that I'm the first person in my family to come to uni? The first to be doing a PhD? Does it*

even matter when the world will still see us like this? Treat us like this? There's only so much someone can take before they ask; what's the point?

Being the 'spokesperson' for a societal group is not often felt by white colleagues, often because they occupy the majority within the institution. But the above demonstrates how even in institutions where active involvement in changing perceptions in utilised, comments and behaviour is still evident to the contrary. For Jessica, colleagues lack of engagement, effort and enthusiasm for shaping their modules to reflect a changing society was problematic:

> Jessica – {…} *the semester before one of my colleagues, she's quite senior to me, she was delivering a theory module about feminism. I was looking at her lecture slides, since I was doing something similar, to check we didn't overlap too much. I looked at this lecture, you know, she talks about intersectionality yet she never talked there about Kimberlé Crenshaw, about Toronto Burke, there's nothing, no Black faces on there at all.*

'Malcolm' expresses a very similar experience to that of 'Jessica,' again stressing the lack of engagement from white colleagues in decolonising practices:

> Malcolm – {…} *they always ask me, always, what should we do? What shall we use? They just don't seem to want to do their own research. They just want it put on a plate. The sources they should use and how they should use them, that's not engaging with decolonising because you're not trying to understand or to learn. What you're doing is doing something because you feel you have to. Students see straight through that I tell you.*

'The only way change will come'

Based on the responses from the last section, participants were asked what measures they believe should be brought in place to aid in making HEIs more inclusive to individuals from non-white backgrounds, both current and prospective staff and students. At the time of writing, only 4 of the 10 HEIs included within this study had set 'race steering groups' for non-white staff to be able to discuss issues and present ideas on how to improve relations within the institution. Other institutions had 'steering groups,' but these were considered to be more general in approach and failed to consider the nuanced nature of 'race' and the issues with navigation it could cause. Participants were asked to consider what they thought the main issues were in failing to decolonise and create an inclusive environment at their HEIs. Here's 'Malcolm;'

> Malcolm – {…} *it has to be funding. Unfortunately for all the things that we'd like to do, for all the things we want to do, money has to be involved. Whether that means more money for salaries for staff to increase the number of Black faculty members or paying to run campaigns to show perspective students that {redacted for confidentiality} is a place for them. Either way, the university needs to dip their hand in their pockets, and their pockets are deep, because this has gone on far too long.*

'Sophie' seconds 'Malcolm's' point about finances, whilst considering the recruitment of non-white staff and students, and how this could be tailored;

> Sophie {…} *we did a lot of the stuff with the university Afro-Caribbean society and other societies but they had to be outside the university. The university just wouldn't finance anything. Not if it didn't directly benefit them. So, it just leads you to not want to have them involved. That's really sad. I think we could work together really well but they've got to be open to change. They need to be open to people telling them where they've gone*

wrong and what they can do better. It'll be uncomfortable for all of us but it has to happen.

'David' discussed whether a tariff-based system, similar to that employed by Historic Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) in the US, would be beneficial here;

> David – {…} *you have to be really careful with that, affirmative action I mean, you don't want people to feel like they're getting jobs because of their race. Or for people to feel they're getting into uni because of their race. But then, on the flip side, you also need to recognise the years and years and years of oppression and subjugation. Something that our community has had and is still affected by to this day. It just isn't recognised. That's the problem I feel. You need to recognise the issue before you tackle it and that's not being done*.

For 'Laura,' the current state of HE leads her to believe that many PoC may choose different career paths then choosing to pursue a degree;

> Laura – *They talk about equity within higher education but I have to say, doing my undergrad, you saw very few non-white faces. This got even more obvious the more I qualified. It was so disheartening to see no one like me, occupying the spaces that I wanted to be in. It made me want it more but for some people that might be the thing they need that says, "hey," this isn't for me.*

The final remark goes to 'Jessica,' who agrees with 'Malcolm in regards to funding, but considers a societal shift needs to occur to benefit those navigating 'white spaces;'

> Jessica – {…} *you have to encourage them to spend money but to do that you have to show them its important. At the moment. it's probably not that high on the agenda because really and truly it affects a limited number of staff. That's not to say that it's OK. We need to have some serious conversations about recruitment and about retention {…} making sure we keep the staff that might have come here as students, but we can't do that until we're included in the conversation, to be able to show how serious these issues are. They probably think the policies are enough but they're not. We all know it; we just need them to known it now. That's the only way change will come.*

Discussions and Conclusion

Upon the completion of the semi-structured interviews, a thematic analysis was undertaken. This was done to review the policy statements from the universities in contrast with the data obtained from faculty staff. Upon the collation and analysis of the data, three major issues were identified throughout. These are outlined below:

Lack of effective support measures

Within almost all of the policy literature analysed within this study, some mention was made to 'support groups,' 'safe spaces' or 'reporting measures'; all put in place to provide avenues in which non-white members of staff, as well as students, could discuss experiences they had had within the institution, as well as formal reporting procedures to report instances of microaggressions and discrimination. As Cabrera (2017) states, this practice is common place for large-scale institutions, meaning the evidence of these spaces within the policy analysed is hardly surprising. Perhaps more alarmingly, the data obtained from faculty staff determined that these measures were ineffective in their capability to deal with reporting issues of discrimination. In one rather troubling case, 'David' mentioned that despite his institution professing with its literature that 'support groups were available for staff of Colour,' no such space had been offered to current faculty members.

Whilst this may seem concerning to some, this is not drastically out of line with reports from other studies into large-scale public facing institutions. Continually failing to acknowledge the needs of Black members of staff within the institution, whilst maintaining to suggest a support provisions for these individuals is one of the plethora of challenges PoC must consider before deciding whether to work in a 'white-occupied space' (Jackson II, 1999), something not experienced by white colleagues.

Presence of discrimination and microaggressions

According to university policy literature analysed in this study, active measures are put in place to create a 'welcoming and inclusive environment for staff and students.' The aforementioned support measures, however, show a glaring gap between the existence of these support measures and their effectiveness in practice. It is this gap in effectiveness, which perhaps allows for a continued place for discrimination within the workplace.

For participants such as 'Malcolm,' experiences of microaggressions and discriminatory behaviour were experienced from other members of staff, rather than students or other outside influences.

> Malcolm – *{…} people asked me if I could vacuum their office or take out their rubbish. I have to explain that I work here. Then they either shrug it off or they're mortified.*

This is consistent with the rhetoric felt by many PoC, whom determine that just because an institution 'says they are anti-racism' does not mean this is the case. For many – including 'Sophie' – the exclusion on Black voices within the institution's discussions of the creation of anti-discrimination measures is a major issue halting the progression of anti-discrimination within the workplace.

> *Sophie – '{…} we're supposed to be experts on the issue right? {…} but then we're never invited to the discussion {…} there's no seat for us at the table.'*

This is in spite of the many institutions involved in this study, claiming to have 'active dialogue' with their non-white members of staff – through facets such as steering groups – to aid in the

formulation of their policy production. With the data gathered in this study, there seems to be a clear disparity between the needs of staff members, and the avenues in which they can report this to aid in policy change.

The importance of investment

Despite the allusion that active measures have been put in place to aid non-white staff members within university policy, the overwhelming sentiment received within this study demonstrated a belief that whilst staff acknowledge there is a sentiment from institutions to make campuses 'diverse and welcoming,' measures to actively support this was drastically missing – most notably in the distribution of university funds and resources.

> **Jessica –** {…} *the university have been supportive in me doing it but they haven't really provided me with any support to do it.*

Whether this lack of support was as a result of gatekeepers 'failing to understand' the importance of measures such as decolonising the curriculum or a perceived misuse of programmes such as affirmative action, participants in this study felt that the institution's position on issues of race and ethnicity did not reflect their own experiences of vying for university support to aid in the redesigning of the institution for the modern age.

Perhaps a review of the industry awards such as the Race Charter need to be conducted to aid in this. For some institutions involved in this study, it seemed that greater emphasis was placed on other, perhaps more established awards, including the Athena Swan award – given to an institution for their work to produce gender equality in the workplace – rather than the aforementioned. For some participants, this was indicative of institutions who would rather 'focus on concepts they understand' rather than actively trying to change what they do not, through the inclusion of the voices of staff these issues directly affect.

3-step plan for improvement

Based on the aforementioned themes, along with data presented in the previous chapter, this study recommends a 3-step approach for improving the experience(s) of Black and other non-white individuals within UK HEIs. This approach also includes recommended policy alterations to provide more adequate support for Staff of Colour within the workplace.

1) **The acknowledgement of the complex needs of PoC within university policy, within extensive input from current staff.**

Incidences of microaggressions, as well as more blatant examples of overt discrimination levelled at senior academic members of staff discussed in this study, demonstrates a stark disparity between the navigations of Black staff members and their white colleagues. This lack of education, as well as these barriers we face as PoC in white-dominated spaces, needs to be acknowledged in university policy. Universities must recognise that this is both a tangible and contemporary problem for their members of staff and, as such, must make it clear within their policy literature that they are aware that these are issues that may be experienced by members of their faculty and that they have measures in place to deal with these issues.

It is the recommendation of this study, that these measures are decided upon by a staff select committee, made up of current members of staff who identify as PoC at each institution. It is believed that with a committee consisting of individuals from multiple disciplines, seniority levels etc., an action plan that is applicable to the subject institution will be easily attainable. If institutions struggle to bring together a select committee through lack of numbers, it

demonstrates the need for recruitment strategies to be put in place to attract greater numbers of staff whom identify as PoC. How these incentives are introduced, whether this be financial or with greater levels of seniority, will be down to the individual institution.

2) Resource allocation to decolonising the curriculum

Universities need to be aware that 'decolonising the curriculum' is not a phrase that can be attached to policy without real action being taken to alter what is considered 'accepted knowledge' within the curricula. Too often, decolonisation is instigated by either by PoC staff or students, with little to no support from the wider university structure. This is despite a plethora of policy literature suggesting otherwise. In addition to this, institutions seem happy to use the products of this extra work done by staff/students, but fail to provide resources; either financial or practical, to aid in its implementation.

It is the recommendation of this study that rather than using 'decolonisation' as a term to show progression within the university, each individual university determines what their definition of decolonisation is by providing actionable goals that may be achieve each academic year. These may be measures such as; making sure that over 20% of the reading material suggested for undergraduate students is written of produced by Black authors, publishing houses etc. Measures such as these can be reviewed and evaluated each academic year and improvements can be made accordingly. This, it is believed, will far outweigh the continued use of vague definition of 'decolonisation' within university literature.

3) Establishment of a formal staff-student network

Many institutions already employ a personal tutor model, in which students are allocated to a member of faculty who oversees their academic development as well as providing pastoral support. It is the recommendation of this study that incoming students are offered the opportunity to disclose racial background during any university enrolment stage. These individuals would then be offered the choice of being 'paired' with a non-white member of staff, who mirror their background as closely as possible. It is the suggestion of this study that having a measure such as this, would greatly benefit individuals when it comes to discussing issues such as microaggressions etc. as well as a personal and emotive understanding of the challenges navigating white-dominated spaces provides for non-white individuals.

A formal introduction of this measure would replace the more informal approach presented within this study, in which participants discussed feeling a 'moral pressure' to provide support and guidance to Black students, despite them neither being their personal tutees or receiving recognition from the institution for doing so, alongside their other commitments. Again, if an institution fails to put this measure in place, it may perhaps identify problems with both recruitment and retention of non-white talent at said institution, in which a review of the reasonings behind this would need to be conducted.

It is believed with these measures; we may go some way to improving the experiences of Black individuals within these spaces. However, far too often, we hear examples of individuals struggling within these environments with reactive institutional responses. Institutions need to first admit that there is a problem within their institutions, in part due to the legacy of colonialism and imperialism which still haunts many facets of British society, before actively engaging with those of us whom are affected. In doing so, one hopes trust may be rebuilt between the individual and the entity that is the 'institution' encouraging PoC to know that in academia, we have a seat at the table.

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