“So, you want to go to the deep end when you can’t swim? Bringing Fanon into conversation with Black African Social Workers in the struggle against racial microaggressions”

Mary Francis

A thesis submitted for the degree of Professional Doctorate

in

Advanced Practice and Research: Social Work and Social Care

Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust

University of Essex

Date of submission: September 2024

Abstract

This study explores experiences of racial microaggressions on first generation Black African social workers in Britain. This is with a view to bring understanding on the distinctiveness of racial microaggressions as experienced by this specific racial group. The study is premised on the suggestion that there is an inherent complexity in experiences of racial microaggressions, on Black African social workers who are first generation immigrants to Britain, arising from not only the specifity of their racial socialisation in African settings in the context of colonial legacy, but also from the experiences of racialisation post migration.

Underpinned by a critical realist ontology, the study deploys a decolonial epistemology to guard against the colonising tendencies in research, particularly when research is in the context of individuals who have been casted in the role of the marginalized 'Other'. The study synthesises psychosocial research methodology and decolonial thought, to simultaneously address the social and the psychological elements of racial microaggressions, without reinforcing the hegemonic belief in the inferiority of Black Africans. As a result, the study unveils simultaneous experiences of racial microaggressions which are still framed with colonial fusions, while at the same time privileging various ways participants in the study exert their agency.

This study has found that internalised racism is embedded in the African child at an early age through racialisation process, and that this continues to influence how participants in this study perceive and respond to racial microaggressions. In this study, racial microaggressions are common occurrences for Black African social workers. However, they do not trust the broader professional/ organisational structures to support them when they experience this. But despite this, these Black African social workers have continued to find means to exercise their agency. The significant contribution made by this study, is its unfolding of the process of coming alive to racialisation, for those who migrate a Western white setting as adults, and how this interacts with experiences of racial microaggressions. The study documents Blackness simultaneously as an imposed identity that inferiorises dark bodies as subhuman and as a site of liberation. The study articulates how decolonial thought can be utilised to counteract traditional social work pedagogy, which tends to assess challenges faced by marginalised people through a deficit lens.

Acknowledgement:

To God my Heavenly Father and Christ my Saviour; I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

To the participants who took part in this study, this study would not exist without you, so thank you, thank you. Thank you for trusting me with your pains and allowing yourselves to be vulnerable. I hope that when you read this Thesis, you will feel that I represented your truth with honesty and integrity.

To my family, especially my children Kevin, Patience, and Brian: I am because of you. You inspire me to be the best. Thank you for your kindness and encouragement in the four years of doing this Doctorate, and your perseverance through it all. I find strength in your believe in me.

To the local authority manager (you know yourself) with whom I started the Doctorate journey with; thank you for your faith in me and believing in me even when I doubted myself. Thank you for being my greatest cheerleader along the way.

To my Doctorate supervisors, words are not enough to appreciate your guidance and support throughout the research journey-thank you.

Content

Prologue: setting the scene.

I am interested in understanding the experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, because firstly, I am a Black African social worker myself, but secondly, because as noted by Sue at al. (2008) "racial microaggressions may be more harmful to people of color than overt acts of racial hatred and bigotry because the hidden, unintentional nature of microaggressions allows them to flourish outside the level of conscious awareness of the perpetrators, thereby infecting interracial interactions, institutional procedures and practices, and social policies" (pg.331). Racial microaggressions are defined as "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue et al. 2007:273). Gatwiri (2021) citing Tatum (2003), described racial microaggressions as "the nature of this benign form of covert racism is 'like smog in the air'. Sometimes it is so thick it is visible, other times it is less apparent, but always, day in and day out, we are breathing it in" (pg.663). Gatwiri emphasised that sometimes microaggressions are not subtle as they can be intentional and hostile, while still falling within the parameters of what is considered appropriate within a work culture. It is this ambiguous nature of microaggressions which places the burden of interpretation on those at their receiving end, that has prompted my interest in this subject.

But in addition to this, a chance encounter with Ibrahim (2017) analysis of Blackness, immigration, and politics of race, inspired an interest in me to understand how racial microaggressions are experienced by those who like me, were born and raised in Africa, but who later migrated to Britain as adults. This was inspired by a question posed by Ibrahim:

“What happens when the syntax of race meets immigrants whose bodies are assumed to be “Black” in North America but who either do not have the history or the conception of Blackness in North America or are not familiar with the North American Black-White dichotomy?” (pg.511).

As I reflected on the question posed by Ibrahim, it occurred to me that this has resonance with my own experiences of migrating to Britain, as my autobiography discussed in chapter one shows. I realised that the internalised racism which had hitherto laid dormant in me, came comfortably into sight upon migrating to Britain, and upon interacting with experiences of racialisation. My realisation that internalised racism was in me even prior to migrating to Britain, opened my eyes to the realities of ongoing colonisation, and the influence of this on how colonised individuals interacts with racialised experiences. As later discussed in this thesis, racial socialisation plays a crucial role in shaping how individuals experience racial oppression. It is this that prompted a need in this study to pay attention to the ongoing legacy of colonisation in African setting, to then understand what this means for the social racialisation process for the African child, and the implication of this for an African person when they later migrate to a white majority setting. By this study exploring the multifaceted dynamics underlying experiences of racism when this is framed within the interplay of internalised racism and racialisation, the complexity inherent in experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers will be understood.

But from wisdom from lived experiences, I assert that rather than being content to mark the manifestations of racial oppression, or merely studying the experiences of racism on target groups, there is a need to model a way out to disentangle oneself from the ideologies that fuel this. But this necessitates consideration for deeper causal structures. However, there is

little research that draws a clear causal connection between internalised racism and how this interacts with experiences of racial microaggressions. As shall be demonstrated in this study, critical realism offers a way to investigate this. To minimise the risk of constructing knowledge conditioned by a colonial history of Africa and Africans hence reinforcing the inferiority of Black Africans, this study is intentional in its take up of decolonial thought. It does this by appropriating Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) ideas on internalised inferiority. My reading of Fanon reflects my time and place; a Black African female born and socialised in an African country formally colonised by the British. An immigrant in the UK where I currently live and work as a social worker. I was born after my country of birth had gained independence, and I therefore did not directly experience Western occupation.

But Oyedemi (2021) is right in his claim that the distant rehashing and imaginary articulations of the colonial harms, are what current generations – including myself- live by. As this study will show, the continuous colonial cultural damage is an equally painful experience. Indeed, my lived experience and that of participants involved in this study, mirrors Oyedemi (2021) observations. Oyedemi observed that the colonial encounter, although a series of events, has created a generational violence of cultural indoctrination, which tends toward permanence in the psyche and reality of the 'postcolonial.' As an intellectual of African descent, I know what Burman (2018) was talking about, when she spoke of the "intersubjective sense of being devalued in the eyes of others" (pg.111). It is what Nzinga (2020) talked about when she spoke of the shame and embarrassment of experiencing microaggressions. Fanon (1952) called this "the lived experience of being Black" (pg.89).

For this study, theorising racial microaggressions from a decolonial perspective, is to challenge us to articulate the colonial structures, and how these continues to sustain forms of racisms that operate in everyday racist acts (Huber and Solorzano, 2015). These authors posed an important question in their paper: that is, if racial microaggressions emerge from ideologies of white[1] supremacy, and are understood as a form of 'white violence', how can we explain the race-based forms of discrimination Black people engage against each other? I have considered this question, and I reckon that to address this, there is a need to consider the historical context of colonialism and the ongoing coloniality, with a view to trace this racial violence between Black people, to conditions of internalised racism.

I have followed in the footsteps of Burman (2018), who observed that to shift focus from the interiority of whites, there is a need to draw from Black intellectual traditions shaping Fanon's understanding of Black phenomenology. As such, this study is positioned in the community of Black thinkers. I will draw from Black feminist thought, for example Audre Lorde (1934-1992) specifically her writing in Sister Outsider (1984). Aime' Ce'saire (1955) discourse on colonialism, is also of influence. Additionally, juxtaposing the contours of Kwame Nkrumah (1965) thought on neocolonialism, will offer a helpful lens to recognise the role of foreign actors in denuding African sovereignty. I am influenced by many other notable Black theorists; for example, the influence of W.E.B Du Bois (1868-1963), for example his theory of the double consciousness (in the Souls of the Black Folk, 1903,2007). Learning from these Black intellectuals is an appreciation that colonialism was not only an

[1] The reader will notice that I use lower case while writing white, and upper case when writing Black. This is a deliberate choice. Capitalising Black signals my acknowledgment to the shared identity, culture and history of people of African descent, whilst in contrast, by writing white in lowercase, this is intentional to challenge the systemic dominance of whiteness.

economic exploitation and political domination, but it was also (and still is) a practice of alienation and the diminishment of the very sense of being of the colonized.

II: Synergy between social work and this study

For social work, the profession has been at the forefront of work on anti-racist and culturally appropriate practice, recognizing the importance of diversity, and the specific concerns and needs of diverse service users. But as Weinberg and Fine (2022) asks: "how is it possible in a profession such as social work, that prides itself on an anti-oppression orientation and the values of social justice, that racism remains so deep-seated? Weinberg and Fine claims that social work as a profession, has been complicit in supporting white dominance through centering the white experience and privileging individualism. The authors assert that as a profession, social work is no stranger to supporting coloniality, arguing that the profession uses white social and ideological structures to determine how problems should be addressed, including its reliance on individualism. This study responds to these issues.

III: Aims and objectives of this study

The aim in this study is twofold; firstly, to explore the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by Black African social workers, arising from not only the specifity of their racial socialisation in African settings in the context of colonial legacy, but also from the experiences of racialisation post migration. This is in addition to having to contend with the pain of experiencing racial microaggressions in a profession which prides itself on social justice. Secondly, the study aims to resist the hegemonic belief in Black African's inferiority and inability to assert agency.

The study has three main objectives:

1. To examine the nature of racial socialisation within the African setting in the context of historical colonisation, synthesising this with experiences of racialisation post migration to a Western white majority setting. This is to bring an understanding of the nuanced and the complex way racial microaggressions are experienced by first-generation Black African social workers.

2. To problematise racial microaggressions not as a problem residing in Black African individuals but as a problem residing in colonial structures, as well as to accentuate various ways Black African social workers resist racial microaggressions.

3. To highlight the incongruence between the professional experiences of Black African social workers and the stated mission of social work as an anti-racist profession. This is with a view to build awareness and responsiveness to racial microaggressions (and racism in general) within social work practice and organisations that employ them.

IV: Structure of the thesis

Chapter one is presented as my autobiography to situate myself in this study, but also to demonstrate how the Fanonian theory informing this study has been utilised.

Chapter two covers literature review. Discussions frames racial socialisation in a homogenous Black African setting and in the context of colonialism. It also contextualises the experiences of first generation Black African immigrants upon migrating to a Western white majority setting. Anti-racist social work literature is also covered in this chapter.

Chapter three discusses researcher's positionality, to explain the researcher's ontological and epistemological positioning, as well as discussing how the researcher's emotional reactions towards the topic will be managed.

Chapter four discusses methodology to articulate how synthesising critical realism with decolonial thought and the psychosocial methods chosen for this study, enabled the study to read experiences of racial microaggressions which valorises whiteness, but without obscuring the agency of the participants.

Chapter five presents research data through the 'portraits' of the seven participants involved in this study.

The rest of the chapters discusses findings:

Chapter six discusses internalised racism embedded in participants at an early age and how this continues to influence their interactions with racial microaggressions, though this does not mean total annihilation of their agency.

Chapter seven elucidates the act of coming alive to racialisation, as participants get into contact with their 'Blackness' for the first time. Following this racialisation, 'restlessness' became a constant feature in their lives. The study suggest that this is what led participants to the profession of social work in the hope of finding a 'safe home'.

Chapter eight discusses shattering of this hope when participants came face to face with the racial violence in the profession of social work and in employing organisation.

Chapter nine addresses the employing organisation to demonstrate that the organisational environment is shaped by white dominant culture, as well as to question the equal opportunity policies promoted in organisations.

Chapter ten discusses transformation and refusals. Discussions considers how these racialised social workers navigate hostile environments daily, whilst also exercising their agency. Recommendations from this study are also given in this chapter.

Chapter 1: Theoretical terrain via researcher's biographical reflexivity.

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the complexity of racial microaggressions on Black Africans, when this is framed within the dynamic interaction of internalised racism and racialisation. As intimated in the previous introduction chapter, a central concern in this study is that which pertains to epistemology, in relation to knowledge construction conditioned by a colonial history of Africa and Africans. Thus, the central aim in this study is to explore the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by Black African social workers, whilst resisting the hegemonic belief in Black African's inferiority and inability to assert agency. As indicated in the previous introduction chapter, this study takes up decolonial thought to do this.

In this chapter, I engage with autoethnography as a decolonial tool (Dutta, 2018), with a view for me as the researcher to critically engage with my data sources as well as to embody a decolonial approach that is central to this study. I will first give a brief description of what autoethnography entails, and then proceed to discuss the three different self-narratives derived from the three spheres of my life: the personal, the professional and the organisational.

1.1.1 Autoethnography as a decolonial strategy

Autoethnography in this study is taken up as a radical form of making embodied knowledge claims, that resist the normative use of knowledge as an inherently colonial tool (Dutta,2018). Providing the researcher's biographical reflection, is with a view to tackle the "invisible" role of the researcher. This is to underline the need to examine the influence of the biographical experiences of the researcher, on the research process. The self-reflective

account provided, closely follows the tradition of t*estimonio* (see a discussion of this in Silva, 2022; Delgado, 2012). As explained by Delgado (2012), *testimonio* has deep roots in oral cultures and in Latin American human rights struggles. It has demonstrated its power as a genre that exposes brutality, disrupts silencing, and builds solidarity among women of color. Huber and Cueva (2012) discuss how *Testimonio* reveals the resistance, resilience, and hope engaged in research, and means to challenge and transform subordination, while encouraging a collective move toward social justice. In this chapter, I offer *testimonio* to speak out and to name the racial violence I have experienced as an African woman. I speak from my flesh (Moraga & Anzaldua, 1983) to begin my own healing process. I want to make claim in the intellectual landscape on my own terms, but perhaps more importantly, to put currency on the fact that our bodies also tell stories of transformational resistance (Solorzano & Delgado, 2001), talking back, and surviving in the profession and organisation.

In what follows, I will present three different self-narratives, which are derived from the three spheres of my life: the personal, the professional and the organisational. In the first narrative which presents personal experiences, the *testimonio* contextualises my experiences of 'becoming Black'[2] after migrating to Britain. This personal narrative also serves to introduce the Fanonian sociogenic theory informing this study. I engage with Fanon's sociogenic theory and his prominent thesis on racial epidermal schema (in Black Skin, white Masks, 1952), to accentuate the fact that it was not until I migrated to Britain and interacted with whiteness, that my 'Blackness' took shape. This from a decolonial stance is to emphasise that racialised Blackness is not a given, but rather, and as

[2] The use of single quotation within the body of the thesis is to indicate a term I have used that carries subjective connotations or is based on my own opinion.

emphasised by Sekimoto (2014), it takes shape under specific conditions and in relation to a particular set of power. In the second self-narrative which discusses an incident which occurred in a social work professional context, I use the scenario to contextualise the insidiousness of racial microaggressions. In the third self-narrative, I present my experience of undertaking a group relation conference (GRC), to contextualise the racial violence in organisations and to underscore suffocation of blackened body within the white spaces, while invisibilising and silencing the histories of colonial race and gender violence that an immigrant woman of color might surface (Bell, 2020).

1.2 The personal, through the lens of Frantz Fanon (1925-1961)

I grew up in Africa and I did not encounter white people until I came into this country. Therefore, there was no occasion for me to experience my being through others; the concept of being 'Black' did not exist for me then, and the only relevant identity marker was that I was a girl/woman.

But from the moment my feet touched the grounds of this land, something in the unfamiliar environment communicated to me that what others saw in me, is not what I knew of me. It was quite confusing to be confronted by an unfamiliar hostility, to suddenly become a stranger to the person I thought I was. But what was even more perplexing, was the fact that what I was internally experiencing did not find expression outside of me. Because I did not have the language to ‘name’ this or speak into it. What I was internally feeling was not yet processed in a logical sense or languaged in a way that could give sense to this new very precarious state I found myself in. I had a normal childhood and upbringing in my country of birth. I successfully completed my schooling. I was on my way to a successful career, although this was cut short by my decision to migrate to this country. Thus, prior to my

arrival to Britain, I was doing very well in my home country. Which is why I could not understand or make sense of this new internal state of feelings, which communicated to me that 'I was not good enough.' I sensed that something about me or something within me, meant that the ways others were experiencing me or indeed positioning me in whatever system/ place I found myself, was not congruent to the totality of who I am or my capabilities.

With the benefit of hindsight and lived experience, I now know that this is the consequence of racism. I now know that part of the power of racism is that it becomes an internalised lies in the acceptance of "I am something wrong" (Chapman, 2006). Often, this acceptance is done unconsciously which makes it even harder to recognise and work through. But what was (is) the most damaging aspect of all this to my sense of being, was (is) the psychic problem of internalisation of identity shame, and the fact that this conflicted with who I was (I am) as a person. In the more than 20 years of living in this country and reflecting on these initial experiences after I arrived in Britain, this has made me realise that the internal changes that occurred in me (albeit unconsciously) because of what I was intuitively perceiving as 'hostility' (albeit without knowing why then) in the new environment, shaped my trajectory going forward.

But what has pained and saddened me the most, is the realisation that after my arrival to Britain, I accepted without any question this sense of inferiority and the lesser identity status that this unfamiliar environment assigned me. I did not comprehend this 'unseen force' which seemed to dictate a specific direction in both how I will assume space in the unfamiliar environment and what I will do while in it. It is this onslaught to my sense of being, that has motivated me to 'unravel' this, through racism-related studies. This is

especially birthed out of a deep need in me to understand why the self-assured and accomplished 'me' who left the shores of her native land, was so easily transformed into this person full of self-doubt, identity confusion and feelings of inferiority.

It is on these thoughts that Frantz Fanon (1925-1961) has been influential to my thinking, as well as shaping the decolonial direction of this research. I draw from his two texts, Black Skin, white Masks (1952)- in this study I use Penguin books edition (2021)- and Wretched of the Earth (1967). In Black Skin, White Masks (thereafter BSWM) Fanon uses a psychoanalytic framework to theorize the inferiority-dependency complex of Black men in response to the colonial racism of white men. The analysis and unravelling of this inferiority complex are his central concern, through his construction of theory of sociogeny. This theory of sociogeny posits that for true disaelination of the Black man to occur, this calls for a brutal awareness of the social and economic realities (pg. xi). In BSWM, Fanon also discusses the bodily embodiment of racial oppression- what he refers as racial epidermal schema (pg.91). Song (2017) discussing Fanon's work on racial epidermal schema, explained that "the corporeal schema is the development of habitual comportments and motility, through which a body is a body fully at home, comfortably oriented towards the world in unified patterns of movement that are cultivated in relation to that world" (pg.54). Fanon in BSWM explained that such is the body schema he inhabited in his native settings prior to migrating to France. But upon migrating to France and encountering the white gaze captured through his famous quote "Look a Negro!" (pg.91), "his body schema, attacked in several places, collapsed, giving way to an epidermal racial schema" (pg.92).

Personally, and drawing from Fanon's BSWM, I now understand why as soon as I stepped into this country, my skin colour became visible to me. And an inferiority that I did not know

existed took hold in me. In BSWM, Fanon eloquently theorises this as “the epidermalization of inferiority” (pg. xi), to denote how Black individuals become inferior in concrete cases of everyday living. As noted by Song (2017), Black individuals simultaneously suffer from racial hierarchy while perpetuating it by internalizing the idea of Black inferiority. Song observed that when confronted with racial prejudices, Black individuals act in certain ways that render them inferior. In retrospect, I now understand that this inferiority was always in me, albeit unconsciously, thanks to the stories, tales, and the metaphors that I absorbed when growing up, and the history that I was taught in school. Fanon explains that the history taught to an African child serves to portray the ways of the white man as noble and superior:

“Whether he likes it or not, the Black man has to wear the livery the white man has fabricated for him. Look at the children’s comic books: all the Blacks are mouthing the ritual “Yes, boss” (2021;17).

Fanon was deeply convicted that if colonised people do not liberate themselves from the neo-colonial pathology, the domination of the former colonial masters, will prevail long after the end of the colonial era. Initially, my thinking was that participants in this research just like myself, will not have experienced racism in their native countries. But engagement with Fanon’s thought has made me to revise my position. To consider that racism in African countries is prevalent, though this may not necessarily be recognised or named as such. Linking this to my experiences of migrating to Britain, from a country that was Britain’s former colony, Fanon’s thoughts give sense to my experiences. Because as far as Fanon is concerned, the colonial subject is a man penned in, and the first thing the colonial subject

learns is to remain in his place and not to overstep its limits (in Wretched of the Earth, 1967; 40).

Fanon's thoughts have served to awaken me from a deep ideological slumber. I now know why an inferiority I did not know inhabited in me, made itself known when I stepped into the shores of this land. I understand why my Blackness is something else other than just the colour of my skin. But that is not the only reason why Fanon's thoughts are so influential to me; as Said (2018) eloquently stated, "Fanon inspires Africans that they have no reason to put up with the degrading interpretation of their past, that they can and must reinterpret it in a way consonant with their pride and interests; Fanon demonstrated to Africans that there was nothing to be ashamed of in the past, but rather dignity, glory, and solemnity" (pg.17).

My engagement with Fanon's thoughts, specifically around his thoughts on colonial mentality, is to emphasise Houzel's (1996) point. Houzel addressed transgenerational trauma, and how the dramas and traumas are repeated from generation to generation, by the mechanism of projective identification. Houzel spoke how these psychic ghosts operate through the tales and legends in which the souls of the dead haunt the living, until they are given a Christian burial (pg.910). It may be that through this research, I am doing exactly this: giving these colonial ghosts the Christian burial so badly needed!

But as Fanon aptly pointed out, this project is not about 'hurling' anger into people's faces; it is not intended to endorse zealousness (Fanon, 2021; ix). Rather, Fanon has given me a sophisticated theory on how colonialism is internalized by the colonized, leading to an inferiority complex. Or what he called 'epidermalization' of the Black man (2021; xi) which he explained as the requirement to be Black in relation to the white man. Hence, Fanon's

influence will be tangible in this study. This will be in the quest to interrogate participant's racial socialization and unpack the ways in which they have been affected by internalized racism, and how this interacts with experiences of racial microaggressions. Critically, what has been a powerful personal gain in completing this study, has been about sailing towards healing and finding self. Engaging with Fanon's thoughts has taught me to feel comfortable staying with raw emotions, and racial pain. As well put by Said (2018), "the truth about Fanon's writing is to find, in a Fanonian sense, the truth in movements of the damned, the excluded and dehumanized" (pg. 17).

Claudia Rankine asks in her book 'Just Us' (2020):

… "I do know my life, livelihood, and the life possibilities depend on knowing more of certain things that White people wilfully ignore. Who will represent that reality if a Black person isn't in the room?'' (p. 59) …

Maybe this research study is about that…" being in the room"!

1.3 The professional, through racial microaggressions framework

It is fair to say that because of my lived experiences, my professional and academic interests have tended to lean on fields which takes interest in the experiences of racially marginalised groups. Indeed, my motivation to join the profession of social work was based on its key tenet on social justice and anti-oppressive disciplinary focus. Social work plays a significant role in the field of racism, given the profession's commitment to human rights and social justice. Social work's anti-racist perspectives (Dominelli, 1997) have already provided significant insight into the structural and institutional sources of disadvantages.

But racism within the profession is unquestionably still with us. It is imbedded in structures without being explicitly named, thus becoming more difficult to identify (Paul, 2014). My contextual experience as a Black African social worker confirms this, as illustrated in the below vignette:

I remember attending a multidisciplinary safeguarding conference as the named social worker of the person involved. Conference was attended by colleagues from social care, health, and police. I was the only Black professional present. I remember being consciously aware of this fact… "something about how I emotionally experienced the 'space' I was in…feeling different and out of place."

A key participant arrived after introductions had been made. The queries he directed towards me suggested that he assumed I was the client's paid care worker. His assumptions were probably informed by the fact that I was sat next to the care agency manager, and he had probably noted my familiarity with him. I suppose that sounds like a plausible explanation as to why he 'misplaced' me as a paid carer, rather than as the Social Worker of the client. On normal occasions, it is possible that I would have moved on without giving this a second thought…but there was something about this incident that heightened my awareness to this 'misplacement.' Maybe it was to do with what I have already mentioned about how I was emotionally experiencing the space I was in.

My affective state following this 'seemingly innocent mistake' made me realise that something else had been triggered in my psyche; this was being communicated to me through the feelings that I was internally experiencing. The internal dialogue that was going through me concluded that 'my Blackness had something to do with this misplacement.' Although I had no way of proving this, my lived experiences and knowledge as a Black person informed my thinking and my conclusion; whilst this was in no way an 'objective truth' as I could not 'prove it,' it was nonetheless my 'subjective reality' at that time. My reality at that given moment was that the psychological impact, manifested in the myriad of emotions and self-doubt that I was internally experiencing, was not 'imagined' but very 'real.'

As I drove back to the office that day, questions regarding that experience still lingered in my mind; did I imagine it? Did I get it wrong? Could it have been because of other factors such

as being a woman? What was the influence of my professional training on how I perceived the situation? Should I have said something? If I did, how would I have proven my 'accusation' that he made assumptions about me because I am Black? Was I being too sensitive/ playing the race card? Is it possible that the incident was an innocent mistake that had nothing to do with race? Should I say something to my manager?

The vignette shows the insidiousness and complexity of 'invisible' racism. This covert form of discrimination has been labelled as aversive racism (Dovidio and Gaertner, 2000), Modern racism (McConohay, 1983) and racial microaggressions (Pierce,1978; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino et al. 2007). According to Dovidio and Gaertner (2000), aversive-racism framework suggests that contemporary racial bias is expressed in indirect ways that do not threaten the aversive racist's nonprejudiced self-image. Modern racism (McConohay, 1983) on the other hand describes a different group of people who believes racism is no longer an issue, as they define racism as explicitly supporting negative stereotypes and acting in overtly discriminatory ways towards Black individuals. In differentiating between these two forms of racism, Estrada-Reynolds et al. (2023) suggested that aversive racists are egalitarian and discriminate when not reminded of their values, whereas modern racists do not espouse egalitarian values and discriminate when a non-racial reason exists to justify their behavior. For Nail et al. (2003) aversive racists will not discriminate when the race of the target is known and there are strong cues to avoid discrimination. They argued that modern racists will discriminate in this same situation, as they require an obvious cue that their prejudice or discrimination is being observed, otherwise they will discriminate in the absence of such a cue. While describing aversive racists, Hodson et al. (2005) suggested that the combined result of good intentions and negative intergroup biases represents a form of prejudice that expresses itself in a relatively subtle, indirect manner.

Racial microaggressions share some similarities with these forms of indirect racism; indeed, the covert nature of the racist act implicated in the vignette suggests that this could pass as any of the forms of covert discrimination discussed here. But as suggested by Sue et al. (2007), racial microaggressions are broader and describe a dynamic interplay between the perpetrator and recipient and focus primarily on their everyday manifestations. In other words, in the 'mundane' nuances of interpersonal interactions (Harwood, 2018). Sue and Colleagues (2007) developed an original taxonomy of racial microaggressions, a framework that categorized interpersonal microaggressions as microinsults, microinvalidations, and microassaults. According to these authors, microassults are more overt forms of discrimination and can manifest in verbal or non-verbal attacks, while microinsults are rude or insensitive behaviours or statements that degrade a person's racial heritage or identity. Microinvalidations on the other hand is when a person negates or denies the thoughts, feelings, or experiences of a person of color. Jones (2023) gives several important aspects of microaggressions; firstly, microaggressions can be verbal, or non-verbal. Secondly, they are "inescapable" and experienced by the Black community on a consistent basis. Lastly, they are referred to by the authors as "psychopollutants" because of the negative psychological impact they have on those who experience them (pg.2).

On the last point made by Jones, this has resonance with the experience presented in the vignette. The vignette highlights that the impact of the incident on me was psychological in nature. Therefore, this went 'unseen' by person who caused it, or by anyone else in the room for that matter. Additionally, from the internal monologue recorded towards the end of the vignette, the paradoxical nature of hidden racism is clear; whilst on the one hand it was 'invisible or even unintentional on the part of the person who caused it, the jarring impact on me cannot be denied- at least on a personal level. What this vignette shows, is

the usefulness of the notion of microaggressions in its ability to draw attention to what could be perceived as relatively minor subtle incidents that commonly arise, that nonetheless have deleterious effects on those targeted. It is also clear that in addition to dealing with my feelings following the incident, the ambiguous nature of this also 'burdened' me with trying to ascertain whether the incident was intentional or unintentional, hence the quandary of deciding on appropriate response. It was also clear that my 'sense making' heavily relied on my experiential reality, which is contextual in nature and is informed by life experiences from a variety of situations. Also, given that the psychological distress continued even after the incident had passed on, this is indicative that I did not feel that I had dealt effectively with this. It is these complexities inherent in racial microaggressions that drives my interest in this topic.

Sadly, my experiences as a Black social worker and other anecdotal evidence from Black African social worker colleagues, suggests that these types of experiences are commonplace. This is indicative that there is an incongruence between the professional experiences of Black African social workers and the stated mission of social work as an anti-racist profession.

1.4 The organisational, from the concept of 'organisation in the mind' (Armstrong & Robert, 2005)

As part of my Doctoral study, one of the requirements was to attend a group relation conference (GRC), with a view to learn the application of this in my role as policy actor in my employing organisation. GRC are designed to be temporary learning institutions, giving participants the opportunity to gain experience from their own experience about groups and organisations. Roberts and Obholzer (1994) argued that central to the learning process

is the repeated discovery of the presence of irrational and unconscious processes, which interfere with attempts to manage oneself, the groups task, and roles, in conscious and rational way.

GRC included membership and participation in various large and small groups. I found being in these groups quite difficult, and most people felt the same. Negative energy from the large group would spill over to the small study group, and the hostility- better understood in psychoanalytic terms as transference (Curtis, 2015)- would mostly be directed towards the consultant facilitating the group.

The atmosphere at the large group can only be described as 'toxic,' when the issue of race came up. I felt angry to see the White/ Black categorization that was being played out in the room. It was interesting to observe the psychological defence mechanisms (Hinshelwood &Skogstad, 2000) deployed by various people to cope with emotional pain that this topic had evoked; for example, when having a discussion on the topic, one white woman ''burst into tears''- her reaction prompted a heated discussion at the next session, based on DiAngelo's (2019) concept of 'white fragility'. Black people were angry with her 'tears' as this was experienced as an attempt to shift the focus from the pain experienced by Black people, to focusing on her distress as a white woman. The consultant commented that no one had acknowledged his position as a white male consultant and how the group viewed him as a result of this; I remember thinking that until he said that, I had not ''seen him in the room'', probably because '' he represents a system that I perceive as inherently racist'', and as such and from the perspective of defended subjects (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000),what was being defended in me by this ''unseeing'' was the psychic pain that would be evoked in me, if I was to ''see'' him.

It is fair to say that the experiences I had at the GRC are mirrored in what I experience in my employing organisation. As a Black African social worker working in an affluent local authority, whose populace is mostly white British citizens, the way I emotionally experience my employing organisation, or perhaps what organizational consultants would refer to as' the organisation in my mind' (Armstrong & Robert, 2005), is one I experience as being positioned at the 'margins'. On this, Sue (2004) posits that because most institutional systems are monocultural in nature, they represent a potential source of cultural oppression for racial/ ethnic minorities and women.

Given what I have said on being positioned on the 'margins' due to my ethnicity, my contention is that diversity and equal opportunities policies at the workplace, do not go far enough in ensuring fairness for all. It is well documented in literature that especially at workplaces, meritocracy as a cultural ideology (Pyke, 2010), plays a role in obscuring oppression. As argued by Weinberg and Fine (2022), social work has been on a path to bring more individuals into the profession who represent those at the margins. But they point out that if due to institutional racism those professionals do not have the same opportunities, the enterprise is a sham. For organisations, the policies, and politics of diversity within institutions have been questioned (Banks &Stephens, 2018), in the argument that this often prioritises targets of insertion, inclusion and representation over a genuine engagement with the structures of oppression.

This study will lay bare why King (2023) asserted that as organisations increasingly ask employees to "bring your whole self to work", the costs of obliging that seemingly progressive request are inequitable to Black African social workers.

1.5 Conclusion

The autoethnography in this chapter has contextualised what this study intends to focus on. It has intimidated the suggestion that the interplay of racialisation process post migration, coupled with internalisation of racial oppression imbedded at an early age, is what goes on to interact to create unique experiences in how racial oppression is experienced by first generation Black African social workers, working in Britain. The self-narratives reported in this chapter underscores the argument made in this study, that the mandate to practice in social justice, lends itself arguably to an entirely different type and degree of vulnerability on Black African social workers.

In summary, this chapter has delineated key topics pertinent to this study, namely: colonial legacy in African settings and how this shapes racial socialisation; experiences of migrating to a white majority setting and undergoing racialisation; and experiences of racism in a profession like social work which prides itself in social justice. Next chapter canvases existing literature on these topics, to help position this study within this.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This study explores the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by Black African social workers, when this is framed within the dynamic interaction of racial socialisation, migration, and the contested nature of Blackness. In the previous chapter, the autoethnographic narrative identified pertinent topics relevant to this study: colonial legacy in African settings and how this shapes racial socialisation; experiences of migrating to a white majority setting and undergoing racialisation; and experiences of racism in a profession like social work which prides itself in social justice.

Correspondingly, this chapter will review existing literature on these topics and ultimately help to situate this study in the context of existing literature. The chapter is divided into two sections: in section one, a brief overview of the legacy of European colonisation in African setting will be discussed, as well as discussing how this influences the racial socialisation process of the African child. Following this, to accentuate the complexity of 'becoming' Black after migrating from a Black homogenous setting in Africa to a Western white majority setting, literature covering experiences of first generation Black African immigrants will be examined. Following this, given that this study relies on psychoanalytic concepts to explain how racism functions, a brief discussion of key psychoanalytic concept used in this study will be provided, followed by a brief discussion of internalised racism given the primacy of this concept in this study. Discussion will then proceed to section two, to discuss British social work in the context of racism and racial microaggressions,

<u>Section 1</u>

2.1 Colonial legacy in African setting and racial socialisation

I take the view that to understand the complexity of experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, there is an imperative to understand colonial legacies which persist in complicated ways. This is a nod to Tinarwo (2015) whose research with Zimbabwean social workers in the UK, highlights the deficit in British approaches to tackling racism. Tinarwo argued that this avoids connecting with history, but instead frames it as problems in individuals. Mirroring this, Burman (2008) acknowledged that colonialism and racism must be understood in spatial as well as historical terms, pointing to the importance of time and space and of history and geography.

That said, the limit in this study does not allow for a sustained critique of colonial history in African setting and neither is this the focus in this study. In brief, it will suffice to say that physical withdrawal of Western nations from African governance, did not minimize, but instead expanded control over Africa. For instance, the works of Anibal Quijano (2000, 2007) provide a helpful framework to define the colonial and postcolonial experiences. Quijano (2007) observes that although overt political colonisation has been eliminated, the relationship between Western culture and 'the Others,' continues to be that of colonial domination. This is supported by other scholars, who argue that colonialism is still much alive and influences the lives of Africa, Africans, and people of African descent (see in Mignolo, 2000; Swartz, 2018; Bulhan; 2015 among others). These are characteristics of abiding colonial attitudes among descendants of former colonised people, diagnosed by Fanon (1952) as the problem of colonial mentality. Others (such as Adjei and Mpiani, 2023; David, 2019) argues that epistemic violence and scientific racism, which promotes racist ideas about African inferiority, and to celebrate and legitimise Euro-American ways as being natural and normal, has been reported as a pervasive feature of psychology in African contexts. It is what Mpofu (2014) talks about, concerning the crisis of coloniality in

contemporary Africa. Nwoye (2021) describes this crisis through which Africans lost belief in themselves and in their culture and tradition, including their psychological independence as a people.

With the foregoing, one can intuit the conditions under which racial socialisation in African settings occurs. Lesane-Brown (2006) defined racial socialisation as “specific verbal and non-verbal (e.g., modelling of behavior and exposure to different contexts and objects) messages transmitted to younger generations for the development of values, attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs regarding the meaning and significance of race and racial stratification, intergroup and intragroup interactions, and personal and group identity” (pg.403). Linking racial socialisation to racism, research on racial socialisation indicates that how an individual experiences racism relates to her or his racial identity development (Carter, 2007; Helms, 1990). And racial identity is suggested to be influenced directly and indirectly through the process of racial socialization (Helms, 1990). Thus, the influence of racial socialisation on experiences of racism is significant, given that possession of attitudes that allows racialised people to resist discriminatory influences in the environments that they exist, is contingent on socialisation experiences (Jernigan & Daniel, 2011).

To be clear, I understand race as a socially constructed concept, but use it as suggested by Gunaratham (2003) who argues that concepts such as 'race' should be used ‘under erasure' meaning concepts that have passed their analytic sellbydate and are no longer good to think with, but which have yet to be replaced. But in African settings, it is important to bear in mind the low centrality of race salience which refers to how much ‘race’ is relevant to people’s self-concept at a given time (Sellers et al. 1997). For those born and raised in a Black homogeneous setting as is the case in most African settings, studies have found that

the meanings and politics of 'race' do not take the same meanings as they do in Western context (for example in Bardhan & Zhang, 2017). Bardhan and Zhang notes that identity politics in the global South do not necessarily centre on 'race' and may coalesce instead along other vectors of power and human hierarchy such as religion, ethnicity, tribe, caste, and social class. The discussion which follows will highlight experiences of African immigrants to Western settings, to contextualise views around 'race' for an African person who has been racially socialised in an African setting where it is racially homogenous.

2.1.1 Experiences of first generation Black African immigrants

Clark (2008) argued that among the myriad of issues African immigration brings up, are those concerning identity. For instance, Chacko (2019) study on identity and transnationalism among first and second-generation African immigrants in the United States, found that for the first-generation immigrant group, it was venturing outside Africa that stimulated their recognition of race and heightened their sensitivity to racism, whereas for the second-generation group, the re-evaluation of their American identity and a dawning recognition of its racialization took place during early adulthood. Similarly, Anderson et al. (2023) writing in the context of America, suggest that African immigrant having made up a "racial majority" in their home countries, are faced with unique challenges in adjusting as a member of the "racial minority" in the United States, as they are forced to reckon with the country's unique sociopolitical hierarchical categorization of race. Nilinjana and Zhang (2017) reported similar findings; their study which explored the experiences of students from the Global South who entered United States for the first time as students, found that these students struggle with the centrality of race in how people communicate in the United States, mainly because they are used to understanding diversity, power, and social

hegemony in ways that do not centre on race. Nilinjana and Zhang reported that the experience of racialisation seems most intense for participants from sub-Saharan African and/or mainly Black countries, who struggle with "becoming" Black in the United States. In the studies reviewed, some participants reported that they were not aware of their Black identity prior to migration; for example, in Abdi (2020) the study highlights nuances and complexity of the notion of Blackness and the various ways that it is taken up by different generations of Black immigrants. Abdi indicated that first-generation Black immigrants have a strong preference for ethnic identities, compared to the second generation whose perception of Blackness is far more fluid and complicated due to their experiences with racialisation and ethnic socialisation.

2.2 Racism and psychoanalysis

Generally, a psychoanalytic view of racism would study the psychological tendency of human beings, to categorize people into groups and to presume that some groups are superior to others (Blechner, 2020;247). Psychoanalytic explanations of how racism operates, tend to draw on dynamics such as transference, countertransference, projective identification, splitting and other defense mechanisms. Explaining these concepts, Curtis (2015) explained that in transference, unresolved residue of the needs, wishes and desires belonging to early formative experiences are brought to and are unconsciously transferred onto a figure in the present, while countertransference is to do with those unconscious feelings that are aroused in identification with the transference. Knight (2019) observed that transference as a chief concept in psychoanalytic theory, was first noted by Freud in 1905 who began to think about relationships occurring in the current time-space as containing past repetitive patterns of relating, primarily to parents, and thus rooted in

childhood experiences. Expanding this concept, Melanie Klein (1946) is credited with being the pivotal person to begin the shift in focus towards object relations theory. Klein identified the psychological mechanism of projective identification, to describe how thoughts and feelings are transferred onto someone else. Building further on this, the work of Ogden (1979) suggests the manipulative potential of projective identification. Ogden suggested that projective identification acts in such a way as to evoke in the other, feelings and behaviours congruent with the projections. Ogden suggests that in addition, there is the wish/fantasy of control over the externa object, through the projections. On splitting, Melanie Klein proposed that death instincts cause anxiety in infants, and that to deal with these anxieties, the infant splits both his ego and his objects, and projects out separately his loving and hateful feelings into separate parts of the mother- a position Klein referred to as 'paranoid-schizoid position' (Melanie Klein Trust, 2020). Klein argued that this splitting is essential for healthy development, as it enables the infant to take in and hold onto sufficient good experience, to provide a central core around which to begin to integrate the contrasting aspect of the self, progressing to what Klein called 'depressive position' (Melanie Klein Trust, 2020).

In applying these Kleinian concepts in racism studies, Lowe (2008) for example, uses these concepts to explore relationship between Black and white people in both external and internal reality. Lowe develops the concept of colonial object relations, to describe a tendency in black-white relationships for the white to control or attempt to control the black object. Lowe notes that attempts to dominate and degrade the black object by the white object, is because of a primitive way of relating characteristic of the paranoid-schizoid mode of functioning, significantly involving defensive mechanisms of splitting, projection, and projective identification, which results in exploitation and degradation (pg.21).

These psychoanalytic concepts have been deployed in numerous racism studies (see for example Bick, 2011; Blechner, 2020; Davids; 2020; Hartman, 2020; Holmes, 2021; Hook, 2013, 2020; Knoblauch; 2020; Riggs, 2005; Sheehi, 2020; Whitsett 1996). For example, Whitsett (1996) claims that projective identification may operate more frequently and strongly in racism than does simple projection. Whitsett added that the transactional nature of projective identification distinguishes it from simple projection, in that both projectors and recipients influence and are influenced by one another. Whitsett argued that the objects feel powerfully 'contacted,' though they may not be able to sort out the nature of the 'contact' (pg70).

In relation to the study of racial microaggressions, when it is borne to mind what Sue et al. (2007) explained, that whilst microaggressions can usually be explained away by seemingly nonbiased and valid reasons, those at their receiving end often describe a vague feeling that they have been attacked or that something is not right (pg. 275), the usefulness of psychoanalytic concepts such as projective identification is obvious. But the general sense from reading existing literature, suggests that psychoanalysis has had a mixed history of addressing racism. On the one hand, its influence on racism related subject is evident, given the existing extensive body of research on this as shown here. But on the other hand, researchers (such as Thomas, 2013) have pointed that psychoanalysis as a profession has found it difficult to think about how the colonial past has affected Black people's present. Thomas argues that forgetting this painful history has meant that the profession has not considered its complex and haunting long-term effects on therapeutic relationships. Similarly, Morgan (2021) points to the features of psychoanalytic training that produce a disabling complacency, revealing a climate of colour-blindness where trainers, supervisors and analysts take the position that differences in colour are not noticed and not relevant to

in-depth analytic work. Morgan argues that this denial of the reality of the impact of racism and power differentials, means the Black trainee is required to disregard important aspects of her or his experience and put aside their 'Blackness' if they are to survive (pg. 414). Tummala-Narra (2020) adds that although psychoanalytic literature concerning race and racism has been expanding over the past two decades, recognizing and integrating the experiences of Black students and therapists in practice and training settings continues to be largely overlooked. As later discussed in methodology chapter, the decision to thread together psychosocial methods with decolonial perspective is largely to attend to these issues.

2.4 Internalised racism

Internalized oppression concerns the ways in which a member of a target group adopts the dominant group's ideology and the extent to which they accept their subordinate status as deserved, natural, and inevitable (Banks, 2018). Banks argues that racism is often thought of as existing and operating at the interpersonal and institutional levels, arguing that one aspect of racism that has been relatively forgotten, is its internalized component: racism that exists and operates at the internalized level (pg.1). Early conceptualisation of internalised racism (for example Du Bois, 1903; Fanon, 1952; Freire, 1972; Memmi,1965) noted the psychological effect of this type of racism. Du Bois (1903) theory of the double consciousness speaks to the conditions of internalised racism. Du Bois outlines the struggles Black people face, in holding 'two souls' or 'two worlds,' to denote the pressures of responding to the double mastery of reconciling the two worlds- that of holding to their cultures and heritage and the need to belong to the white world. Fanon (1952) put forward the idea that sustained denigration and injustice that the oppressed are subjected to, often

lead to self-doubt, identity confusion, and feelings of inferiority. Memmi (1965) postulated that the oppressed may eventually believe the interiorizing messages about one's racial group, an idea consistent with Clark and Clark (1939) doll studies (see a discussion of this study in Byrd, 2012)). Freire (1972) contended that because of the inferiority attached to their racial group, the oppressed might develop a desire to distance oneself from their racial or ethnic group, and to emulate the oppressor because their ways are seen as superior.

Contemporary conceptualisations of internalised racism (see for example in Pyke,2010; Smith,2022; David,2019; James, 2020) also emphasize the experience of internalized racial oppression as affecting the way a person thinks, feels, acts, perceives, and exists within the world. But for Mehta (2022), Internalised racism may also manifest as a gratitude tax, which refers to feeling indebted to institutions or seniors for opportunities, despite achievements being earned and not gifted. This indicates that minoritised people often push themselves to overachieve and perform acts of service. Thus, internalization of racism may arguably be the most damaging psychological injury that is due to racism (Speight, 2007). If internalized racism is an experience of self-degradation and embarrassment of one's African identity as described by Maxwell et al. (2015), then it is not difficult to see why it would have an influence on how racial microaggressions are experienced by Black Africans.

Section 2

2.3 British social work in the context of racism and racial microaggressions

Aymer (1996) provides a historical background on British social work engagement with racial issues up to the mid-1990s. Aymer observes that this engagement stemmed from social services departments being forced into the realization that they were not meeting the needs of Black communities, and that some of their practices were deemed to be directly or

indirectly racist. In response to this, recruitment of Black and minority ethnic (BAME)[3] social workers was seen as the solution (Lewis, 2000), the idea being that this would increase knowledge about cultural issues within the workforce and therefore improve practice (Mbarushimana & Robbins, 2015). Mbarushimana and Robbins observes that this logic continues in the practice of diversity work in large institutions.

With the entry of BAME social workers in British social work, Wainwright (2009) observes that anti-racism became prominent as a social and political movement in the UK from the 1970s onwards because of the BAME communities' resistance to racism, noting the many positive opportunities which emerged because of this. Keating (2000) provides a review of the contributions of anti-racist and Black perspectives to anti-discriminatory practice, but also offers a critique of limitations of anti-racist ideas. Keating argues that anti-racism has provided social work with a critique that paved the way for other forms of domination to enter the discourse on oppression in social work. But he cautions that to use anti-racist theory as the only frame of analysis is limiting, because it implies that racism is a system that operates independently from other systems of oppression and domination. Others (such as Singh, 2019) while interrogating the experiences and outcomes of anti-racist social work education, spoke of the saliency of 'race' and racism in a supposedly post racial society. The data presented in Singh's paper enables an understanding of how learning is experienced differently by Black and white students, and why their different learning needs should be differentiated and reflected in different areas of course content. Singh's observation that Britain's Black and minority ethnic communities are not homogenous and are comprised of a plurality of ethnic identities is helpful, as it invites need to consider the

[3]I acknowledge the term BAME is contested. Increasingly, the term Global Majority is being used.

differences that exist among different racial groups. Current study acknowledges this, hence its focus on the unique experiences of Black African social workers.

But in recent times, researchers (for example in Cane & Tedam, 2022) have commented on the shift in social work from anti-racist focus to a spectrum of social justice, with many arguing that this has diluted the discourse about race and racism. Indeed, Cane and Tedam's qualitative study with 67 newly qualified social workers (ASYE), found that almost all the participants from racialised groups, whether on the pre-registration programme or the ASYE programme, had not received adequate training on the strategies needed to challenge racism targeted towards them by service users, or what to do if their managers were unsupportive. Many participants in this study felt their employers were not committed to anti-racism, and where conversations had begun to take place since George Floyd's murder, concerns were that many discussions were tokenistic. This confirms Singh and Masocha (2019) observations, in their argument that racism and the experiences, histories and struggles of oppressed and colonised Black and minority ethnic people have become lost, in the desire to develop practice models beneficial to all equal opportunity target groups – including those who enjoy considerable class, racial and/or gender advantage (pg.3).

In a general sense, the overwhelming evidence from literature is that racism has persisted in social work profession. For instance, disparities between Black and ethnic minority students and their white counterparts in social work education in England, continues to be reported (for example in Fairtlough et al.2014; Tedam, 2014, 2015; Masocha, 2015). In Fairtlough et al. (2014), the study summarised that Black and ethnic minority students progress more slowly on their social work programmes in England, than their white counterparts. These authors reported that several students identified that their use of English contributed to

difficulties experienced within their programmes. Fairtlough et al. reported that when placements are scarce, and where students are competing with each other, Black and ethnic minority students could be disadvantaged in securing placements, adding that Black and ethnic minority students appeared to be more vulnerable to being referred and failed in or withdrawing from their placements. In Masocha (2015), the role of race and racism in the ways in which Black students experience social work teaching and learning was examined. Masocha concluded that current discourse of inclusive learning does not sufficiently foreground the centrality of racism in this group of students' negative experiences.

Matters do not appear to be any different for qualified BAME social workers. In Outlanders (Reid & Maclean,2021)- an anthology documenting compelling essays on anti-racism and social work education- the book powerfully amplifies the experiences and narratives of social workers from BAME backgrounds, including the invisibility of BAME social workers, the silencing of BAME social workers in the profession. The book also documents the agency and activism of BAME social workers, for example, Zoe Thomas, whose piece in the book is written as “act of rebellion and protest” (pg.32) against racism. Zoe powerfully contrasts her experiences as a social work practitioner to when she became a social work academic, describing the latter as “I entered a sterile world of emotional disconnect, privilege disinterest, white denial, the protection of fragile white feelings with a dose of insincere apologetic smiles of apathy and a few sympathetic nods” (pg.33).

Elsewhere, in Mbarushimana and Robbins (2015), their study in a diverse East Midlands local authority, reported that BME social workers who took part in this study reported feeling that their efforts were not appreciated by the management and their struggles were not taken seriously. They reported that attempts by BAME social workers to improve the

service by positively dealing with racial issues, were not supported or upheld at management level. Obasi (2022) qualitative research with Black female social workers in the North of England, reveals examples of racism, marginality, invisibility, and hypervisibility as part of the lived experiences of Black female social workers in the study. Obasi reports that where Black social workers talked about their isolating experience of being the only Black member of the team, there was also an added frustration about the missed opportunities from colleagues to be more sensitive and empathetic to their situation. In Channer and Doel (2019), the study explored the specific experience of being Black in relation to post-qualifying study on a Post-Qualifying Child Care Award (PQCCA) in Northern England. In this study, respondents felt that a change of career was likely, with all pointing to what they regarded as discrimination as playing a part in this decision. Participants in this study indicated that racism played a role in what they perceived to be exclusion from training opportunities. In Cane and Tedam (2022), they found that where racism is observed, newly qualified social workers are hesitant to whistle-blow due to the fear of becoming unemployable. Cane and Tedam observes that it is evident that when social workers are recipients of racism, the priority is placed on the needs and vulnerability of service users, rather than addressing the racism experienced by the social worker, although both are important.

2.4 Black African social workers in England and racism

Specifically concerning Black African social workers in England, Samuel (2020) observes that Black African social workers make up 27 per cent of the workforce in England (12 per cent children and 15 per cent adult services social workers). Research on this specific group is however limited, perhaps due to what Tedam (2015) noted; Tedam observed that majority

of the research tends to be within the categorisation of Black minority ethnic (BAME) often used by researchers and academics (as indeed evidenced in the foregoing section). In the context of England, the exception to this is Tedam (2014, 2015, 2021) and Tinarwo (2017) whose work focuses on Black African social workers in England.

Tedam (2014) reported that practice educators find it easy to fail Black African students. Tedam reported on how the tone, pitch, and pronunciation of words by people for whom English is an additional language, is regularly subjected to evaluation by native speakers of English, leading to what Tedam called the 'expert first language user privilege' (p.140). Tedam (2015) examined the experiences of Black African students on social work placements. The study reported experiences of racism, over-scrutiny, isolation and exclusion, differential treatment and that participants were racially stereotyped on a regular basis. Tedam (2021) explored the experience of Black African social workers during a period of the COVID-19 pandemic in England. The findings of this paper indicates that Black African social workers perceived some of their experiences to be racialised and discriminatory from managers and on occasion, from their peers.

Tinarwo (2017) study sought to uncover racial discrimination as experienced by overseas Zimbabwean social workers, employed within the British Welfare State. Her findings highlight racism perpetuated by institutional policies that have remained unchallenged for years but have continuously served to undermine foreign qualifications and devalue work experience of those recruited from the Global South. The research participants also commented on commitment to policies like the equal opportunities policy within the organisation, with almost all of them strongly feeling that such policies were just there on paper and were not being put into practice within local authority.

2.5 Racial microaggressions

See chapter one for previous discussion of racial microaggressions. The burgeoning body of work covering racial microaggressions, is indicative of the prevalence of this issue in the society. The impact of racial microaggressions is known and widely reported in literature and will thus not be repeated here. But variations in experiences and types of racial microaggressions have been reported across racial groups; for example, in Torres-Harding, Andrade and Romero (2012), the study indicated that some racial microaggressions are unique to people's experiences and stereotypes based on their racial group. This was confirmed in Wong et al. (2013) literature review on racial microaggressions, which identified uniqueness of racial microaggression experiences for immigrants who may not have encountered racial oppression prior to migration and are experiencing this for the first time in a new setting. Wong et al. literature review identified the possibility of differential experiences of racial microaggressions between native English speakers, and those who speak English as a second language, and differences attributable to degrees of acculturation and racial ethnic identity.

2.6 Black African social workers and racial microaggressions

There are studies focusing on racial microaggressions in social work (for example Nakaoka, 2018; Davis & Mirick, 2022; Wong, 2008; Hollingsworth et al. 2018; Brown, Johnson & Miller, 2019; Weng & Gray, 2020), but none of these studies are specifically on Black African social workers in UK. Most of these studies are in the context of America and are mostly in the context of education settings. For example, Hollingsworth et al. (2018) investigated Black students' experiences of racial microaggressions in a predominantly White institution in America. They found that Black students while struggling with the untoward effects of

racially oppressive experiences, are often simultaneously struggling to correct them and improve outcomes in the process. Davis and Mirick (2022) study in social work education found that in classroom, about one third (31.8%) of participants reported experiencing a microaggression committed by a social work faculty member. Findings from this study indicate that in the larger sociocultural context, differences in social identity are related to differences in power and privilege, resulting in systemic inequality, and these dynamics are replicated in social work education and may result in microaggressions perpetrated against social work students from marginalized backgrounds. Wong (2008) examined the microaggressions as experienced by students and perpetrated by students and faculty in one of the most ethnically and racially diverse social work programs in the nation. They found that even where there is great diversity with the percentages in favour of people of color, microaggressions are strong and persistent. In Weng and Gray (2020) participants believed that racial microaggressions were evident in social work. Participants in this study reported that being treated 'disrespectfully' was one-way social workers displayed racial microaggressions. For example, participants said that when working with clients whose culture was more conservative, participants noted that some providers may dress or act inappropriately. In the Canadian context, Weinberg and Fine (2022) explored the experiences of racisms and microaggressions in social work. Participants in their study spoke about the racism they experienced from service users toward themselves, including clients refusing the racialized social worker as their practitioner. The study found that colleagues or managers did not treat incidents of racism by service users seriously, nor were the practitioners supported.

2.7 Locating this study within the exististing literature.

The literature review in this chapter has evidenced an extensive body of literature covering experiences of racism and racial microaggressions on Black social workers. But at the time of writing this study, I did not identify any study on racial microaggressions specifically on Black African social workers in England. As discussed in this chapter, Tedam's and Tinarwo's studies have made significant contributions, in relation to acknowledging racism which have plagued the experiences of Black African social workers in England. This study builds on this knowledge by contributing an original thought on the link between colonial legacy and racial socialisation and racialisation, and how this shapes how racial microaggressions are experienced by Black African social workers working in an English local authority. This will bring understanding of the nuanced and the complex way racial microaggressions are experienced by first-generation Black African immigrants, and how this shows up in their professional life as qualified social workers. Drawing from the Fanonian decolonial perspective informing this study, the unique contribution made by this study is its ability to unveil simultaneous experiences of racial microaggressions which are still framed with colonial fusions, while at the same time privileging various ways participants in the study exert their agency. This counteracts the normative positions whereby those racialised as Black, are often framed through dependency on whiteness.

2.8 Developing the main research question.

Given the broad focus in this study as described above, it was important for me that when developing the main research question, to approach this without fully anticipating the specific process in advance, as it is necessarily emergent. This resembles what Lipscombe et al. (2021) refer to as "swimming around in the uncertainty, where not knowing is valued"

(pg. 6). Hence, the main research question was framed as 'openly' as possible, to allow participants to focus on what they felt is important to them. Therefore, the main research question openly asked:

''What does conversations with African Black social workers tell us about their experiences of racial microaggressions, and how can this inform the profession of social work/ and or employing organisations''?

Five research sub-questions were developed to enable the study to meet its aims and objectives:

- In an African setting, how does racial socialisation in the context of historical colonial oppression and internalised racism, inform understanding about racial oppression?
- What are the experiences of racism for those who may not have encountered or recognised racial oppression prior to migration to England, and are experiencing/recognising this for the first time in a new Western setting?
- What are Black African social workers view on social work as an anti-racist profession?
- At an organisational level, what have Black African social workers found in the organisational policies, culture, and practices that either enhances or negates their experience of racial microaggressions?
- In the face of all this, how do African Black social workers continue in an environment that feels hostile to them?

2.8 Conclusion

Discussions in this chapter have shown that 'race' is not as salient in African settings as it is in Western settings. As discussed in this chapter, this has implications on experiences of racial microaggressions for Africans after they migrate to a Western white majority setting. Discussion in this chapter has highlighted the dynamic interaction of racial socialisation and

racialisation on experiences of racism on Black African immigrants. In the context of social work, discussions in this chapter have illuminated the prevalence of racism and racial microaggression within the profession. We can thus expect that for the Black African social workers involved in this study, experiences of racism and racial microaggressions are prevalent, but that there is an added complexity of this arising from the specifity of their racial socialisation and racialisation.

The next chapter focuses on the researcher's positionality, to lay open the challenges of studying experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, when the researcher herself is a Black African social worker.

Chapter 3; Researcher's positionality, ontology, and epistemology

3.1 Introduction

This study explores the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by Black African social workers, when this is framed from the double mastery of negotiating the influence of internalised racism on racial microaggressions, whilst also resisting this. In chapter one, the autoethnography contextualised what this study intends to focus on. The autoethnography laid bare the influence of the biographical experiences of the researcher on the research process.

In this chapter, the focus is on researcher's positionality, to illuminate the challenges present when the researcher's identities are implicated in the research, especially in relation to communities with whom the researcher shares affinities. Firstly, the researcher's ontological positioning will be made visible, followed by a discussion on the researcher's decolonial epistemology and a privileging of Ubuntu African worldview. Discussion will then turn to researcher's reflexivity, to explain how the possibility of over-identification with the research topic due to the emotional nearness will be attended to. Lastly, discussion on participants' wellbeing and that of the researcher will be considered, in acknowledgement that the nature of the research topic is likely to cause distress.

3.2 Ontological and epistemological positions

The two opposite philosophical orientations about the nature of reality, has been positivism and constructivism. The former claims absolute truths and causal laws, whereas the latter argues for reality which is relative to one's position within the social system (Cruickshank, 2012). Critical realism is positioned between these two philosophical orientations, and views unobservable structures as real, on the ground that their effects can be experienced or

observed (Bhaskar, 2008). This is because critical realism posits a structured reality composed of three levels: the empirical level consisting of experienced events; the actual level, comprising all events whether experienced or not; and, lastly the causal level, embracing the 'mechanisms' which generate events (Bhaskar, 2008). On this basis and on the issues of racism, the broader historical context, and my subjective experiences as a Black person, plays a significant role in mediating my belief that racism exists. Not only do racism exists, but also the wider historical and societal structures are inter-woven. I believe that certain power relation exists, and that these have material consequences for certain people (Ahmed, 2008). Therefore, the ontological standpoint from which I interact with reality is that of a critical realist. Critical realism will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Epistemologically, I started the research journey as a social constructionist. But as I started deeply engaging with my research topic, I realised that social constructionist is ill positioned to meet my research aims. My research interest is on how people experience racial oppression, in this study racial microaggressions. But given that social constructionism prioritises people' lived experience without accounting for their 'actual' conditions or the broader structures that creates these conditions (Neuman, 2014), I found this approach insufficient to meet the objectives of this study. Furthermore, due to my education which I acknowledge is steeped in Western sensibilities, constructing knowledge from my initial social constructionist lens would 'weaken' this study's decolonial aims, considering that social constructionist ignores the structural conditions which creates oppression (Neuman, 2014).

I thus turned to decolonial epistemology. Decoloniality is thinking and existing with and from standpoints that make what is presumed to be "other," visible and valued (Silva,2022).

On this, several social work scholars around the world are resisting the privileging of white Western epistemologies and perspectives, in influencing what is conceptualized as legitimate 'social work' and therefore what is regarded as valid social work knowledge (see for example the work of Chigangaidze 2021, 2022; Mulumba &Carvalho, 2023; Ibrahima & Mattaini, 2019; Ndimande, 2012; Mugumbate et al. 2023; Seehawer, 2018, among many others). These scholars discuss Ubuntu as an African philosophy, worldview, moral ethics, and a way of knowing, advocating for this philosophy to be adopted when working with Africans. In brief, Chigangaidze (2021) conceptualises Ubuntu as "an African philosophy that is based on humanness, kindness, communality, socio-structural issues such as social justice, and human rights" (pg. 291). Others (such as Mugumbate et al. 2023) define Ubuntu as "African humanism, a people-centred approach to looking at the world" (pg.2). Community as the cornerstone in African thought and life, is a similarity shared in many African cultures.

In the context of the study, I was mindful that for the Africans to whom this study is concerned about, there is a need to recognise that "the White Western perspectives do not reflect values and knowledge systems in other contexts such as the African Obuntu/Ubuntu (Tusasiirwe, 2023: pg.1). It is this that firmed my decision to favour decolonial perspectives. I acknowledge the possibility that some may question the 'rigour' of this study, due to my display of explicit political and cultural subjectivity in this research. I admit that compared to approaches taken in traditional Western research, approaching this research as a 'decolonising interpretive research (Darder,2019), sometimes feels like 'a less defined methodology'. Admittedly, because of this, concerns around 'research rigour' has been an enduring pre-occupation throughout this study. But on this, Darder (2019) exhaults me to stay the course:

"About concerns that a decolonizing approach is less rigorous, due to its expressed political and cultural subjectivity, there are a few things that must be understood. Rigor is the outcome of developing an intellectual capacity to engage critically and move with depth into different aspects and dimensions of an issue or problem that one is studying, and to do this both systematically and creatively" (pg. 4).

3.3 Researcher's reflexivity

An imperative in this study is to be therapeutic in its focus, and this commitment is reflected throughout the whole research process (see an example of this on the diary reflection on Ivy's data in page 68). I use the term 'therapeutic' here very cautiously given that I am not a trained therapist; my use of the term 'therapeutic' is tentative and mostly to suggest the' potential' in decolonial researchers "to be the transformative 'healers' who use research to improve the lives of the marginalised research" (Barnes, 2018:383). Expanding further on the issue of using psychoanalytic concepts when one is not a trained therapist, Archard (2020) acknowledged the anxiety and trepidation he experienced in his choice of a psychoanalytically informed method, in his acknowledgement that although he had some knowledge of psychoanalysis, he was however without clinical training. I have similar concerns as Archard. But I equally concur with his view that although social workers are not trained as psychotherapists, their professional training, and the nature of the job they do, certainly skills them to have conversations that deal with intimate and personal matters as psychotherapists do.

But this has prompted me to consider what it means to complete research with other Black African social workers who share many similarities with myself (Black, African, immigrants, social workers), and the possibility that over the course of this research study, I may find myself conducting the research from any of those positions. There is a real possibility for over-identification, via transference- countertransference.

Therefore, and taking a leaf from Trainor and Bundon (2020), I will endeavour to provide clear examples of 'reflexivity in action' throughout this thesis. This is with a view to share my thought processes and my subjectivity and involvement in data production. For ease, the reader will find these examples wherever the box borders and shading appear on the text. To illustrate this, I offer a diary entry I completed as I analysed interview data for one of the research participants (Tia)[4]

In one of my diary entries, this indicates that while listening and watching the recording of first interview with Tia, I noted how her tone and body language would change, as she voiced some of her experiences. I noted that whenever these changes occurred, I would mirror this with my "mmhs," almost to signal that I understand and hear what she was saying. It is as if in those times, I would occupy a position not that of a researcher removed or distanced, but an equal participant with her. I get a sense that my action stems almost from an automatic need in me to validate and bear witness to what she was saying. It is an interesting aspect when researching a topic that is so near emotionally, because then I catch myself identifying with what Tia is saying. And that is shown in my mmhss responses and my visual ques, which hopefully communicates to her that 'I not only hear, but also 'knows' what she is telling me. This is an interesting reflection in terms of my emotional responses to data and what that means to how I receive and interpret it.

Another entry on a different date indicates that when listening to Tia's recording, I note how sad and emotional I get, listening to what she said about "very few Black people who want to fight." I feel sad because Tia recognises that Black people not fighting, denies them the job satisfaction. But at the same time, Tia recognised that they do not fight because they want to survive. I catch the emotion in her when she talks about the impact of the experience she went through at the hand of a white manager, and how this impacted her family life. She said that she was feeling on edge and anxious when Monday comes. No

[4] The reader is advised that all names mentioned in the thesis are pseudo names.

matter how many times I listen to this, I feel overwhelmingly sad, because 'I know' from my lived experience that this is the reality of many Black workers.

3.2 Participants' wellbeing and that of the researcher

I was also very mindful that by asking participants to narrate their experiences of racial microaggressions, this will undoubtfully provoke pain and distress, as participants relive their experiences of this. But based on the concepts of the ethics of researching psychosocial subjects (Holloway &Jefferson, 2000), the emphasis is not so much on avoidance of harm, but on the researcher's responsibility for creating a safe context, in which issues of honesty, sympathy and respect are central. To emphasise this point, I offer field notes and diary reflections for another participant (Kay):

I noted Kay's body language just before he started his narrative. I noted the nervous laugh and the shifting in his seat. With insight I now have from the two interviews I have completed with him, I can now decode this body language, as a signal to what I now know of the pain and racial trauma he still carries with him. Thinking about this, it is no wonder that the transference in the two times we have met for individual interviews, has had me adopting a very maternal position, and an acute need in me to spare him the pain activated by speaking about his experiences. This may explain why in the first interview, I 'instinctively' did not want to dig too deep about his experiences with Home Office. I 'instinctively' deduced that his process of normalising his immigration status in this country was a painful process. When I discussed this during supervision with my supervisors, this invited reflection on whether this was an attempt by myself as the researcher to protect myself from pain?

I will not deny that Kay's narrative activated a deep pain in me on his behalf. However, after much reflection and listening to the whole interview and field notes, I don't think I was protecting myself. Rather, this was an 'instinctive' need in me to minimise 'distress' on him, known to me through the countertransference. I also had in mind the research ethics, about not wanting to create 'unnecessary' harm. Unnecessary in the sense that I did not deem it

necessary for the purpose of this research, to ask him to relive his immigration experiences, which clearly carries deep personal pain to him.

While doing this research, I have often reflected that when I decided to study this topic, nothing could have prepared me for the psychological and emotional 'burden' I experienced, when the actual research got underway. I have often reflected that even though I considered my wellbeing as part of the ethics application process, I admit that on hindsight, I never really grasped the 'reality' of this at that point. What I had thought was that my considerable lived experiences of racism would have prepared me for this; but, 'offering' myself to be a 'container' of the experiences my participants 'entrusted' me with, and staying 'emotionally close to these experiences,' was quite emotionally tasking. I have cried a few times. I have felt overwhelmed at times.

Thankfully, I have had supervision space to 'unburden' myself during the research journey. My family and close friends have provided strong 'scaffolding' to ensure I can keep standing without buckling under the weight. My Christian faith has been my strength and stay. And lastly, keeping a research diary has been therapeutic and cathartic. On hindsight, I would advise anyone embarking on 'emotionally near' research, to give considered thought on how they will keep themselves safe. I admit that at the beginning, I underestimated the impact of this on myself as the researcher.

3.4 conclusion

This chapter has made explicit the researcher's critical realist ontology, but also made it plain that a concern in this study, relates to epistemology in relation to research proclivity which tends to privilege white Western epistemologies at the expense of non-Western epistemologies. To counteract this and specifically in relation to the Africans whom this study is concerned about, this study has turned to decolonial epistemology. What discussions in this chapter has alluded to, is what Kenneth (2022) discusses as 'the epistemology of resistance'. Kenneth described this as a lens which tries to elucidate the epistemic aspects of oppression, whilst also trying to offer a way out of the epistemic injustices that accompany oppression. Such were my considerations when deciding on the research design and methodology, as discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This research study focuses on first generation Black African social workers, working in an English local authority, to document their experiences of racial microaggressions. The previous chapter accentuated an important consideration in the study, which is how to theorise racial microaggressions without reinforcing the hegemonic belief in Black African's inferiority and inability to assert agency. As already communicated in previous chapters, the decolonial epistemology informing this study is with an intention to unveil experiences of racial microaggressions which are still framed with colonial fusions, but without framing this through dependency on whiteness.

This chapter discusses how the overall research design enables this study to meet its objectives. Firstly, a brief mention of the difference between quantitative and qualitative research will be offered, as well as positioning this study within the latter. Following this, critical realism as this study's philosophical assumption will be discussed, and with this, a discussion on how it harmonises with a decolonial methodology. A brief discussion on how participants were selected is then followed by a discussion on the mixed methods used for data collection. Lastly, discussion on data analysis will be provided.

4.2 Research type

Quantitative methods are more appropriate when establishing cause-effect relationships, and when professional values and processes are not compromised by controlled techniques (Cooper et al. 2023). Given the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, it is apparent why quantitative method is ill suited for this study. Qualitative studies seek to

understand the complex phenomena through participants experiences, and thus can explicate the perceived explanations, mechanisms and the complex relationships that may not otherwise be identified through quantitative research (Allana and Clark, 2018). This study privileges participant's subjective experiences, as well as acknowledging the value-laden nature of the overall research study. Thus, positioning this study within qualitative methodology is appropriate.

4.3 Philosophical assumption; critical realism

Critical realism was introduced in the previous chapter. Earlier in the study, it was observed that there is little research that draws a clear causal connection between internalised racism and the influence of this on experiences of racial microaggressions. Suggestion was made that critical realism offers a way to investigate this. For this study, critical realism is important for three main reasons:

Firstly, informed by Fanonian sociogenic theory, a central premise of this study is the centrality of the influence of colonial legacy on racialised people. This 'colonial legacy' is not a concrete element that can be investigated directly. From a critical realist position however, its complex causality can be inferred from the patterns of events it generates, as experienced and observed in the lived experiences presented in this study. This is made possible because as Wiltshire and Ronkainen (2021) notes, critical realism offers a real potential to engender a thought process which entails thinking about the mechanisms that may be latent or dormant, but that which have real causal influence on the world because of their intrinsic properties. This is in harmony with the Fanonian sociogenic theory informing this study, since this theory asserts that the inferiority complex of the Black man is not an individual problem (Fanon, 2021; xi), but lies in the structures of colonialism (both

political and economic). In critical realist terms, rather than seeing internalised racism manifested in how participants respond to racial microaggressions as an individual weakness or maladaptive coping, it is instead seen as nested within the domains of the real, the actual and the empirical.

Secondly, this study also considers that the subject of microaggressions have not been without its critics (for example Lilienfeld,2017 and Elder,2021). For instance, Lilienfeld argued that the 'eye of the beholder' assumption in the microaggressions literature, generates quandaries, given that it is not apparent what level of agreement among minority group members would need to regard a given act as a microaggression. Moreover, a general understanding is that most microaggressions contain both a conscious communication and hidden or metacommunication, that is outside the level of perpetrator awareness (Nadal et al. 2014). Therefore, the phenomenon under investigation can only be understood if people understand the structures that generate events, and this can only be achieved if the exploration of what is observable, is also accompanied by studies of the hidden generative structures. Critical realism is helpful because as Willis (2023) notes:

"It provides on the one hand, an ontological basis for making inferences about unobserved or unobservable entities or processes that are nevertheless real and have impacted on what we have observed or can observe, and on the other hand, can help us provide explanations (as opposed to just descriptions) for the content of our data" (pg.282).

Thirdly, the conceptual challenge of researching racism is known; for example, Stephens (2013) attributed this due "to the need to view racism as grounded as much in psychological as in macro-political processes, as existing in both concrete material arrangements and phantasmatic dispositions and as perpetuated as much in (inter)subjective as in

institutional" (pg.1). This complexity by necessity requires 'creativity' as illustrated in the approach taken for data collection methods in this study (discussed from page 56). Bearing this in mind, it is a strength that critical realism functions as a general methodological framework for research but is not associated with any set of methods (Fletcher, 2016).

But it is also acknowledged that critical realism also has its weaknesses; for example, the reliance on researchers' prior knowledge of the conceptual landscape (Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021), carries the risk that this may 'unduly' shape the explanations generated. To bring this point to life, I offer below a diary reflection I completed after reading Kawa's interview script, following his second interview:

During the first interview, Kawa described his 'sadness' about those Black young girls at the laundrette, who did not respond to his 'friendliness.' Kawa explained that 'he had assumed that they would "see him as one of them." During this first interview, my 'prompting' around this suggests that I was informed by my existing knowledge about 'the political Blackness' and the 'solidarity' from this. From this perspective, I interpreted the 'sadness' Kawa experienced as caused by 'the young girls not seeing him as their African brother.' However, during the second interview, when I clarified this with Kawa, it became apparent that his sadness did not stem from the 'empirical level' (i.e the interpersonal relationship with these young girls); rather this was on 'causal level' (i.e the mechanisms driving what is observable on the interpersonal level), which Kawa explained as the 'divide and conquer' tactics employed by colonial masters, to ensure Africans are not united. Kawa's sadness stemmed from what he saw as the role played by 'Western' governments to create what he called a 'wedge' between Black communities,' his sadness stemming from younger generation of African heritage not recognising this.

The strength of the chosen FANI interview method is its insistence on completing at least two interviews with each participant. Had I relied on only one interview for data collection, my 'interpretation' based on my prior knowledge on the topic, would have 'obscured'

Kawa's focus on the unseen mechanisms involved, concerned with the ongoing influence of coloniality.

4.4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria:

The focus in this study is on social workers who are Black Africans, who immigrated to Britain as adults post socialisation age (in this study, I take the word 'adults' very 'loosely' to mean post primary school age). To meet the organisational focus in this study, the said social workers had to be working in a local authority, and for practicality, in the same local authority as the researcher.

I did consider whether to include Black Africans social workers born in this country. But from my subjective experiences in listening to how my Black children who are born in this country talks of racism, I have realised that their orientation to Blackness and where this positions them in relation to societal structures, is vastly different to mine. This understanding and wisdom from lived experiences, added with what I identified in the literature review, firmed my decision on the stated inclusion criteria.

4.5 Recruitment method and location

In most studies that I reviewed, I noted that purposive criteria (Patton, 1990) were mostly used to select a sample, to maximise chances of recruiting participants who fits the inclusion criteria. I used the same sampling method in this research. To secure participants, I sent research participation request via email, to the Black and Ethnic staff network group in the local authority I work in and requested participations from the targeted group.

My approach to seeking participant involvement was to be flexible to suit their preference and needs. I offered the option of taking part in the research either virtually or face to face, especially given current ways of working due to the recent pandemic. Following COVID-19

pandemic, this has highlighted the benefits of embracing technology, and how much this saves time due to reduced need to travel to places. My assumption was that participants are likely to be willing to take part in the research if participation is online, and this proved to be the case as all participants opted for the online medium. Microsoft Teams platform was used for the research, as this is the online platform currently used and approved in the local authority involved.

4.5 Methodological approach

4.5.1 Psychosocial approach to research

Due to the nature of the research problem, I acknowledge that in seeking to uncover the 'unconscious' processes implicated in racial microaggressions, what I am seeking to investigate is not just openly there ready to be observed (Lindseth & Norberg, 2022). The challenge therefore is finding ways to investigate what is not readily seen or readily named. As well put by Brett (2018), "language is not always sufficient in understanding human emotional experience", adding that "some feelings are beyond words, and it is only through affectively feeling the emotion that some things can be truly understood" (pg. 5). Hoggett (2008) suggested that people communicate affectively as well as discursively, precisely because of the inherent limitations of language in expressing experience (pg. 381). In the context of racial microaggressions, the limitation of language to explain this is well noted; for instance, in Sue et al. (2007), these authors explain that those at the receiving end of racial microaggressions "often describe a vague feeling that they have been attacked or that something is not right" (pg. 275). This thus suggests that at times, experiences of racial microaggressions are not always immediately accessible to the recipient through language. A psychosocial approach is well placed to attend to this, because as noted by Brett (2018),

“a psychosocial approach takes into account narrative construction but goes beyond this to access to the unconscious thoughts, motivations, feelings, fears, and desires of the participant” (pg.2).

Moreover, given the known anxieties triggered in racism discussions, I was cognizant with the possibility that both myself as the researcher and participants will be ‘defended’ (Holloway & Jefferson, 2000) during the research encounter. I was attracted to psychosocial research methods because the methods offer opportunity to consider the unconscious communications, dynamics and defences that exist in the research environment (Clarke & Hoggett, 2009). This is what prompted my choice of free association narrative interviewing (FANI) method, for the individual interviews (later discussed from page 62).

This said, scholars (such as Hunter, 2005) have demonstrated the benefit of coupling other approaches with the psychosocial; for example, Hunter points out that” the problem with current policies seeking to redress institutional discriminations is the failure to acknowledge the ambiguous relationship between institutional and individual racism and sexism within health and social care” (pg. 150). To contest these imbalances, Hunter developed a feminist psychosocial methodology for her project.

Taking a cue from Hunter, I was mindful that for the Africans about whom this study is concerned, concern exists that when it comes to attending to colonial racism, a psychoanalytic informed method may fall short. This is from what researchers such as Thomas (2013) have pointed, that psychoanalysis finds it difficult in thinking about how the colonial past has affected Black people’s present. I was thus conscious that a psychosocial method on its own, is insufficient to meet this study’s objectives. This is what inspired the coupling of the two decolonial data collection methods used in this study (autoethnography

and focus group), with the FANI psychosocial method used for the individual interviews. The discussion that follows discusses the three data collection methods used in this study.

4.5.2 Autoethnography as a decolonial strategy

Chapter one provided my biographical reflexive account of myself as the researcher. As I discussed in chapter 1, completing the autoethnography was a process for me to start unwinding internalised colonisation as well as surfacing how colonial practices affect my life. This is influenced by Freire (1970) insistence that emancipatory knowledge of the researcher, must emerge from an intimacy with the empirical knowledge of the people. Completing the autoethnography prior to commencing data collection exercise with participants, ensured that I turned inwardly first. This honours what decolonial perspectives teaches us, about putting the researcher's tool on ourselves first, before turning the tool on others (Silva, 2022). This kind of reflexivity characterised by a practice of self-reflection and introspective awareness, facilitates decoloniality which seeks to deconstruct hegemonic epistemologies that render Indigenous and local community knowledge as illegitimate (Jesica, 2018).

Thus, my use of autoethnography was/is an intentional decolonial strategy for two reasons: firstly, by deciding to avail my personal experience as part of the research enquiry, this enabled me to "investigate in depth my existence, my being (who I am), and what I know (my knowledge) through observing and narrating my lived experiences and social realities" (Nguyen &Chia, 2013: 215). Secondly, as part of the *testimonio* (provided in chapter 1) was orally read to participants at the focus group, this was not only a means to connect with research participants thus reduce the researcher-researched distance, but it was also an intentional act of epistemology disobedience (Mignolo, 2009). This is because I intentionally

sought to depart from “the typically superior, detached, objective and aloof disposition of a researcher, and shatter the barrier separating the researcher from their research subjects” (Quah, 2020: 206). Sharing ‘self’ with participants through orally reading the *testimonio* to them, was with the intention of honouring an African centred ontology, whereby knowing who I am as a researcher is in relationship with my research community (Glocke, 2011).

While this method may be a deviation from scientific research which conceives the researcher as distanced from the research activity (Mignolo, 2009), I however saw this from the perspective of Mignolo, who resists zero-point epistemology. Mignolo describes this as “the knowing subject who is detached and untouched by the geo-political configuration of the world in which people are racially ranked and regions are racially configured” (pg.160). Mignolo calls for epistemic disobedience to delink from the illusion of the zero point.

4.5.3 Focus group

I designed the focus group based on the principles of ‘Thinking Spaces’ (Lowe,2014). This was to lessen the anxiety in racism discussions, prior to completing individual interviews. But also, and most importantly, it was to provide a safe environment where colleagues with a similar ethnicity and professional values can support one another. What is remarkable in reflections cited in Lowe’s model, is not so much the pain they describe, but the fact that they have been unspoken. Lowe notes:

…” the discussion was not just a release of painful emotions; it was also a reclaiming of part of the self—one’s cultural heritage that had become split-off and kept at the periphery (pg.31).

Thus, whilst the primary source of data for this study was derived from individual interviews, the decision to incorporate a focus group in the design of the study was an intentional decolonial strategy- in the sense that the main purpose of the focus group was to facilitate a space where myself as the researcher could come together with research participants in a mutually inclusive space. This intentional consciousness of the researcher and the research coming together, was inspired by the 'collective' orientation of African people espoused in the Ubuntu African world view (see earlier discussion in page 46). As well put by Ibrahima and Mattaini (2019) "existence-in-relation defines the African conception of life and reality" (pg.801).

The design of the focus group was therefore intentionally decolonial, in the firm believe that if research is to benefit those being researched, then it "should be driven by indigenous worldviews, cultural values and a language that is relevant to the indigenous group with whom research is undertaken" (Marovah & Mutanga, 2023:1). Consequently, the main emphasis in the focus group was not just sharing painful experiences of racial microaggressions, but was also an invitation as a group, to look at the world differently and to ask all of us to undo what we have grown to know and accept as truth. In wanting to distinguish the design of this focus group from any other focus group design, Seehawer (2018) words in reference to such spaces come to mind: "that they are considered sacred in many indigenous cultures and serve as a space for personal growth and transformation" (pg. 458).

The focus group was held online via Microsoft Teams. Of the 15 participants who had accepted the invitation, 12 participants logged in and participated, although 3 participants did not participate to the end as they had to deal with some personal emergencies. I used

Microsoft software to record the session and to transcribe. I offer below a diary reflection I completed, after holding the focus group:

I have been reflecting on the focus group data; I have gone back to watch the recording, and I am struck at my body language.

I noted how at first when I first started the focus group, I had a very visible body movement rocking forward and backwards. I was drawn to this bodily movement. Something about the way my body moved, communicated to me about the anxieties I was holding as the group facilitator and researcher. I wonder whether this bodily movement, at the start of data collection phase, was a way of mentally preparing myself to receive the projections from participants, given the nature of the research topic?

As I think of this, I have this visual image of 'nesting;' like how pregnant beings do the preparation ready for birthing? Almost physically getting ready for the onslaught and pain associated with any birthing.

Given that the focus group was my first data collection exercise, the embodied experiences noted here, felt to me like a symbolic 'boundary crossing' into the research journey, and provided me insight to the emotional demand that will follow, during the individual interviews.

The story told from focus group data, can be summarized in three words:

Violence-participants used words like "needing protection"; "attack"; "shove aside"; "fight on"; and "scared to fail".

Obscurity- participants used words like "profiles anonymised"; "I can't see you"; "Black students overlooked"; "greetings not acknowledged"; "it's like you are not there".

Inhuman- participants used phrases like "I am just a pay roll number"; "not seen as a person"; "Black person cannot sit on my seat".

Reflecting on this, it has occurred to me that the reported 'bodily rocking,' is a 'visceral' response to the 'violence 'emptied' into the space through the narratives shared, and 'held in my body'. The linked 'boundary crossing,' is reflective of how much Black workers must mentally and physically prepare themselves, as they go to work, into what they know to be

'hostile spaces. This to my mind is what my 'body' mirrored in this 'locking back and forth,' to 'soothe or comfort myself,' in readiness to the onslaught about to be received into my body, from the research experience.

That said, is it not then feasible to think of this 'boundary crossing' as the 'rituals and mental preparation' that these Black African social workers engage in daily, in their awareness of stepping into unsafe spaces to do their job? As the researcher, to 'hold and carry' this awareness of how much extra 'burden' on these workers, not just to survive in hostile spaces, but to effectively perform their duties as 'containers' for others in their professional role as social workers, is exhausting!

4.5.4 Individual interviews:

The same participants who participated at the focus group were invited for individual interviews; 7 participants accepted. Approach to individual interviews was based on free association narrative interviews method (FANI), as laid down by Holloway and Jefferson (2000). Holloway and Jefferson do not suggest that the interviewer is an objective observer, but what they encourage is for the researcher to try not to impose a structure on the narrative. What is prioritised in this method is the importance of the psychoanalytic technique of free association. Holloway and Jefferson explain that by following the principles of free association, respondents are asked to say whatever comes to their minds in relation to the subject of discussion (see appendix 3 for interview schedule**)**.

The authors suggest completing two interviews with each participant, and this proved useful as shown in the diary reflection for Kawa given in page 39.

Holloway and Jefferson (2000) concept of 'defended subject' (pg.33) is helpful in the context of this study, given that the nature of the research topic is likely to arouse different kind of effect, hence the 'defences' that may be adopted by both the researcher and the

researched to cope with this. Additionally, if it is accepted that interpretation of microaggressions will necessarily be contextual to the individual, and others may make different interpretations of the same, then it follows that the method chosen, needs to account for this. The potential of free association narrative method to defy narrative conventions, hence enabling the researcher to notice incoherencies in participants' accounts and accord them due significance (Holloway &Jefferson, 2000:37), is what makes this method particularly useful in the context of racial microaggressions. To illustrate this, I offer a diary reflection I completed after interview with Kay:

> When talking about his social work experience, Kay talked about a white colleague who racially abused him; he ended the narration by saying "I don't think I'll ever remember." It sounded to me as if some of these experiences are buried deep in psyche, not to be remembered perhaps for survival's sake? The way Kay said this, was in a tone and manner that suggested he wanted to 'forget'. Maybe the discussion was too painful?
> He followed this by talking about his response, similar response to the one he gave at the focus group. That of not wanting to escalate the matter further. I noted the tone of his voice, almost 'grasping' for breath when saying this. But interestingly, he added this by saying "because it was not having any negative impact on me" …
> Considering his nonverbal cues, I thought that it was incredible for him to deny the impact of this incident on him. One strength of FANI methodology is its ability to help in identifying these inconsistencies and paucity in narrative. Often, this is where depth is. In this one, these incoherences revealed a very deep internal struggle from this incident.
> Unsurprisingly, when I followed up on this during his second interview, he revealed that "having a wound" has an impact on the extent to which one can seek support, even when "wronged." This opened to how much racial trauma Black social workers are carrying around, and how this impacts their willingness to seek support or to openly discuss this.

But there were some elements of the FANI method that did not work well with this study's aims. For example, Holloway and Jefferson (2000) suggest that analysis come later after

data has been gathered. They thus imply the non-intrusiveness of the researcher during data gathering. However, given the study's decolonial commitment regarding creating conditions for 'therapeutic research encounter' (see earlier discussion in page 49), the suggested non-intrusiveness of the researcher during data gathering, was not amenable with the aspired transformative healing potential of this study, as earlier discussed. Because of this, I found it impossible to avoid judgments and interpretations during the data gathering stage, when the need for this arose. I offer a diary reflection below, to show one instance when I could not implicitly follow the FANI method. The diary reflection was written after first interview with Ivy:

As Ivy recounted a particular racist incident- the Macdonald incident, I remember feeling very moved and emotional during the interview as I looked at her, not as the adult Ivy she is now, but as the 15-year-old Ivy she was when this incident happened. This 15-year-old who has just moved into an unfamiliar environment and now has to deal with this racial hostility towards her. Ivy never got a chance to process and make sense of what had just happened, as she did not discuss this with anyone. I felt quite emotional, especially in recognition of how much 'stuff' is buried deep inside of us, but that which we carry around sometimes without realising.

I note that when she narrated that Macdonald incident and her saying that she did not tell anyone about this incident, I did not 'just move on' – I recognised the impact of this on her and proceeded to invite a reflection on this incident. When I 'checked in' with Ivy towards the end of the interview, she acknowledged how therapeutic talking about this has felt to her and acknowledged that this has prompted her to consider some of the racial issues that could have been buried in her, stuff which has had an impact on her even without her realising. As one of the objectives of this research study is to be therapeutic in focus, I am glad to see this honoured when the need for it arises.

But this has made me reflect on my position as a researcher and how this 'practice near research' is calling upon my 'whole self' to be used as a tool for research. Not just with an aim to collect data for the study, but also for the purpose of serving and benefiting the participants.

I am also noting a number of times when my shared understanding of the lived experiences of participants is being used to co-construct knowledge with them; for example, I noted that when I asked Ivy about whether anyone has queried her African accent, she at first said "I can't"…but when I 'normalised' this with my own experiences and stating what others have said on the same, she seemed comfortable to open up on this…

4.6 Ethical considerations

A detailed and rigorous ethical consideration, for example on confidentiality and consent, was completed as part of the ethics approval process. Hence a discussion on this will not be repeated here. But as a brief example, when presenting participants (see chapter 5), the portraits for participants include only generalised demographic details, to minimise the risk that participants can be identified. And when reporting findings (from chapter six) there are times when I made the decision to use the gender-neutral pronouns (they, them) to disguise the gender of the person involved. I however acknowledge that despite these efforts, it is possible that with such a small sample, there is still a possibility that these risks remain. Participants were aware of these risks (see appendix 2 for participants information pack).

4.7 Reflexivity

Cautiously, Clarke and Hoggett (2009) notes the potential for gross intrusion of the researcher's subjectivity, for example through use of the researcher's counter transference. Clarke and Hogget calls this 'wild analyses'. Throughout this study, I was cognizant of the possibility for researcher over-identification with participants, due to shared characteristics. To minimise this risk, I relied on triangulation (see in Boydell, 2009) during data analysis. Keeping a research journal to document my emotional responses to research materials enabled me to keep note of my emotional responses and to reflect on this. I also relied on psychoanalytic informed discussions with research peers, as well as utilisation of monthly

supervision with my research supervisors. This formed an essential part of the data analysis, to enable me as the researcher to be open in exploring my emotional reactions and exploring the role this may have on the conduct of the study. I borrow the concept of "third spaces" (Gabriel, 2020) to denote analysis done from these sources. These 'third spaces' proved valuable in providing varied perspectives, hence hopefully adding rigour to the analytic process. But I also found that often, the 'defensiveness' that I have often encountered in racism-related discussions, would 'surface' in those spaces. To illustrate this, I offer a diary reflection I completed after presenting research material to peers, and the subsequent supervision discussion I had with my research supervisors:

I presented Tia's data to research peers. In my presentation, my 'emotionality' was clearly visible. Tia's data vividly captures the violence in the organisation and is quite a 'painful' narrative to present/ hear. The seminar group is facilitated by two lecturers who are from minority ethnic group. The peers in the group were all white women.

The responses from peers were quite 'flat' and 'minimised' the impact of these experiences on the person involved, but also on me as a Black researcher. For instance, one of Tia's experiences is the constant questioning of her professional judgment by her white manager. And while the context and patterns of this clearly suggest racism from this white manager, two of the peers responded by giving examples when their own managers questioned their 'professional capabilities.' These two white peers implied that Tia could have wrongly interpreted the manager's actions as racism, suggesting it could have been job-capability related.

One of the group facilitators was my Doctorate supervisor. Later, when I had a discussion with her, she told me that her and the other lecturer 'were really taken back' observing what was going on in that space. She commented of how my emotionality was 'flatly' received by the peers. She commented that it appears that there was a determined effort 'to move away' from the emotions I clearly wanted to process.

The supervisor commented that her and the other lecturer 'shrank back' from the space, to 'defend' their psyches, for them to be able to perform their job of facilitating the seminar. We acknowledged that the dynamics observed in that space is what happens in the wider

society, when racism discussions are involved. Either the white peers could not 'tolerate' the pain evoked by what I presented, or their response is to 'sustain the status quo'?
But the questions that needs to be asked is this: why was these interactions with the peers not questioned or at least invite reflections as to what was being observed in that space?
Either way, what we observed is that whilst those affected often 'shrinks back' when confronted by these types of racial onslaught to get on 'the business of living,' we can't help but also acknowledge that this 'shrinking back' also means that opportunities to challenge whiteness are missed.
It does point to a myriad of reasons why those affected by racism may choose to respond one way or another. Sometimes, these responses are influenced by the need to 'continue living normally.' I will hold this in mind, especially when considering which responses/behaviours are attributed to internalised racism, and which ones may be for the sake of surviving.
But these interactions do beg some questions: how do racial matters 'land' on white ears? Had I been white, would I have been impacted or 'heard' participants accounts the same way? Or am I 'affected' the way I am because I racially identify with participants?

4.8 Data analysis

4.8.1 Describing the analysis process.

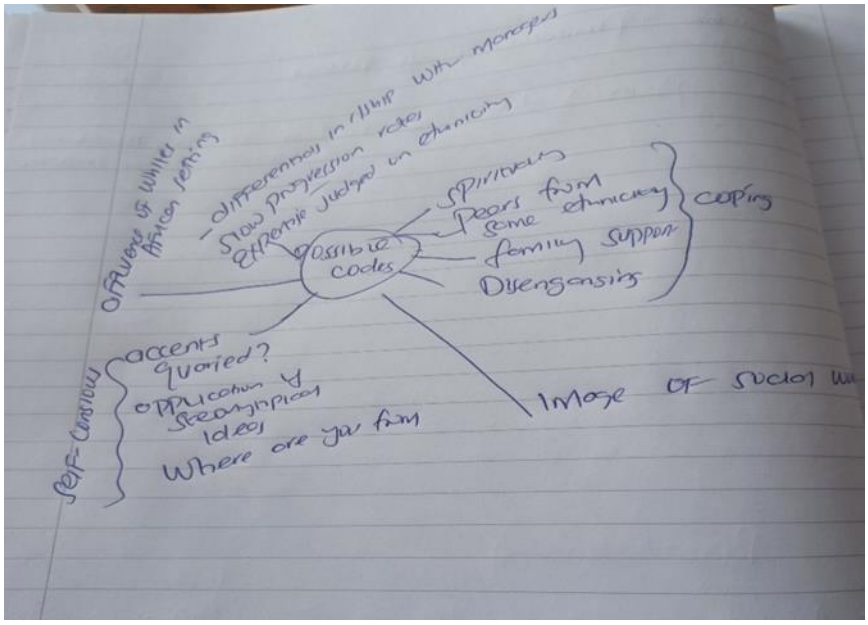
I was cognizant of the fact that with data material from focus group and two lots of interviews with seven participants, this represented a huge amount of material to go through. To enable analysis in a systematic manner, I used Braun and Clarke (2022) reflexive thematic analysis (RTA). I followed the six phases of RTA as identified in the model, but it is important to point out that whilst the phases suggest a linear process, Braun and Clarke are however clear that this phase-approach is not intended to be followed rigidly; rather, the analytic process is necessarily recursive. In reference to framings of language, data and meaning, the use of RTA in the analytic process, took a continuum between deductive and inductive analytic process (Braun & Clarke,2020), rather than adopting a dichotomous

stance on this. Data analysis was underpinned by a critical realist ontology and an epistemology steeped in decoloniality.

In the discussions which follow, each of the six phases is described:

Phase 1; data familiarisation and writing familiarisation notes.

I used Microsoft Teams for data collection. Although the Microsoft Teams functionality recorded and transcribed for me, this however still required me to 'correct' mistakes on the script. This was one way of familiarizing myself with data. It is worth noting that with FANI method, one must immerse themselves in this data following the first interview, to identify that which needs to be followed up on during the second interview. Thus, completing two FANI interviews during the data collection phase, meant that I was already familiar with data by the time I reached the structured data analysis phase. But that said, I still read and re-read the interview scripts, as well as watching/listening to the recordings of the interviews several times. To capture ideas that were being formed as I familiarised myself with interview data, I created 'mind map' for each participant; for example, the below mind map is for Ivy's data:



Phase 2; systematic data coding.

I used Microsoft Word functionality, to make notes on the margins and to highlight segments of data that interested me. In RTA, a deductive or theoretical approach entails using pre-existing theory as an interpretative lens through which to read and make sense of the data (Braun and Clarke,2022). Initially, coding was data-driven and was coded using words used by participants to express their subjective viewpoints. As I got more familiar with data, I started identifying patterns in each case, and across cases, making a note of this. I considered using software analysis package- NVivo, but discarded this idea as I felt that this will 'get in the way' of 'staying close' to data as I wanted (I used the software later in the process mainly for data visualisation).

Undertaking analysis in this phase felt quite 'frustrating, maddening and convoluted,' and was quite slow. Which is not surprising if the intention is to expose puzzling tensions, ambiguities, and dissonant elements in interviewees' accounts, as well as our own intersubjectively resonant sensations, emotional responses, and reveries (Ivey, 2022). I took a descriptive approach to coding, meaning that I applied relatively long descriptive codes to the data, rather than single word codes.

Bearing in mind the critical realist ontology informing this study, which implies imagining three levels of analysis (empirical, actual, and causal), this by implication meant incorporating and valuing both surface and deep aspects of the data. Analysis felt like it resembled a 'scaffolding' or 'layers upon layers' of distinct levels of analysis, reflecting the recursive nature or this going back and forth. The 'sweep' done towards the end involved 'posing questions onto the data' based on the research questions (see an example of this in appendix 5).

I relied on the theoretical ideas underpinning this study, as well as accessing literature to open and clarify key concepts. For example, the table in appendix 4 shows microaggressions at a 'glance,' showing findings of microaggressions in this study based on the racial microaggression taxonomy developed by Sue and colleagues (2007). Based on the findings reflected in these two tables, it is evident that microinvalidations were the most common type of microaggressions experienced by participants, whilst on the distinct themes, the myth of meritocracy and environmental invalidations were most cited. What these two tables shows is that for most participants, their narratives were discussing structural microaggressions as opposed to interpersonal microaggressions. This prompted me to examine microaggressions in the larger context of the social structures in which they occur, to highlight systemic forces that permit hostile work environment for the culturally 'Other'. Hence and from a critical realist lens, this study adopted a simultaneous focus on what Nakaoka and Ortis (2018), identified as the micro side (downstream) and the structural side (upstream) of microaggressions. The argument made is that even in the instances of microaggressions at individual interactional levels as shown on the table in appendix 4, these are really rooted in the violence of structural/ systemic/ organisational marginalization. These observations were confirmed by research peers when I presented these analyses to them.

But given the known subtlety of racial microaggressions, a question that peers raised was on participants' recognition and responses to incidents of racial microaggressions; on the table below, I show what participants said on this:

Recognition of racial microaggressions by participants	**Participants responses to racial microaggressions**
(a)Recognised through implicit behaviours.	Those inspired by avoidance due to the need to protect oneself.

(b)Recognised through emergence of patterns. (c)Recognised as a felt feeling. (d)Recognised by utilising existing knowledge from lived experience. Not recognised due to: -The challenge of knowing whether it is racism or whether its curiosity or ignorance -Difficulties in 'naming' 'unfair' experiences as racism when the racial factor is not made explicit -Racism recognised only when it is overt/outright incident? -due to the asymmetry of racism information, targets are unable to detect racism, meaning that racism goes unresponded to - The paradox of seeing and identifying subtle racism and at the same time not reading everything on racial terms	Those inspired by African cultural values. Resistance as response Segregation of Black people as a response The decision not to take any action when racism has been experienced at the workplace influenced by various factors e.g., need for job security, stage at which one is in the career e.g., ASYE etc. Legacy burdens derived from past trauma influences responses taken and the cost of pursuing.

Based on existing literature which suggests that most microaggressions are subtle, I was however surprised to find such high prevalence of microassults, as the table in appendix 4 shows. Research discussions with peers and my supervisors commented on this, noting that though microaggressions have been hitherto understood to be subtle and covert, instances of open racism have been prevalent in this study.

In addition to peer discussions, I was also in regular discussion with my supervisors throughout the research process; for example, in one such discussion, the supervisors observed, that there were data coding that reflected a strong inductive orientation. On such, supervision discussion considered whether other 'forces' were at play, such as me being 'defended' due to the pain and anxieties aroused by the data, hence adopting a more theoretical approach to 'avoid' engaging with the anxieties aroused? Each data set was presented at least once to peers and at least twice to research supervisors. The reflexive mirror holder role of my supervisors was crucial in this phase.

Phase 3; generating initial themes from coded and collated data.

Generating themes required data-driven coding, deductive and inductive thinking as well as abductive and retroductive thinking (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By then, I was quite familiar with data and the 'story' told by the same. Because by then I had a particularly good understanding of what was in the data, theme development was relatively easy to do, which I did by clustering codes together. Themes developed captured something important about the data, in relation to the research questions, underpinned by the critical realist ontology and the Fanonian sociogeny theory. The assumption of ontological depth suggested the need to engage in empirical as well as highly theoretical and speculative activities (Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021). I used different colours to group together similar codes ;17 initial themes were generated (see appendix 6)

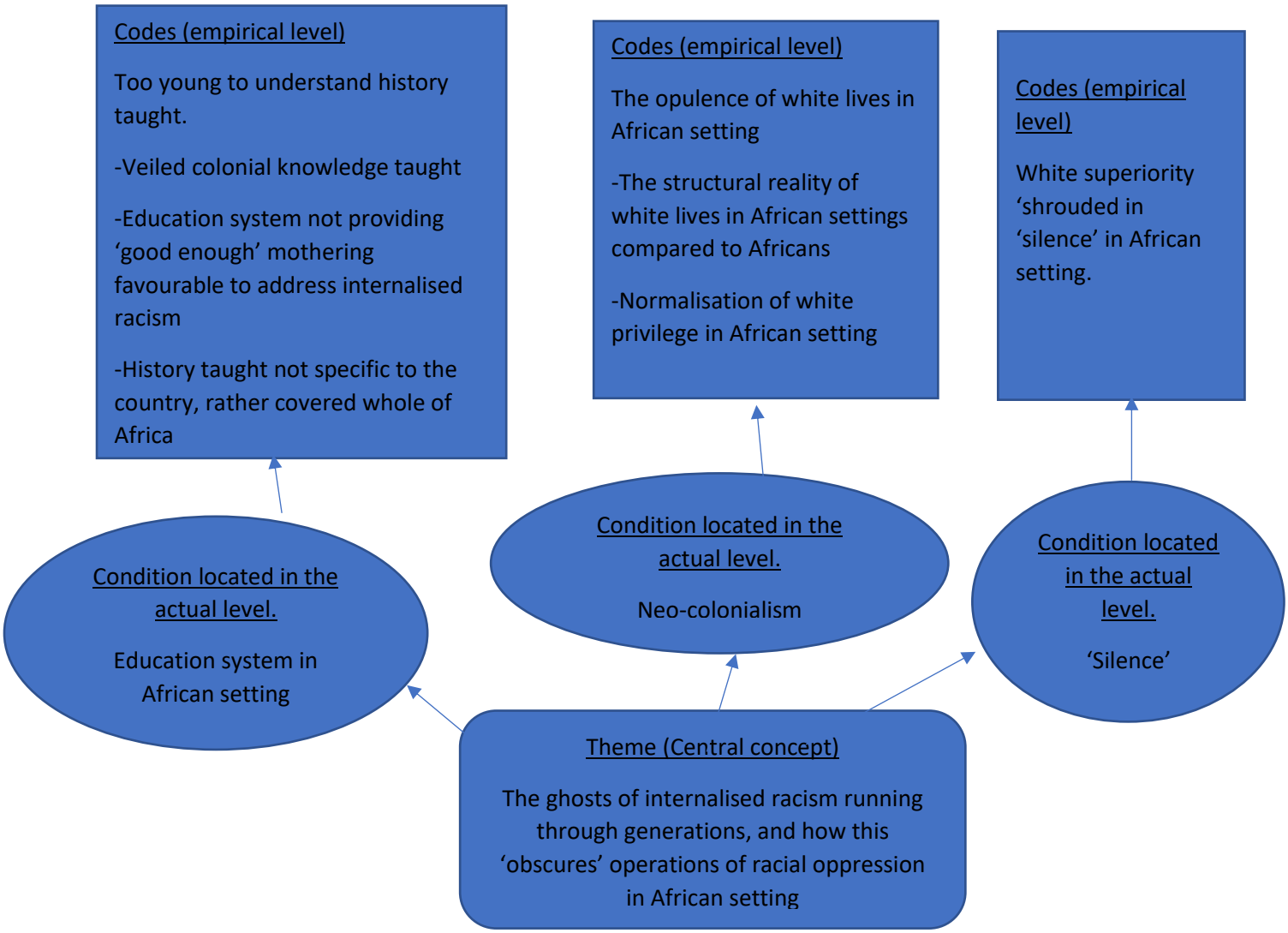
Phase 4; developing and reviewing themes.

On this phase, I assessed the initial themes developed and the viability of my overall analysis, by going back to the full data set. I bore in mind Braun and Clarke (2022) emphasis, on what differentiates RTA from other variants of thematic analysis; that with RTA, themes are conceptualised as a cluster of shared meanings united by a central concept or idea. Braun and Clarke (2020) advise that themes might draw together data that on the surface appear rather disparate; but when I reviewed the 17 initial themes generated in phase 3, I realised that these resembled what Braun and Clarke (2020) identify as data topics, which they explain are not themes but are things discussed, for example, introduced in a question from the interview guide. What I was aiming for were themes resembling what Braun and Clarke (2022) described as 'a rich and multifaceted pattern of shared meaning, organised around a central concept of idea'.

I thus 'collapsed' what I had identified as 17 initial themes (but which were in fact data topics), into four themes. To illustrate this, research sub-question one asked

- In an African setting, how does racial socialisation in the context of historical colonial oppression and internalised racism, inform understanding about racial oppression?

Diagram 5.9 below illustrates how the theme addressing this research question was developed, underpinned by a critical realist ontology:



Phase 5; refining, defining, and naming themes.

I completed a further refining of the themes and wrote a detailed analysis telling a story that the theme captured and how this fit with the overall story of whole study. Four themes were the final analytic outputs as reflected in the thematic structure provided in page 68.

Phase six is writing the report as shown from chapter 6 onwards.

Conclusion

This methodology chapter has outlined the research design adopted to address the objectives of this study. Discussions has highlighted how the coupling of the psychosocial method with decolonial methods, enabled the study to theorise the influence of internalised racism on experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, but without obscuring their agency. The next chapter presents research data through the 'portraits' of the seven participants involved in this study.

Chapter 5; Data presentation

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data through the 'portraits' of the seven participants involved in this study. Holloway and Jefferson (2000) put forward the idea of developing participants portraits, to give the reader a descriptive summary of the information obtained from the interviews. This chapter highlights a brief portrait of each participant. Participants names have been changed to protect their identity.

5.2 The seven portraits

For clarity, in writing these portraits, I drew from Holloway and Jefferson's notion of the 'double hermeneutic,' to imply the bringing together of the researcher's and the researched person's subjectivity (Hingley-Jones, 2009). Thus, the reader will find that in the portraits presented, the researcher's reflections/sense-making is weaved in together with participants narratives. Interpersonal reflexivity (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022) documenting how existing relationships and my position in the context impacted data is very visible in these portraits. This is to signal that the researcher's subjectivity is conceptualised as a resource for knowledge production, which inevitably sculpts the knowledge produced (Braun & Clarke, 2020). This is a recurring aspect throughout this study and serves to signal the active decisions the researcher made during the data gathering process, the struggles and rebounds experienced, and how these informs the analysis made.

Amal

Amal was born and raised in an Eastern African country. Her country of birth was colonised by first the Germans and then Belgium. Amal migrated to Britain under the age of twenty. Amal is currently employed in an English local authority and has close to five years of social work experience.

Amal's story focuses hugely on English racist nativism (Huber,2011). She talks of the challenges faced by those whose English is not their first language. She narrated how this impacted her university experience when studying for social work, and how this continues to impact her experiences in the employing organisation, touching on how this impacts how she relates with white colleagues at work. Amal however indicated that for non-English speakers who are white, for example Europeans, they do not seem to experience the same challenges, clearly identifying that the issue seems to be with African accents.

Amal's narrative told of challenging experiences for Black workers joining new organisations, talking of how different their experiences are, compared to white workers. Amal said a new white member of staff can access support from the 'whole team,' but for a Black worker, "only your Black colleagues will reach out to you." Amal said this also extends to white managers and how they welcome new white member of staff, compared to the same for Black workers, adding that managers create time for a white member, but not for a Black worker.

Listening to Amal's narrative, the mental image that forms in my mind is that of the organisation as impenetrable for Black workers. This is given expression by Amal's view that the "head of the department, the deputies, all have known each other for many years, they are friends." The view about front line managers being protected by the higher echelon of the organisation, seems to be firmly established not just in Amal's mind, but in other participants (like Kawa and Tia). I wondered whether this hinders Black workers from raising complaints against their managers, if the belief held is "it will be swept under the carpet by the higher management structures," as said by Amal. Amal repeated this narrative both at

focus group, and during her individual interviews, hence suggesting the strength of this view in her mind.

Amal also spoke about the complexity in relationships between Black managers and Black workers. She said: “how a Black manager manages the team and the same for a white manager, is completely different, because they are probably under the same pressures as us. With this pressure, they start making it harder for their own Black Staff members.”

When I asked Amal how she keeps herself safe, to mean how she copes, I thought it was interesting how she heard this to mean how she “protects her own back in practice”. Amal reported recording as part of keeping safe, acknowledging how this ends up becoming a practice of over-recording. Amal expressed the constant worry on whether she will be believed if something happens, and whether her managers will come to her defence. Amal said: “changes in organisation are in paper only not in reality,” adding that the “organisation has a long way to go on racial matters.”

Like Kawa, I was struck at what felt to me as a despondent note in the way Amal ended the interview. She said: “live a quiet life, hold everything in, you don’t say anything. You just get on with it.”

Amanda

Amanda was born in a West African country. Her country of birth was colonised by the British. In her home country, Amanda studied to a degree level and held a diploma in social work. She migrated to Britain in her early twenties.

Amanda is currently employed in an English local authority as a social worker and has over three years of social work experience.

Amanda tells of a very painful story about her social work qualifying experience at the university. She narrated how she went to university, to complete a 2-year master's programme to qualify as a social worker but ended up spending 4 years to complete this.

Amanda narrated how this experience turned her "into a scarecrow." Her story is that of a person whom this qualifying experience, turned the educated confident person who left her native country, into this person she likened to "a jelly fish," saying the trauma experienced during placement, still negatively impacts her. Amanda said that even after getting a job as a social worker, she still constantly remembers where she is coming from, hoping she is not being "singled out again."

Amanda spoke of her pain, saying that this was because it was at the hand of a Black Practice Educator (PE).

Amanda's story reveals how the system of accountability, i.e university systems and local authority providing placement, failed her. It reveals how these systems colluded with the PE:

"I was told I did not achieve 3 PCF, on the 95th day of my placement, with only five days left, after she had cancelled my midway for five times. Or six times she cancelled with the practice tutor, six times. Around about the 50th day, which is about Midway, I went to my practice tutor. I reported to her for her to know. I expected her to do some investigation. She didn't do it. It doesn't make sense to me. You know. I did not achieve leadership, but I'm the one holding the cases of the young people. I attend. What's it called? PEP meetings. I am the one representing my young people in the colleges. You know Human Rights meetings. I am the one I coordinate that. That's so, who is the leader here? Is it not me? So how come it is not captured in my PCF?"

Field notes and diary entries indicates that upon watching the recording of Amanda's interview, I was visibly emotional with tears on my eyes when Amanda was narrating her story, especially the part when they terminated her placement at 95 days. I was upset not just for Amanda, but for those young asylum seekers who had forged such trusting

relationship with her. I felt that terminating her placement did not just unjustly affect Amanda, but those young asylum seekers were denied 'maternal support' which they were getting from her, as reflected in her narrative:

"Oh My God, I didn't know what to do. My young people are waiting for me. We had meetings. I had to call them. I could not hold back my tears. I could not even speak to them. I was practically sobbing. I had to break the news to them. I'm leaving. They're broke down as they're crying. I am on my side crying. I thought I was gonna die at some points. So, what can I do? I cannot be suicidal. I have a child who depends on me".

Interview narrative indicated strong internalised racism focusing on Black-on-Black dynamics, and how organisations ignore this. Her narrative strongly highlighted incongruence in social work stated mission as an anti-oppressive profession:

"For one, I do not believe in that aspect of social work anti-oppressive/ anti discriminatory. After my experience, I do not ever talk about it. I do not ever use it, even in my write up, I do not talk about it. I focus on my PCF or my KSS. To me it does not exist because it is an oppressive profession. Anti-oppressive profession? No! I do not know about that!"

Ivy

Ivy was born in a Southern African country. Her country of birth was colonised by the British. Ivy migrated to Britain under the age of eighteen. She is currently employed as a social worker in an English local authority. She has close to ten years of social work experience.

Ivy's narrative provides a strong insight on experiences of African immigrants when they first come into a white majority environment. Her narrative provides particularly good insight on social stratification in African nations because of coloniality, whereby you see the minority white people in African nations occupying affluent spaces, spaces that Africans themselves feels uncomfortable to venture in, in their own countries.

It is however worth noting that though her narrative gives this insight, her narrative itself does not indicate that there is a link made between the colonial history of her nation, and the visible and observable social structures giving rise to inequity of resources in African setting. In other words, this insight is spoken about in a matter-of-fact way and avoids naming discrimination on racial grounds, perhaps pointing to what she said about herself not experiencing any racism in her home country.

Ivy also speaks of the pride she feels about African values and ways of upbringing- especially around 'respect.' She said she came to appreciate these values when she migrated to UK and realised that children her age are "undisciplined and disrespectful" to authority. Ivy felt that she would not want any of that and felt that her cultural upbringing was better.

Ivy's narrative clearly highlighted the discrepancy between the view people have of social work, to what they find it to be upon entering it. This is especially evident in the university experience, as people go through the qualifying course. The fact that Ivy spoke of the university experience at the focus group and repeated this during her individual interview, is a crucial signifier of how much impact this university experience has stayed on her mind to this date.

Kawa

Kawa was born and raised in a Western African country. His country was colonised by the British. Kawa migrated to Britain in his early twenties. Of all the participants involved, Kawa has the longest years of employment at the organisation involved, which spans over a period of over 20+years.

Kawa's narrative conveys a sense that he sees himself as belonging to a different generation, different to that of the other participants in this study, who are much younger than him. His narrative captures a distinct racial socialisation in his native country, quite different to the other participants; he talked of: "taking part and witnessing the African revolution, which was going on in the seventies, characterised by the anti-colonial movement in Africa".

Unsurprisingly, Kawa's narrative is the only one that captures this sense of deep identity rooted in Pan-Africanism and African nationalism. He talked of "a deep sadness in him to see the current Black generation oblivious of their African history and roots".

The overwhelming feeling, I captured from Kawa's narrative at the focus group is violence in the employing organisation, known to me by noting the number of times he referred to "needing protection".

I remember at some point during the individual interview, it registered in me that I was feeling quite compassionate towards Kawa. I sensed his vulnerability, made known to me through the countertransference. Kawa is a colleague whom I have worked with for many years and with whom I have had many conversations with, but what I was feeling in this research relationship is vastly different to anything I have ever felt when conversing with him before.

He told of a story when a "white female manager provided protection" when working in a predominantly white rural area. Diary records indicates that when watching the recording of his interview, I felt that there is something about Kawa- this tall Black man who said he "does not show emotions outwardly", that does not sit comfortably with the strong feelings in me of his vulnerability. Drawing from my African cultural upbringing, I cannot help but

think there is something deeply culturally uncomfortable about a tall African man wanting protection from a female.

I am struck that upon reading field notes entered on different dates, the mental image that forms in my mind is that of his castration of his manhood. Reflecting on this transference, it is evident that these are stemming from the fact that Kawa's narrative vividly unfolded the process of awakening to Blackness, like what Fanon discusses in the famous incident in Look a Negro! (See chapter six). Kawa verbalised this awakening as:

"Oh, OK, so this is. The. reality. Now you're coming to a country where people will snob you because of your color of your skin. So, you started having that shock."

Kay

Kay was born in a Western African country. His country was colonised by the British. Kay migrated to Britain under the age of eighteen. He is currently employed in an English local authority and has over five years of social work experience.

At the focus group, Kay talked of an incident that happened about 5 years ago when he just started his social work job, when on a visit: "a white service user was staring at me to a point of me feeling uncomfortable, and then she said she was surprised to see a Black social worker".

I noted that at the focus group, Kay openly admitted the impact this incident had on him. This openness to impact of racism is different to what he has said in the two interviews I have had with him, whereby mostly he tended to say he has moved on from any racist incident he referenced. I do wonder whether making this admission in the collective (i.e with others who are also affected by the same) made it easier for him because then being in the collective reduced the isolation, or perhaps 'shame' (see page 97) felt by the individual?

This being the case, it supports the benefits of facilitating safe spaces, where affected groups can come together and find solidarity and strength from one another.

On one of the diary entries, the entry relates to my reflections upon watching Kay's interview. This relates to the narrative about the treatment he received from home Office officials and his subsequent detention. Diary entry indicates how still my body is, with an almost 'shellshocked' body language, especially when he said: "I realised that my skin colour could put me in trouble, that I am not seen as human being." This is a very deep and sad narrative. I seem to feel this deeply as mirrored in my body language. It is like I am almost scared to move, rest I breakdown or something. I am nodding to indicate I hear him, but the rest of my body appears very 'stiff.' I know his statement touched me deeply. I sense that my body responded by becoming 'stiff,' probably to protect it from complete breakdown.

Observing the recording, I am struck at how 'maternal' I am with Kay in his interviews. I seem to share myself with him to validate him or to normalise his experiences. It is like I really want to dispel any stigma (the idea about stigma/ shame is strong in my mind). I seem to convey to him that I understand; I too am an immigrant.

Towards the end of the first interview, the interview 'mood' takes a quite different quality. Kay talks of his spirituality and his pride in his African ancestral roots and how this keeps him going. It felt to me as if Kay's interview has two parts; the first part is quite sad and is steeped in racial trauma from the experiences encountered, starting from his arrival in UK as an unaccompanied teenager with no family support, and the subsequent painful treatment he received from home Office officials. The second part 'feels' quite triumphant, spiritual, mythical, powerful, revealing the 'cultural' resources for resilience and hope.

Kay's narrative reveals the racial trauma Black people carry around, and how this influences how they seek support; Kay exemplified this in how he responded to the racial incident perpetrated by a white colleague at work, and Kay declining to escalate the matter. He said:

"I think it's because of wound. When you have a wound in your heart, sometimes you start feeling guilty even to the abuser, to think ohh I'm not. Maybe I am at fault."

Lina

Lina was born in a Southern African country. Her country of birth was colonised by the British. Lina migrated to the UK at the age of 18. Lina is currently employed in an English local authority and has over five years of social work experience.

I am struck that at the beginning of her first interview, Lina said that racism "hit home" when her own daughter experienced this at nursery school. But following this, she then went on to narrate how when growing up in her native country, she knew there was racism, because history about colonialism was openly taught to them at school. Lina described an extensive history taught in school back home, even saying that the colonial history she was taught is richer than what her daughter is taught in UK school during Black history month.

But it appears to me that there is such a huge gulf between what participants are saying regarding what they knew about racism through what they were taught in school, and the realities of racism. The dichotomy between theoretical knowledge and knowledge from lived experience is very vivid in Lina's script. For most participants, it appears that racism only became 'alive' or became 'real' when they 'directly' experienced this in England; in Lina's case, when her own daughter experienced this.

Lina repeats many times about the “unwritten rules” that dictates the lives of Black people. She said that these unwritten rules dictate not only the career they can take, but also which speciality; for example, she referenced Black people going to adult social work but not to children’s services. The idea of racial ‘tethering’ is so prominent in her script (see discussion of this in page 117).

The reader will note that it appears that Lina’s portrait is comparatively shorter than of other participants; however, this is not the case. I took the decision to continue her portrait in page 93 as it made sense to ‘export’ her narrative into that section of the discussion.

Tia

Tia was born in a Western African country. Her country of birth was colonised by the British. Prior to permanently migrating to the UK, Tia had visited the country on vacation several times; she said she did not pick up any racism then, because she was in the country as a ‘tourist’ and reliant on her own resources, and therefore, “since I'm out in a couple of days, it’s nothing for me to deal with”.

Tia is currently employed in an English local authority and has close to five years of social work experience.

On Tia’s first individual interview, I noted the ‘defences’ when I first asked her to speak about her first experiences of racism. I thought she ‘avoided’ directly talking about this. I re-directed this question towards the end of the interview, perhaps when she was a bit more comfortable.

Tia said her first experiences of racism, were when she moved into Xshire from London. I wondered whether being in a diverse locality in London, meant that this ‘obscured’ her

‘Blackness’ from her conscious awareness, or whether she chose not to be aware of it, until such a time when racism directly confronted her- for example, when she visited a client, and the white client told her not to sit on a chair, because she is Black.

I noted the length of time it took for Tia to come to the point of addressing questions asked; this ‘roundabout’ way of dealing with issues may be a coping mechanism, considering the anxiety- laden nature in racism discussions. But also, on this, Tia pointed to how others “can be themselves, whereas Black people must stage manage themselves”.

Tia narrated about experiencing racism in the hands of a white manager, both at the focus group and during her interview. I remember when she narrated this at the focus group, the whole atmosphere at the focus group changed. The ‘weight’ of her experience enveloped the space. And in line with the therapeutic focus in this study, I ‘paused’ the focus group for us to collectively process Tia’s narrative.

A question which Tia posed at the focus group has stayed with me. She asked: “how do you carry on every day in an environment where you are not wanted”? And then she asked: “we are doing everything well, why are we then still at the bottom”?

On a different date, my research diary entry starts with a single word in capital letters: BURDEN. The diary entry goes on to indicate that as I analyse Tia’s data, I feel ‘burdened’ and that I keep pausing and pacing to distract myself. That I viscerally ‘feel’ the labour Tia evokes through her narrative. For example, when she described her university experience when training for social work, she said she had to remind herself of the goal. She told herself that she had to pass, telling herself that if this required her to work four times more, then that is what she had to do. She said this is because she realized that no one is listening to her, and she therefore had to rely on herself to get what she wants.

As a Christian, Tia's narrative makes me think of the Biblical story, about the Israelites 'trending' the trenches of mortar and clay in Egypt. I think of the theology of work; work may be physically and mentally taxing, but that does not make it wrong. But the situation in Egypt was unbearable because it was not just slavery, it was also extremely harsh. We learn in Exodus 5;9 that they were made to work harder, so that they keep working and pay no attention to anything else. The intention was to exhaust them, break their spirits that they would not have any will or strength to fight.

I think institutional racism, or in this study macroaggressions, serves the same purpose; the injustice of it all breaks our spirit that we can only turn up to work, do what you are paid and go home. No strength to think harder or fight the injustice. Tia asked the same question: "how many of us can fight"?

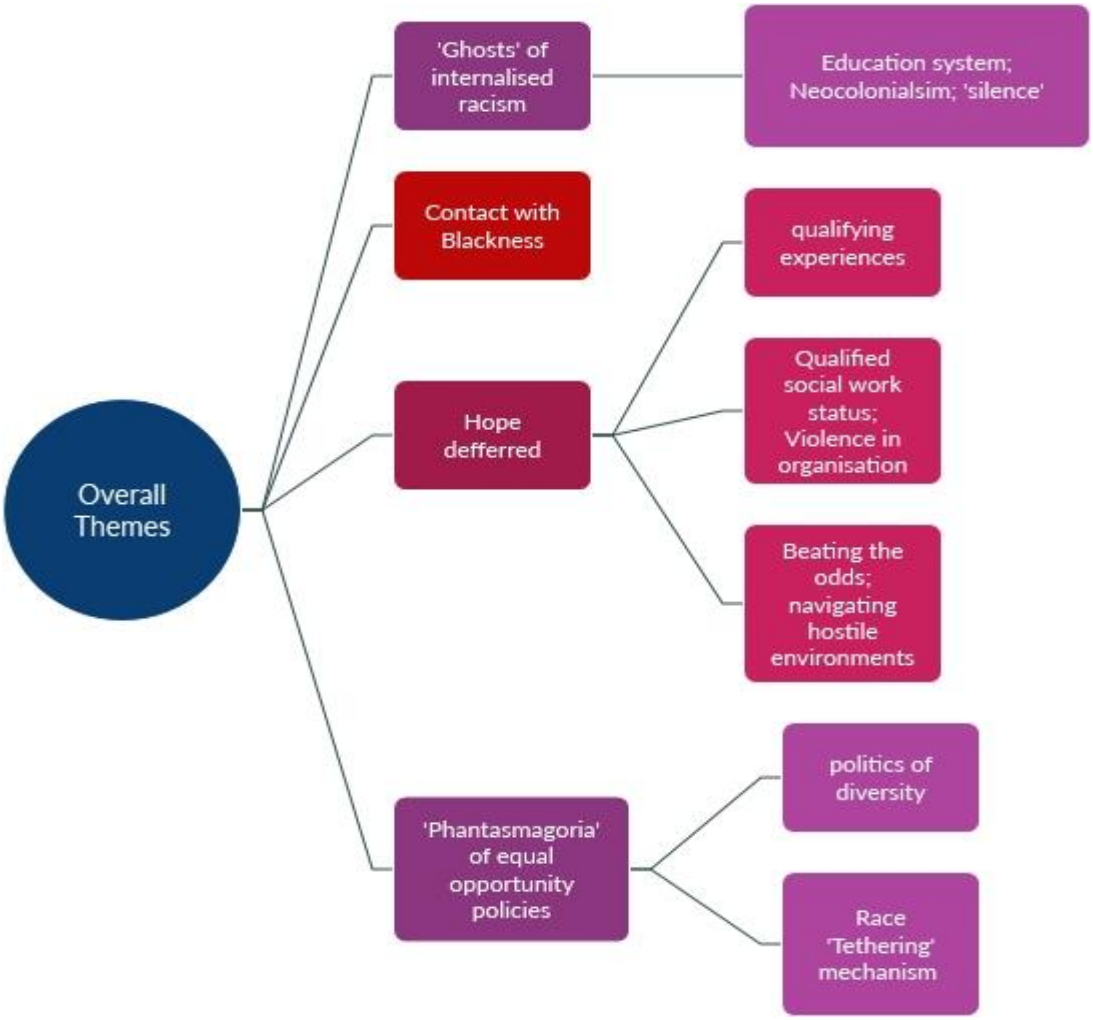
Tia's narrative captures something powerful: Restlessness. This restlessness is showing up in what other participants have said in their narratives; for example, the constant changing of jobs described by Ivy as "chopping and changing", or the staying in the background 'hunched' down described by Lina, or the "over recording" described by Amal.

5.3 conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented data through the portraits of the seven participants involved in this study. In chapter four**,** I described the analysis process, and how themes were developed.

In the five chapters that will follow, discussion of these themes will be presented, in answer to the research questions set in this study. To help the reader follow the discussion easily,

the discussion chapters are arranged to mirror the thematic structure provided in the diagram below, which visualises this thematic structure:



Chapter 6; the 'ghosts' of internalised racism running through generations, and how this 'obscures' racial oppression in African setting.

6.1 Introduction

This study explores the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by first generation Black African social workers, arising from the specifity of their racial socialisation in African settings in the context of colonial legacy and its attendant internalised racism. In this chapter, discussions will highlight the conditions in which the racial socialisation of the African child occurs. The chapter will highlight how internalised racism is embedded in the African child at an early age. The implication of this as discussions in this chapter will demonstrate, is the influence of this racial socialisation and the internalised racism on how participants in this study perceive and respond to racial microaggressions. Findings in this chapter will be elucidated via Fanon's (1952) sociogenic theory (previously discussed in chapter one).

6.2 Fanon's sociogenic theory

Various writers discussing Fanon's work have pointed to the enduring strength of his theorization of the sociogenic creation (see in Scot,2010; Goozee, 2021; Ifowodo,2013). For instance, Ifowodo (2013) argued that Fanon's insistence on a sociodiagnostic methodology, is on the premise that every trauma refers to the socially lived world of the historical event that caused it. Ifowodo pointed that this historical event may also be repeating the trauma in new ways. He argues that literary theorists should read history as the history of a trauma. Ifowodo observes that doing so, requires that we pay attention to the dual process of forgetting/ repressing the painful memories of history, and grappling with the insistent return of those same memories to haunt the present and define the future.

Heeding Ifowodo's call, I have paid attention to how participants in this study talk about the colonial histories of their nations. I noted how much the past still haunts the present. The language of 'ghostly hauntings' reflected in this chapter, has emerged from this.

In reading Sheehi (2020), the prevailing situation in African nations is the continuation of a colonial ideology, which according to Sheehi has become the apparition, ever present, but unseen. This is especially so, in the context of an education system so woefully inadequate, in responding to the aftermath of colonisation. In the language of hauntings, Butler (2019), distinguishes objects of phantasy from ghosts. This is helpful in explaining how historical hauntings function as phantoms or the phantomatic, explaining that phantoms erase presence, creating a kind of empty space. Gonzalez (2019) discusses this using the language of a medical metaphor "the phantom limb effect", to denote something which seems to be filling the space, but it is an absence of presence (Sheehi, 2020). It is on this that the theme reported in this chapter, wishes to connect to what Fanon called the "zone of occult instability where people dwell that we must come" (see in Ifowodo, 2013). This delving into the said occult zone of the trauma of colonialism, serves the purpose of illuminating and helping to resolve the unthematized tension that lurks there (Ifowodo, 2013). From this, the discussion in this chapter reveals how much racial atrocities brought by colonialism, has been 'banished' from consciousness, for people to function in a 'normal' way.

My first-hand experiences of this, as presented in *testimonio* in chapter one, pointed that my racial socialisation as I grew up in my native country, inadvertently served to instil a racial inferiority, but which was not consciously known to me until I arrived in Britain. I know from my own experiences that these internal racial schemas handed down during one's

early socialisation, plays a noteworthy influence on how one subsequently engages with racially related matters. For participants in this study, a similar picture emerges.

The main idea captured through the theme in this chapter, is the development and operation of internalised racism. For participants in this study, findings indicate early installation of this. Thus, the story told from participants narratives is how in African setting, internalised racism runs from generation to generations. Three main distinct conditions which are seen as the key conditions that both breeds and sustains internalised racism, are reported: (a) African education system; (b) neo-colonialism; and (c) silence.

6.3 African education system

Discussion herein demonstrates conditions of euphemised colonialism in African nations, through the African education system (both formal and informal systems). Kenneth (2020) argues that there is an inextricable link between colonial legacy and knowledge production in Africa, such that Africa today is still grappling with the superimposition of Eurocentric epistemological order, above the people of Africa's Indigenous knowledge systems. Equally, Fanon discusses aspects of schooling and education across his books. For example, he identifies the distorting and de-subjectifying effects of racist folk tales and comic books (in Black skin White Masks, pg.124). Findings in this study reflects the observations made by Fanon. The findings indicate an African education system not providing 'good enough' mothering (Winnicott, 1984) favourable to address internalised racism, which then has implication on recognition, experiences, impact, and responses to racial microaggressions in later life.

Findings in this study elucidates education system in Africa, as a site through which colonial indoctrination persists. This reflects what other scholars focusing on decolonising African

education have found (for example, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013; Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 2009; Mbembe,2016). In this study, all the participants' narratives (except Tia) indicated some form of racial socialisation, through the colonial history taught in schools or through some other informal means. However, the analysis of this suggests that this racial knowledge did not do much in terms of elucidating the link between colonial structures and their present day lives. Rather, it is an education on colonialism that is abstracted on superficial levels, and that which implies that colonialism existed in the past. For example, Amanda's statement that "I never saw it happening," points to the passive nature of the colonial knowledge passed on, a knowledge that does not go beyond what she said that "xxx from what we were told, from what I know we were colonized by the British…."

The narratives reveal how knowledge production systems in African setting, sustains a euphemized colonialism (Eribo, 2008). In other words, and from a critical realist standpoint, a hidden coloniality which is so abstracted on surface level, yet so embedded on concrete level, thus making its operations extremely hard to be perceived. This may explain why despite participants in this study being aware of their country's colonial history, and being aware that white people in African settings are privileged compared to Africans; yet this did not translate to awareness of the presence and persistence of racism in their countries. Hence their assertion that prior to migrating to Britain, they had not experienced racism in their native countries.

Based on this, I thus suggest that colonial knowledge passed on to generations after generations in African setting, seems to be devoid of critical appraisal and have little cognitive content. I suggest that this is the root cause of the seemingly passive acceptance of white dominance in African setting. Fanon described this as the "uncritical 'yes -man'

framework" (in Wretched of the Earth, pg. 38), a framework that appears to continue to inform African education system. Lina's narrative contextualises this, revealing how these systems of knowledge production in African setting, are steeped in accepting white superiority as the norm, thus 'validating' the 'inferior' statuses of the African subject from an early age:

When we're growing up, we were told, colonialism that they came in our country, they took the good, the finer things in the country and take away, and Blacks were used for slavery, for doing the farms and everything. So, it was embedded in us that some races think they are superior to the other. Our kind of history we knew that the white came in our country took the gold, took the farms took everything that was nice and came with it back to England. They forced people to do Christianity, and you work every day, and you got nothing to show for it, and you're in your own country. So, it was embedded in us when we were growing up, we were told these things. So, we grew up knowing this. This was hammered in since we were growing up. That we are not the same. We'll never be the same and our history lessons were so open and upfront about this, like racism, slavery and everything. When we're growing up, we're taught we're different right from day one. So, because of that if someone is nice to me, it's a bonus. I'm not expecting it.

Ivy said:

I do know that there's always that way, way people behave in Africa towards white people like you know. You know, I have had other experiences maybe when going on holiday or something and you know it's like yes, say yes, say boss, boss.

6.4 'Silence'

For other participants, the unequal treatment between Black and white people in African setting, is not explicitly named. In fact, the conditions which breeds internalised racism in African context seems to be shrouded in 'silence.'

For example, Amal said her father was a teacher, but he "never told us much". This is akin to what Gordon (2008) in her discussion of ghostly hauntings, described as the affective force of unresolved pain, social wounds, violence, and injustice. Gordon elucidates gaps in history and abusive systems of power; the things 'not there' and the things 'not spoken,' which she

suggests remains a 'seething presence' (pg.195). In the narratives like that of Kay as shown below, there is a striking similarity to what is described by Gordon as 'crypts' that remain unspoken, adding that the 'ghost' or the 'phantom' is the consequence of family histories that are shrouded in silence. Kay's narrative strikes a similar chord; for him, colonial history was not 'directly' taught at school, but he understood the differences in Black and white relations at the age of 12, from observing the treatment accorded to a pupil in his school who was white. Yet, his attempt to understand from his parents why this white pupil was treated differently, was met with 'silence':

Back home, and I remember, I would maybe I think I was in age 12 or something like that then. We'll adored this boy because only white. The class we were, so all of us do. Even the teachers, they always put him aside. Special treatment to us, you know, this white supremacy, the mentality has gone into all Africans. So, if we come, if we came late, they would beat and flogged all of us, they wouldn't flog him, they will just treat him differently. And they said Ohh, no, no, don't touch him he is a white guy. And so, then I was like to my parents why? They treat us badly, but they treat him good, why?

6.5; Neo-colonialism

Findings form this study indicates the opulence of white lives in African setting, is seen as a 'natural' condition of being white. This is discernible from insights from Nkrumah's (1965) concept of neo-colonialism, which explains the economic hierarchies between white and Black people in African setting. Anchored in neo-colonialism, white privilege/ affluence in African setting is seen as a 'natural' condition of being white. Nkrumah's lens is helpful in elucidating the role of certain African elites in maintaining power networks through deliberate appeal to the priorities of the erstwhile European 'masters' (Langan, 2017).

On this, Ivy's narrative provides particularly good insight on social stratification in African nations, whereby you see the minority white people in African nations occupying affluent

spaces, spaces that Africans themselves feels uncomfortable to venture in. What Ivy's narrative reveal is the invisible yet tangible lines of racial differences, which continues to create racial enclaves, propped by economic structures reticent in today's post-colonial states.

What is unfortunate though, is the fact that although Ivy's narrative gives this insight, her narrative itself does not indicate that she could make the link between coloniality, and the resultant visible and observable social structures that reflects inequity of resources, between the white elites in African nations and the natives of the land. In other words, this 'insight' is spoken as a matter of fact, and avoids naming economic disparity and discrimination on racial grounds; in fact, in her first interview, Ivy said she did not 'experience' any racism in her country of birth, and she affirmed this when I followed up on this on her second interview:

So, I already had an idea of maybe white people being privileged, even though I was growing up in African country, I could already see how white people were privileged because most of the white people I came across were wealthy. I never came across white people suffering and there were neighbourhoods where there were big houses, where we knew white people were living there. When we used to go to the shopping centre, there was a specific cafe where it would only be filled with white people. And if you go, there as a Black person. You're actually odd person out.

it wasn't exactly like there was a sign saying black people can't go. It was almost unspoken that if you did go, people would look at you like (indicated with body language surprise/ uncomfortable/ disgust) You know, so that's sort of thing. So, it was unspoken so. To be honest, I think we just never bothered to go there. However, *I still feel that I haven't experienced racism in (country of birth) because there was nothing directly that ever happened to me by a white person. If that makes sense.*

6.6; Conclusion and implications

Discussion presented in this chapter has demonstrated some certain conditions prevalent in African setting, which breeds and sustains internalised racism at an early age in African subjects. The collusion through 'silence' from systems of knowledge production, have

functioned to sustain this colonial status quo. Neocolonialism (Nkrumah, 1965) has supported unseen economic structures which continues to sustain white privilege in African setting. The lack of analysis on how neocolonialism functions to sustain the opulence of white lives in African setting, has led to white opulence uncritically being seen as a 'natural condition of being white.'

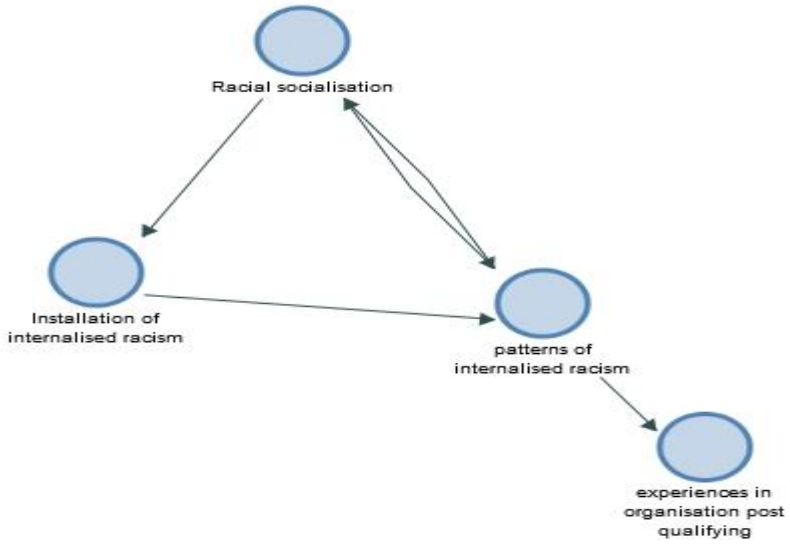
The discussion has captured how the colonial experience in African nations has been purposefully (if perhaps at times unconsciously) disappeared. It appears that the colonial history taught to the African child, resembles what Freud described as the period of 'incubation' or 'latency' (see a discussion of this in Solms, 2021) – a period which Ifowodo (2013) citing LaCapra, emphasises the distinction between the traumatic event and the traumatic experience: Ifowodo explains that the former is punctual and situated in the past, while the latter is not punctual and remains elusive to the extent that:

"It relates to a past that has not passed away, a past that intrusively invades the present and may block or obviate possibilities in the future" (pg.72).

Consequently, the interaction of these conditions combines to create and sustain internalised racism, which continues to run through generations in the African subject. The colonial material experience, which has purposefully been disappeared, erased, or lost, and that which collective fantasy fails to capture (Gonzalez, 2019), is evident in the discussion presented in this chapter.

Drawing from Winnicott's (1984) theory of childhood development and the psychological effects of trauma in the earliest phases of life, the implications then are clear. From this, it is evident that the African setting where the African child is socialised, is under-developed when it comes to the racialisation process of the African child. The implication of this can be deciphered using insight from Burman (2008), who argues that racialization can have similar

long-term effects, as those seen in infants whose needs were not adequately met by the care giver. Thus, I cannot underestimate the influence of this racial socialisation, on participants' present experiences of racial oppression. Fig 6.2 illustrates this point:



What Fig 6.2 illustrates is how the patterns of internalised racism installed in the participants in their early lives, continues to be re-played in their present lives. Informed by a Kleinian (1946) psychoanalytic view, the suggestion that people oscillate between the schizoid- paranoid position and the depressive position, is helpful in explaining the double-pointed direction of the arrow between racial socialisation and patterns of internalised racism. What I mean by this is how participants' presentations in their current context in their employing organisation, and patterns of internalised racism are rooted in their early socialisation context; a context which they often' revert' to when navigating racialised settings. Lina contextualises this:

We are comfortable in the background. We have been brought up to be thankful for the little that we have, not to want more. If it's not broken, why try to mend it? That's how we were brought up. The more you knock on the doors, isn't the more you are destabilizing your life? We're taught to just stay in the background and be comfortable… in a way, sometimes the way we brought up can be a disadvantage to us. Because we are taught to just be comfortable being just mediocre. To stay in our comfort zone, to say if you knock on the

doors, you are exposing yourself. But knocking on the doors means opportunities, isn't it? So, in a way, it can come as a disadvantage. Because in as much as you want to say, oh, it's black and white, it's because we're told not to put ourselves out there.

In this study going forward, I suggest the need to 'hold in mind' the racial socialisation of the participants, as discussed here. I suggest that bearing this in mind, will clarify the patterns of internalised racism that will be prevalent in the rest of the discussion in this thesis. But on this, Gordon's (2008) concept of 'complex personhood' (pg.4) is helpful, as it captures the complex and oftentimes contradictory humanity and subjectivity. Drawing insight from this, caution is called for when interpreting the said patterns of internalised racism, to account for the fact that these patterns or behaviours from participants in this study, can never adequately be glimpsed as evidence of their victimhood or their agency.

Thus, whilst the issue of internalised racism is a running thread throughout this thesis, I however caution against adopting a 'simplistic' view based on victimhood or pathology. Rather, I suggest that participants in this study mirror Fanon's description of "overpowered but not tamed; treated inferior but not convinced of their inferiority" (pg.41).

In fact, I have come across instances whereby the racial oppression experienced served as a 'stimulant' to achieve participant's goals. For example, for Tia, the racial discrimination she 'perceived' in the university setting, spurred her towards her goals:

I have put myself up. That regardless, I'm gonna pass this and this is what I owe to myself. So, if I needed to put the work four times more, well, I had to push myself. It was what I needed to do at that time, to get to where you wanna be.

Gleaning from Tia's narrative, I reiterate that when it comes to thinking about internalised racism, it is worth holding to mind the complexity involved. I privilege the discussion in Shellae et al. (2019). Shellae and colleagues suggested alternative language, from internalised racism to 'appropriated racial oppression,' to characterise how groups use a

range of tactics to navigate and cope with racism, rather than just accepting it. Certainly, the said tactics will be evident in the chapters that will follow, as participants in this study navigate hostile environment daily.

6.6.1; Blackness at the 'borders'

But before proceeding to the next chapter, allow me to pause here "at the border," to consider Kawa's narrative. Because of Kawa's awareness to racism from his socialisation (see his portrait in page 62), he was able to recognise incidents of racism starting from his first journey to Britain. I use his narrative to demonstrate how 'national borders' keep out racialized persons who appear too different and dangerous to belong to the nation-state (Vargas, 2020). Drawing from Gordon's (2008) work on 'ghostly matters', I use this insight to discuss 'ghostly borders', to describe Kawa's experience 'at the border', and his sudden realisation to what his Blackness means in relation to mobility across and within European borders:

"It's started first on my journey in the plane. There were these white British guys who were having a conversation and we came by France. And they were smiling to me, but when we did the transit from Paris to London, I saw these guys who were talking to me, they stopped talking to me.

When I got to de Gaulle airport to transit, these British people and they were looking at me talking to me smiling, I decided to follow them, and I saw they gave me the cold shoulder now that they realised that I was coming to England. The white men, they were until then speaking and smiling with me, thinking that maybe I was going to France, but when they realized I was coming to their country, suddenly, these people who were smiling to me started giving me the cold shoulder. I tried to speak to them, but obviously they just ignore me. They realised, oh well, this Black man, he's coming to England".

It is interesting that Kawa was able to deduce that in so far as these white fellow passengers thought he was going to another country (France), they did not have an issue with that, until they realised his destination was Britain. What Kawa's narrative opens up, is the possibility of what is well known about scarce resources and how this invites hostility towards the

foreigner in Britain (see in Erel, 2016; Healy, 2011; Benson, 2019). Kawa's experience 'at the border' in so many ways was a preview into what awaited these participants after their arrival to the UK, as discussed in the coming chapter.

The next chapter will cross the boundary with these 8 participants into Britain. This chapter will discuss the experiences of racial microaggressions for these participants, who may not have encountered this or recognised this prior to migration and are experiencing this for the first time in a new setting.

Chapter 7: Getting into contact with 'Blackness'.

7.1 Introduction:

This study explores the complexity of racial microaggressions as experienced by Black African social workers, arising from not only the specifity of their racial socialisation in African settings in the context of colonial legacy, but also from the experiences of racialisation post migration to Britain. Discussions in previous chapter have considered how racial socialisation in the context of historical colonial oppression and internalised racism, inform understanding about racial oppression. In previous chapter, it was established that internalised racism is embedded in the African child at an early age, through the racialisation process. As shown in previous chapter, it is this internalised racism that is behind participants validation of the unearned privilege of white people in African countries as normal and natural.

From this position of internalised racism, it means that whilst racial oppression is prevalent in African settings, this is however not grasped or named as racism because of the racial superiority erroneously bestowed unto white people. Previous chapter discussed the influence of childhood experiences in later life, thus surmising that participants' early racial socialisation context, is a context which they often' revert' to when navigating racialised settings in their present. It can therefore be expected that manifestations of internalised racism, is a recurring pattern that will be observed throughout in this study. But as discussed in previous chapter, the presence of internalised racism in participants does not mean total annihilation of their agency. It is also worth pointing out that while the African setting where these participants are coming from is already subsumed in colonial culture as shown in previous chapter, being in a majority homogenous Black African society also means that

the internalised racism discussed in previous chapter exists in an 'unknown' form- that is, until these participants migrate to a white majority setting in Britain as discussed in this chapter.

Current chapter thus unfolds the process of coming alive to racialisation for those who migrate to a majority white setting as adults. What discussion in this chapter will contextualise is the internalised racism which had hitherto laid dormant, 'coming' comfortably into sight upon migrating to Britain. Discussions will unveil the complexity which ensued when participants in this study came to the realisation that their Black body embodies different meanings that their 'race' carries in Britain, in comparison to where they are coming from in Africa. What will be unfolded in this chapter is the process of awakening to acts of racialisation, as understood using Fanon's argument concerning the 'misrecognition of the Black man via the white gaze (Hook and Truscott, 2013). Fanon's famous quote "Look a Negro!" (1952), will be used to undergird discussions in this chapter, to underscore the creation of a new species from the white gaze. Of this new species, Fanon reported "I see in this white gaze that it's the arrival not of a new man, but of a new type of man, a new species. A Negro, in fact! (pg.95).

7.1.2 Look, a Negro! (Fanon, 1952)

In Black Skin, White Masks (1952,2021), Fanon gives voice to the contested nature of Blackness:

"Maman, look, a Negro; I'm scared!" Scared!" (pg.91).

For Fanon, what this scene captured is the fragmentation of his bodily integrity, to be replaced with what he termed as 'racial epidermal schema' (pg.84). I use this scene which many scholars have termed as the Fanonian moment (see for example in Mbembe, 2013) to

elucidate how the act of racialisation precipitated psychic and bodily alienation for the participants in this study, who thereby became the racialised 'Other'. But to be clear, I concur with Scott (2010) who seeks to banish from the reader's thought any notion that Blackness is a priori truth, natural or eternal in its all-too-transparent meanings; indeed, the example of Kawa as presented in this chapter, confirms that 'Blackness' was not a priori truth, until the process of racialisation took place. I will use Kawa's narrative, to show the psychological impact when the colour of his skin made him realise for the first time, what it means to be Black in this part of the world. As a way of explaining, I acknowledge the use of the term 'Black' as a political strategy, but in the context of the discussion here, the Blackness I am alluding to is like how Dei (2018) reframes Blackness for decolonial politics. Dei's discussion on Africanness in discussion of Blackness, takes the analysis back to pre-contact/pre-colonial Africa when African peoples had discovered themselves and were not waiting on Europeans. Dei argues that it is inconceivable that Africans would not have their own Indigenous conceptions of Black and Blackness, which is outside of European thought. In Kawa's case, he knew what racism is owing to his distinct racial socialisation, but like all the other participants, he did not know himself to be 'Black' when growing up in his native country. And this is not surprising because as explained by Fanon, "a normal child brought up in a normal family will become a normal adult" (2021; 121). Thus, for these participants who were brought up in Africa, the 'colour of the skin' would not have come up in their native settings.

When I asked Kawa at which point he became aware that he was Black, he responded that "I am aware that I'm an African". I noted that he did not say that he was aware of being African, he said he was aware *he was* African; the two are not the same in my view. I suggest that *being* something is different from *am* something, my argument being that the

latter speaks of a natural state, whereas the former speaks of a process of becoming something else. I suggest that Kay's conception of his Blackness as subsumed in his Africanness effectively asserts his African Indigeneity, while at the same time resisting the culture of Whiteness which operates in such a way that Blackness is often looked down upon even in the Black countries (Dei, 2018: 130). I suggest that what Kay evoked in his "I am" is like what Ibrahim (2017) theorised as the "rhizomatic process of becoming Black" (pg. 518) to denote a Blackness which Ibrahim citing Stuart Hall (1992) "lives out a politics of race without guarantees" (pg.518). For Ibrahim, this Blackness "is a tree that is welcoming the sun, the rain, the snow, and so on, whose branches and leaves are growing horizontally. There are no certainties about what shape or form they will take, or how green they will turn out to be" (pg. 519). Ibrahim suggests that this Blackness itself is in a constant state of flow, deterritorization, and multiplicity (Ibrahim, 2017: 519).

I suggest that the Blackness spoken about by Ibrahim, is like the Blackness Kawa knew of in his native settings. This is different to the Blackness he then came to experience after migrating to Britain. The latter departs from the natural Blackness described by Ibrahim, to take up a Blackness like the Blackness Fanon evokes in his theory of the body schema (2021, pg. 54). Fanon explained the body schema he inhabited in his native settings was "a body fully at home, comfortably oriented towards the world in unified patterns of movement that are cultivated in relation to that world (Song, 2017: 54). But upon migrating to France and encountering the white gaze, his body schema which until this point was not *imposed* on him "underwent racialisation thus developing an imposed racial epidermal schema (Fanon, 2021:84). Fanon stated that "the white gaze, the only valid one, is already dissecting me. I am fixed" (pg.95). Thus, my argument is that prior to this point of encountering this imposed 'Blackness,' participants in this study 'knew' themselves in their 'natural' state. But

following the racialisation as discussed here, what followed was the now 'created' racialised state of "I am a Black man," as Kawa powerfully verbalised:

OK, so this is. The. reality. Now you're coming to a country where people will snob you. because of your color of your skin. So, you started having that shock. So, it just reinforces. There're stories about racism in this country, which I was already aware of, but when it happens to you, but now you've been a victim of that, I think, the shock of it. You know, so you started learning all over these issues and you know, and you started asking yourself, ohh what am I doing here? This is what my life is gonna be?

It is about the whole thing hitting you for the first time. Yeah, you realize what it means. To be Black in this part of the world. So, I mean, you went through that, so you started taking the fact that OK, I'm a Black man.am a Black man in England. so, the color of your skin now becomes an issue. You think about that all the time. You know, you go to places, that's exactly what is given attention. So yeah, it becomes an issue with something that's never been an issue in your life.

Prior to migration, none of the participants knew themselves to be 'Black,' as reflected by Amanda:

"I grew up with both white people and Black people, but the concept of being black never crossed mind. I had never heard or felt anything about blackness, of who I am."

It appears to me that this concept of 'Black,' as used in western context is like what Gordon (2008) described as a phantom. Gordon described this as something 'apparent to sense but with no substantial existence'. I say this because for Kawa, when he came to this painful realisation of "OK, I'm a Black man.am a Black man in England," I got a sense that what he was referring to, was not just the colour of his skin. Rather, it went beyond this to reveal how this racialisation 'swallowed' up the positive identity position he held prior to this point. Prior to being made aware that' he is Black,' I asked Kawa who he was in his native country, and this is what he said:

I see myself as Kawa. Kawa from my hometown. My family. That's how I see myself. I see myself as a member of this community, this great community, this big family. And so that's all you have in your head. You belonging to this family. You are from this area. And so that was who I was. Uh, the colour of my skin or race was not an issue with me. Experiencing this for the first time. You know, uh, it was more of a difficult thing. So, and it's something that to this day, wherever you go you have that. Because that label is there.

7.1.3 The term ‘Black’ and its burdening element in holding ‘double consciousness’.

Yet for another participant (Kay), his narrative powerfully highlights the burdening element of constantly navigating two worlds. That is the burden of holding on to his self-identity, and having to reconcile this with how others view him through the lens of the external dominant culture. Kay said:

I have known myself to be black. So, but not in derogatory way. Even in Africa, we have people with white skin, they're not white in their culture from the ethnicity background. Even now our great, great grandmas when they want to describe you. They will be like, take this to your auntie who is fair in skin. Take this to your auntie who is dark in skin. When you're describing people just referring to. Identifying them with one of the features or traits that they've got. And then you don't mean it to put them down. So, in Africa, it’s not that because they want to refer to you as you are less privileged, or you are a slave, or you are this. That's what they can the best way they can use to describe you.

Kay gave an example saying when he first started working here in England, a white man was shopping, and at one point he started swearing, “it's just the word FF word and called me Black.” Kay said everyone was ‘pitying’ him urging him to report the man, but he said he did not find any offense in it, saying “I didn’t really have the insights of how that could be interpreted to be racism, because I wouldn't expect you to call me white”. This was until Kay recognized the ‘load’ applied in the term Black:

Until when I started having a much insight into what it means. Not from my perspective. By shifting my position to their position to view from their own lens how they want us to feel by using that word, and then the connotation behind it and the history, so then I began to understand that alright, yes! you're not just talking about my identity. You are putting the loads, loads behind that and then thinking that you want me to feel like feeling less of myself, all because all this white supremacy and all that, and I was alright, I see I see. So, and then I became more aware of it.

Kay’s narrative brings to the fore the burdening element in holding the ‘double consciousness’ (Du Bois, 1903), in terms of retaining ‘Black’ in its positive element as used in

African setting, whilst resisting the racist tones in the same when used in a white majority setting. For Kay:

It is difficult to differentiate. That is why when I have any issues about people cursing black, I want to clarify that. What do you mean? And for me not to have confusion whether you mean it in a positive way or negative way, why don't you use the proper way instead of and then stay away from that black completely so that there's no complete confusion in my heart as to whether you mean it as a positive or a negative way?

7.1.4 The disciplining of the Black body from the white gaze

For others, their arrival to Britain meant experiencing the white gaze and the resultant hypervisibility and disciplining of the Black body. On this, Fanon (1952) writes about his experiences in relation to the burden of living under the white man's eyes, and the ways in which it structures the Black experience. Canham and Williams (2017) writing on the white gaze indicated that firstly, the white gaze arises in the white unconscious as inscribed racialised discourses that control, inferiorise and negate Blackness. Secondly, as the white gaze controls and inferiorises, it simultaneously denies and protects white privilege. Thirdly, it gives rise to the internalisation of the white gaze and the resultant Black self-disciplining. Participants in this study indicates similar experiences:

For example, Amal reported that after arriving in Britain, she found it "very, very, very strange." She described her stay in a student accommodation with mostly white students:

So, I was completely treated different. Have you seen such and such? We've got a new person who is coming from Africa. Everybody wanted to, you know, who is that? And you can see some of them did not want me to be with them. No one wants to say hello. And then slowly, you learned to know, ohh such and such they don't want. No, she's not one of us.

For others like Ivy, by being subjected to the white gaze, she reported the 'culture shock' when she migrated to Britain at the age of 15. Ivy describes 'shock' moving from schooling in a Black majority class in her native country, to then being the only Black kid in the new school. She narrated how racialization from the white gaze altered her previous state of

being a “normal happy kid enjoying school”, to an “African child in school and feeling different”:

I remember being asked about my hair because I'd gone with my hair in a natural straight state, I guess usually I always had braids or something and then he saw that my hair was an afro and he is like why is your hair 6 inches from your scalp or something silly like that? I can't even remember what I said back to him, but it made me feel a bit conscious now. Like ohh. Like maybe people will be looking at my hair funny, maybe I hadn't thought about it too much going in. So, it made me feel different. Yeah. So, it wasn't really positive. It wasn't a positive feeling. I think the way I saw my identity changed because when I was in (native country), I wasn't thinking about all those things, you know. And you know, it's happy. I was just enjoying being a kid in school, but suddenly, I felt like, I don't know, maybe I had more things to think about and all of a sudden, I was identified myself as a black African child, whereas before I didn't think about it too much. So yeah, so the yeah, I think that's what being in majority white environment makes you start to think and feel. Yeah.

7.2 conclusion and implication

Discussion in this chapter has highlighted the process of racialisation and the implication of this. This resembles what Lisa (2018) captured in her discussion of today’s globalisation and the reconfiguration of spatial barriers, which has produced a new kind of segregation. Lisa explained that this gives rise to the ‘colonised’ who are ‘outsiders from elsewhere.’ The colonized whom Fanon described in Wretched of the Earth (1963) as “being constantly on his guard, a person who by the myriad signs of the colonial world, never knows whether he/she is out of line” (pg. 141).

From the discussion presented in this chapter, I suggest that life for the thereafter racialised ‘Other,’ becomes marked by a constant feeling of ‘restlessness. I suggest this ‘restlessness’ hence the ‘internal frustrations,’ manifests in a manner like what Tia narrated. Tia’s narrative revealed an ever-present internal conflict in immigrants, due to the goals and dreams birthed in countries of origin, which were hoped to be actualised in the host country, only to realise that due to racism, it is not easy to do this. Indeed, this ‘restlessness’

represents an *enduring [emphasis made]* and pervasive quality, present in all participants narratives, but well exemplified in Tia's narrative:

I didn't make sense of it because all I wanted is I am going to a foreign land to succeed. The mindset is totally different from when you were… and now living in it, you know. Like I said, when you visited is a different ball game, but when you do live in it, you get to like experience it. Ops, it's not as easy as I thought. It's not gonna be. Is not going to be and has never been. And does that create a problem? Because of course you sort of left your country… and there is, you know, every one of us must navigate and adjust to circumstances, but. Yes, it does because. Uh, we are generally. Competitive. In the sense that we want to achieve, and we justify our growth process by progress of getting it and doing it. So yes, it does create an internal conflict within you. Because at that time you'll be like, ohh I'm feeling, I'm a failure and you don't wanna feel that way. And part of it is you now trying harder, and it seems like that effort is being suppressed by the system. So that's where it becomes like, conflicting between us, we will become a bit restless.

This restlessness can be understood from Du Bois (1903) theory of double consciousness: "this double consciousness, this sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness; —an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder" (pg. 3). This restlessness is felt acutely by Black immigrants to Western settings because as explained by Fanon (2021), the Black man on his home territory is oblivious of the moment when his inferiority is determined by the Other, until he/she arrives in a Western setting and then "given the occasion to confront the white gaze, resulting in "an unusual weight descended on us "(pg.90). Bardhan and Zhang (2017) study with students from the Global South to America, contextualises what is being discussed here. These students reported that having experienced racialisation in the United States, and being intensely aware that the same body can be coded in different ways in different locations, they reported experiencing a tension between their "old" identities and their experiences with race in the U.S. context. This 'tension' is what is being theorised here as 'restlessness', made sense using Fanon's discussion of the internal agitation that ensues because of the transformation from the natural corporeal body schema to racial epidermal schema due to racial oppression. With the 'restlessness' captured here, the coming chapter will follow these participants as they search for what I argue to be 'rest and safety,' by joining the profession of social work.

Chapter 8: Hope deferred makes the heart sick.

8.1 Introduction

The wording of the theme in this chapter, is derived from the Bible in Proverbs 13;12. Building upon what was captured in the previous chapter, concerning 'restlessness', this theme takes the reader into the journey of these seven participants, in their hope of finding rest and a 'safe home' by joining the profession of social work. As the story unfolds, the discussion captures the 'shattering of this hope,' as these participants come face to face with the violence in the setting, starting from their university experience and running through their working context, and the realisation that they are not safe in social work as they had hoped.

Given the breadth of what is covered in this chapter, this by necessity requires topics of discussion to be presented in three sections: Section one covers pre-qualifying experiences. Section two covers post-qualifying experiences. Section three reports how these Black African social workers navigate hostile environments daily, as they go about meeting their professional responsibilities and uphold their professional values. In line with the decolonial commitment in this study, section three considers that these participants are not merely 'victims' of racial oppression, but are agentive, even despite having to navigate hostile environments. The subtheme of 'second skin formation' communicates this.

<u>Section 1; Pre and qualifying experiences</u>

This section captures what participants thought social work is, prior to joining the profession. The university experience is also presented in this section.

8.2.1 'social work- in- mind' prior to joining the profession.

For some of the participants, they were motivated to join the profession of social work due to employability, in what they are saying that Black people are likely to find employment in the social care sector (Lina, Amanda, Amal). But for others like Ivy, they had a certain image in their mind, about what social work stands for grounded in social justice. Ivy said:

It shocked me. Before you go into social work, you've got this view about it…it is shocking to be honest how there's a lot of politics in the profession that's grounded on social justice, anti-discrimination. I realised that the profession could be grounded on trying to be good to people, but there's always people coming with their own beliefs and values. I realised that if people have racist backgrounds, where they feel a certain way about Black people, it doesn't change just because they're now doing this profession.

But it still shocked me, because I thought that by the time somebody decides to go into it, it's because they've got those values already in place. It's because they feel passionate about social justice… I don't know what happens in other professions, but I expected that social work would be the one, should leading by example.

8.2.2; Student experience; the story of Amanda

Experiences of hostile campus racial climate, often experienced by professors and students of color is well known and documented in literature. Same case in social work's qualifying programmes (see for example Davis and Mirick, 2022; Fairtlough et al. 2014; Tedam, 2014). Similar findings were reported in this study. All participants reported facing racism from the point of entry at the university. Participants reported facing racism in the classroom, both from lecturers and their white peers. Negative social work students' placement experience was reported. The story of Amanda (see her portrait in page 79), amplifies this student experience:

Amanda's story shows systemic failures in both university and placement systems, and how these systems of accountability (Practice tutor, university, Team manager) did not speak up, rather they "brushed under the carpet) and 'colluded' with those who commit racism" - in Amanda's case, her practice educator (PE).

But the fact that this PE is Black was not lost on Amanda, making it important to consider how Black people relate with one another:

Black-on- Black relationships

Amanda said that the PE being Black "added to her pains." In a similar vein, Tinarwo (2017) researching on experiences of Zimbabwean social workers employed in a UK local authority, reported about these social workers not getting along with one group of Black people, the African Caribbean social workers. Tinarwo discusses the lack of power by the African Caribbeans, thus suggesting that an analysis of discrimination on this basis cannot constitute racism. But on the latter point, researchers are asking whether Black on Black racial discrimination constitute racism; for instance, a study by Khalifa (2014) considered Black student and parental perceptions of exclusionary practices of Black school principals. The study asked why students and parents viewed two Black principals as contributing to abusive and exclusionary school environments that marginalized Black students. The study revealed that exclusionary behaviours toward Black students—which was viewed as "abuse" by students and parents—was a reproduction of the district's racism, and thus adds new considerations for discussions around the value of racially-like (i.e., all Black) educators and students (pg.259). Similarly, Addae and Quan-Baffour (2022) considered anti-foreigner sentiments seen in South Africa, resulting in waves of violent attacks on African migrants leading to loss of lives and properties. The authors described these actions as "Afrophobic", "Black on Black Violence", and a "new form of racism" in South Africa (pg.1). However, Addae and Quan-Baffour are clear that these vices cannot be divorced from the history of Apartheid, which fostered a system of fear of and mistrust for other foreign African nationals through isolating Black South Africans from the international community (pg.1).

Likewise, in this study, instances of Black-on Black discrimination was widely reported. For example, Amal said:

You will get those colleagues within our practice where you realize this Black person actions, she's forgetting, it's our fellow Black people. It is interesting bit when you have got those that are Blacks, who act whiter than the whites themselves.

Thus, whilst I concur with Tinarwo's (2017) view that racism between two groups of Black people does not exist based on lack of power on both, it is however important that racially based discrimination between two groups of Black people is not overlooked. However, in a similar thrust with Addae and Quan-Baffour, I suggest that analysis of this needs to concentrate on structural causes of racism and the role of internalised racism. Internalised racism theory (see Kutateladze, 2022), would suggest possibility that Black people have internalised negative perceptions of their race and Blackness. Thus, I emphasise on the need to consider Black people experiences of collective disenfranchisement and historical trauma, because of slavery and persistent racial disparities, and how this influences their relationship with one another. From this position, the argument made is that a discussion on Black-on-Black discrimination that limits the role of the involved parties as either victim or perpetrator, negates the complexities related to the social historical background context of racism, and how this history impacts the ways Black people relates with each other.

Section 2: Post-qualifying experiences

This section exemplifies what has been participants' experiences after becoming qualified social workers. 'Racial violence in the organisation' is a sub-theme discussing the experiences discussed in this section, to highlight the pervading 'characteristic' of the participants' working context. Five key ideas are discussed to capture several ways this racial violence in the setting is enacted:

1. Amputation of Black workers 'affects'
2. Navigating the workplace as a person who speaks English with an "African accent."
3. Consistent operations of internalised racism
4. Quality of relationship between front-line managers and Black social workers
5. Paradoxical hypervisibility and invisibility

8.3 Racial violence in the organisation

> *"I feel like anybody coming to social work or social care settings, we are all aware of discrimination. It should never happen amongst us because that is what we stand for. So, you would not expect it within us. So, when I saw something similar within the settings, it was a shock to me. Like. "**So, I am not even in a safe place**." (Kay)*

I have started this section with direct quotes from Kay's narrative (emphasis on safety), to bring home the concept of racial 'violence' as the prevailing condition in the employing organisation, as experienced by these Black African social workers. To elucidate this, I use Fanon's discussion on violence, presented in his text The Wretched of the Earth (1963). Fanon discusses the revolutionary struggle against Western subjugation. He discusses the 'native intellectual,' arguing that for this intellectual, neither education nor wealth can offer them the protection from the violence of colonization or enslavement (James, 2013).

I bring Fanon into conversation with Bourdieu's field theory (1992, 1999). Bourdieu's conception of 'symbolic violence' reveals how those who are oppressed, inevitably adopt the status quo as obvious and appropriate, even when it is hurtful to them, further legitimizing and solidifying it. Bourdieu explained that these dispositions or domination are also experienced bodily, through what he called the 'bodily hexis.' I incorporate this with Fanon's discussion on these bodily experiences, which he described as 'the native's muscles always being tensed' (1963; 41).

Anchoring the discussion on these thoughts, the experience of qualified Black social workers in this study, becomes discernible. The 'violence' exerted on these workers is on the premise that one would think that upon attaining qualified status, this then becomes a 'licence' to practice as mandated by the profession. But on the contrary and as verbalised by Tia:

> *And it was a phase that I went through with my own personal journey and experience coming into a professional setting. Whereby, Ohh. OK, I've completed uni now. I'm now a professional in my own capacity and I should be given the right to make decisions and hold up to those decisions. But I was in a position whereby every single decision I took at that stage was questioned.*

But before I continue with the discussion, a brief pause is warranted here, to revisit and continue with Lina's diary reflections and field notes, started in page 86:

When Lina said that when growing up, "it was imbedded in them that some races are superior to others," I got a sense that in African setting, this is accepted as irrefutable or as the 'doxa' in the language of Bourdieu (1992).

Watching the recording of Lina's first interview, I registered the sadness in me, listening to what she said that "we are brought up to be thankful for the little we have." This sadness envelopes me every time I listen to this.

Lina said that "we are taught to just stay in the background and feel comfortable;" I observed Lina's body language as she said this. She demonstrated this "hunching" with her body language, to demonstrate "to hunch low so as not to be seen." Before this, she had said that if the team manager did not nudge her and another Black colleague to go for career progression, they were "comfortable" staying in the background.

This mental image of 'hunching' has caught my attention; field notes corresponding to this narrative, 'ponders' on 'the discomfort of 'hunching down,' wondering how these fits with Lina's assertion that they were 'comfortable' staying in the background? Were they comfortable or were they managing a racial enforced position that is not compatible to their sense of capabilities?

My diary reflections centres on this 'hunching down.' I point out that it is not comfortable to 'hunch down,' because this is not a 'natural' body posture. Rather, this posture is adopted to minimise visibility- not to be seen to protect yourself as Lina said. The natural poise is to be upright, and so I see the contradiction in being "comfortable," in what is an unnatural position!

Later, as I go back to this data and having had further reflections, it occurs to me how this body posture of 'being hunched down' is prominent in Lina's data.

Connecting with the communicated mental image of 'hunching' characterising Lina's script, Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus' (1992) certainly elucidates this bodily disposition, but also and sadly, the fact that this has been accepted as 'doxa' (common sense) in Bourdieu's language. Bourdieu's symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1992) makes sense. I now want to connect this with Fanon's concept of "affective ankylosis" (Black Skin, White Masks, 2021; 101). Fanon uses the rheumatological metaphor of ankylosis to gesture to a figural hardening of motion wrought by the onset of colonization (Chamberlin, 2018). Expanding on this further, Shiloh (2018) utilised Fanon's contribution to the theory of the body schema, to illustrate how the political economy of affects in colonial racism, functions to refuse affects for Black bodies. Instead, these Black bodies are burdened with absorbing the projections of unwanted affects from white bodies. Returning to Lina's script to connect this with what I described as 'hunching' of her body, I propose that this physical body movement is a 'visceral' manifestation of experiencing racism. Thus, and applying Shiloh's analysis of this, I suggest that Lina's assertion that "we are taught to just stay in the background "(and the accompanied 'hunching), needs to be 're-framed' from the cultural framing of this, to seeing this as a direct consequence of:

"a uniquely affective structure of oppressive violence, one that displaces and accumulates disjointed affective force, quarantining it within the racialized body until it becomes toxic" (Shiloh, 2018; 512).

On this issue concerning racialisation of emotions, Audre Lorde's writings, for example her writing on the gendered and racialized work regarding anger (Lorde, 1984, 2019) powerfully illustrates how racism manifests when it comes to uptake of affects. Likewise, Fanon (1963) on the same subject observed that:

"In the colonial world, the emotional sensitivity of the native is kept on the surface of his skin like an open sore which flinches from the caustic agent; and the psyche shrinks back, obliterates itself and find outlet in muscular demonstrations which have cause certain very wise men to say the native is a hysterical type" (pg.44).

The discussion herein is attending to the violence in the organisation, as experienced by Black African social workers involved in this study. To contextualise this further, I want to connect with what is being said here concerning racialisation of emotions, to consider the amputation of their 'affect', as observed in this study:

8.3.1 Amputation of Black African social workers 'affects'

In this study, narratives from participants indicates that their humanity, feelings, and emotions are not considered, when conversations around racist incidents from families are held. Because of this, when racial incidents occur, racial trauma experienced in the line of work, is being carried around by Black social workers, because there is no avenue open to them to work through this. What is revealed in participants narratives, is that they can process or make sense of racism from clients, because they can appropriate this to clients' mental condition. The difficulty for them is receiving the same from those meant to support them, for example their managers. Participants revealed that when they disclose racial discrimination experienced in the course of their job, how their managers respond to this, hugely determines what happens next.

But sadly, narratives from participants suggests instances when front line managers are not providing 'structural reinforcement' for these Black African social workers in racial

incidences. Participants indicated that when they face racist incidents from clients and their families, there is an expectation on them to be 'professional' at the expense of their wellbeing. They indicated that there is expectation by the profession for Black social workers to 'swallow' racist 'incidences and 'continue'/ act professionally. Participants indicated that their managers show little willingness to 'work through' race related issues, but rather, there is a tendency for them to 'take sides' with clients, and to assume that the worker involved is at fault. It appears that when Black social workers face racial discrimination from people they work with and for, their managers are not only placing the blame on them rather than considering that they have been victims of racist abuse, but they also place the responsibility on them to rectify the situation. This is a situation of double jeopardy on these Black African social workers, as victims of racist abuse whilst also expecting them to provide emollient for the situation.

For example, Ivy reported an occurrence where she felt that one of the managers did not consider the racial dynamics involved working with a certain white family, and instead 'placed' the responsibility on her to 'fix' the situation. Luckily, Ivy reported that a different manager in the team stepped in to support with the case. Ivy attributed this to the latter manager being 'good' but added that not all managers are able to pick up on those things.

To contextualise these experiences further, I want to bring in a microaggression, that of a microinvalidation type (Sue et al., 2007) that happened between Tia and her white manager. By using critical realism and its ability to explain structures that function as causal forces to produce events, it was possible to address the response of this white manager, in answering the question of whose reality is seen as valid. By dissecting the response of this white manager from a critical realist position, what is surfaced and made visible is how the

embedded ideology of white supremacy, which privileges individualism, continues to obfuscate the causal forces that shape, maintain, and perpetuate racial injustice (Rozas, 2022). In so doing, the microinvalidation then powerfully revealed how affective intentionality (Shiloh, 2018), may be severed, or "amputated" as part of oppressive practices:

I had an encounter with an elderly person that I went to visit during a crisis, who told me not to sit. And gave me straight up blunt. People like you cannot sit on my chair. I said fine. I stood up through the assessment, completed what I needed to do, the job I needed to do. I left the environment, go into the car, called my manager, and said dah and dah and dah this is how I feel. "Ohh dear. Perhaps you might want to reflect a bit."

And my mindset was, what am I gonna reflect on? I've been face to face racially abused and you're telling me to go reflect? Yeah, what exactly am I gonna reflect on? Being Black? Am I gonna reflect that I shouldn't be in this country? Am I gonna reflect that I shouldn't work with people who have a problem with the color of my skin? So that, to me, did not sit well with me from that approach.

Considering this manager's response from a psychoanalytic perspective, Davids (2011,2020) psychoanalytic approach to race and difference is helpful. David's work discusses the formation of internal racist organisation, explaining these as internal structures that acts as defence mechanisms against racial anxieties. Applying this to this manager's response, what is observable from her paranoid-schizoid position (Klein, 1946, 1996), is the activation of these defensive organisation. I argue that this manager must have recognised that to occupy the role of a 'container' (Bion, 1962) as Tia needed, would have meant 'confronting' the racist act perpetrated by the white service user, and by association, by 'herself' as a white person. Seemingly, what was 'avoided' by this manager was the 'containing' role, as this would have required her to 'take in' Tia's projective identification and experience them, to connect with her experience (Duncan, 2014). From a psychoanalytic point of view, what this manager failed to grasp is the projective identification used for communication; she thus

effectively hindered development of introjective processes and the development of Tia's ego.

Undoubtfully, this is anxiety-provoking, and so to 'defend against this,' the response observed. But to do so, as was the case in this situation, is suggestive of a borderline functioning (Steiner, 2003), replete with pathological internal organisation, hence unable to address states of needs. For a person in her position and the responsibility conferred to her by her role, such functioning leaves a lot to be desired, as Tia expressed:

Tia said that while she could 'deal' with the service users' behaviour as she could see she was unwell mentally, what she found hard to come to terms with, was the response she got from someone who was supposed to support her. She said:

Honestly, there's a part of me that died within…but I snapped out of it. I didn't want to think about it for too long because it was gonna mess me up. It hurts when it's done by a service user, but being addressed poorly by the superiors, that's where it hurts more. I rather you say nothing than you make it worse.

But I also want to further this view, by bringing in another perspective- that which pertains to 'shame' related to racism. Graff (2011) speaking on the topic of shame, explained that shame tends to evoke repression of ideas, adding that it motivates people to conceal and withdraw. He attributed shame to the absence of slavery and racism from literature on trauma, explaining that the shame and trauma of slavery causes(d) dissociation, not only to enslaved Black people and their descendants, but to whites as well. Racial shame thus resides in both the oppressed and the oppressor. Paulo Freire in his text 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed,' eloquently put it this way:

"Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human" (1970;18).

But what I want to speak into is the 'restitutive 'potential that feelings of shame have. Sullivan (2014) discussed how racial shame can help white people understand their negative feelings about race, including whiteness, in ways that can increase their feelings of racial responsibility and their solidarity with people of color. She explained this can happen because:

"To feel shame, is for white people to take responsibility for their feeling of emptiness and the racist wrongdoing to which it has led" (pg.132)

Thus, the argument I make is that the presence of 'shame' is not necessarily the issue here. The issue is how that shame is 'connected with;' either to repress and hide, or to welcome its discomfort, thus opening potential space for thinking adequately about a constitutive relation between self and other. In the case of this white manager, unfortunately, the former was true, to the detriment of Tia.

The discussion so far is on how racial violence is experienced by Black African social workers in their employing organisation. The discussion which follows continues this theme, by highlighting how English dominance is used to propagate this violence:

8.3.2; English dominance: practising social work as a person who speaks English with an "African accent."

Huber (2011) introduces experiences of English dominance as a racist nativist microaggression. Their work showed how language became symbolic of the perceived inferiority of the African accents' language, and of the people who spoke it. Huber explained that they experienced this inferiority through subtle, layered, and cumulative assaults that are one form of a systemic, everyday racist nativism or racist nativist microaggressions. Huber identified that practices of English dominance are often subtle and difficult to

recognize without the help of theoretical constructs that can expose them, arguing that racial microaggressions is a concept that is useful in describing how English dominance is experienced.

In this study, I have been struck by how much English language 'looms large' in participants narratives, in a manner that suggests that for these participants, the dominant culture in the host society continues to devalue and subjugate these cultural and linguistic Black African social workers. This study is not alone in this observation; many studies have reported similar occurrences around this issue of supremacy of English language (see for example in Weinberg, 2022; Wong, 2008; Tinarwo, 2017).

But what seems to be 'lost' or not acknowledged is in the fact that for these minority ethnic workers, they are individuals who speak other languages other than just English. Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1993), drives this point home, in his argument that Indigenous languages are our common heritage:

> "A world of many languages should be like a field of flowers of different colours. There is no flower which becomes more of a flower on account of its colour or its shape. All such flowers express their common "floralness" in their diverse colours and shapes . . . [and therefore] all our languages should join in the demand for a new international economic, political, and cultural order" (pg. 39).

But contrary to what Wa Thiong'o asserts, what is seen in this study is the way in which dominance of English language is given expression. This is often communicated by the natives of the host society through the perceived deficiency and professional inferiority of the Black African social workers involved in this study. They reported devaluing of their professional expertise by clients and families, often hidden behind 'not understanding because the accent is too strong' as Amal narrated:

I have had many instances where clients have said that they don't understand me. Well, I think it's the things you live with every day and when you come across that, you just ask what it is they don't understand, so you can clearly break it down for them because what you are asking them is nothing major is only everyday life. So, it's like let me know what it is you don't understand, then I can break it down. And if they continue, that's when you realize actually this is racism, they want somebody who speaks English, who is a white English, who can come and communicate them in their mother tongue, you know.

But as argued by Macedo (2000), this cannot be reduced simply to issues of language, but rests on a full understanding of the ideological elements that generate and sustain linguistic, cultural, and racial discrimination, which represents vestiges of a colonial legacy in the society. Macedo argues that colonialism imposes "distinction" as an ideological yardstick against which all other cultural values are measured, including language. This is the case for participants in this study; in fact, it appears that the issue around 'accents' is problematised by professionals too, as narrative from Ivy and Amal indicated. Ivy said:

I'm sure that we've all they had these experiences, whether at training or at uni, you know like when we go into groups and we have discussions, you might say the same thing. Somebody says it with a British accent, or somebody says it in a different way. Like, yeah, yeah, that's right. And it's like they've said something spectacular. I think it can knock your confidences. If it's perceived that there's a certain accent where you know it's more intelligent or maybe once somebody says it's taken more on board than you, even though you might say the same thing. So, it knocks on your confidence. And sometimes you feel like your competency is questioned.

Amal spoke of feeling 'uncomfortable' when speaking with white colleagues, saying "with your accent they might not even catch what you're saying." She said because of these 'little things,' "they pick on you." Her story highlights this phenomenon regarding the 'supremacy' of English language, but more importantly, her story revealed that the issue is not necessarily about 'accents,' rather, the issue as deemed by others, is to do specifically with "African accent":

You know, languages until today, I would be talking to my colleagues who are white. You come up with a word which you know, with my accent and it's like (makes facial gesture to indicate displeasure). But if it's a white person who is Spanish and speaking English, regardless is broken one, talking to another white, they actually feel so excited and saying oh

wow, someone who is Spanish is speaking English, look at the amount of effort they are making! But coming to someone like me, nobody's going to realize that I'm making effort. So that's a part of our everyday racism we are experiencing.

Look at Ukrainian refugees, they are getting jobs within a day, even though you can't understand what they are saying, but if you brought a person from Somalia as a refugee and gave them a job in the supermarket or anywhere, you would see the reaction from the white people.

The discussion so far in this chapter, is focused on highlighting several ways racial 'violence' bears forth in the working context of participants in this study. Such one way is entrenched in patterns of internalised racism instilled at an early age (as discussed in chapter 6), and which continues to bear forth on how these participants 'show up' at the workplace:

8.3.3; Presence of chronic patterns of internalised racism

Lipsky (1998) notes that patterns of internalised racism are a result of the experience of systemic and institutionalised racism, adding that these chronic patterns are consistently present in operation, so much more that many Black people have come to view this as inherent part of Black culture. Lipsky's point is reflected in what Tia said:

It's even strange how you might feel sick, but you still carry on because you are being challenged behind you. You like ohh I must make it. I must be at work. I need to be. They need me. Because we are constantly guilty, feeling guilty of, ohh I should be working. But I'm sick. Ohh, let me log on. I'm not feeling like it. Ohh. You feeling like you need? I'm out of the computer for an hour. I feel bad. Like ohh. I shouldn't be out.

The 'violence' in this refers to the physical domination that is replaced or made purposeless because the individual sees the existing social order as natural and appropriate (Wiegmann, 2017). Similarly, for others like Amal, 'working hard 'has become part of being Black:

I mean when we get in this country, you train your mind to accept and say I need to work hard to prove that I can do the job. And even actually end up working harder, and then you realize the white population are hardly doing anything. You know, the amount of effort you must put in, so it has become a reality thing of Being black. Yeah, working hard. Which it became a habit, and our mind have agreed to accept it regardless.

What is being revealed in these narratives is the 'double bind' (King, 2023) and the inherent complexity because of this. For example, in Amal's example of 'needing to work hard,' this is a double bind, because on the one hand, racism creates this need to work hard, but on the other hand, acting on this sustains the cycle of internalised racism. What this discussion unveils is the 'violence' in the setting. The discussion below continues this theme, through the exploration of relationship between Black African social workers and their managers.

8.3.4 quality of relationship with frontline managers as a key determining factor

The quality of relationship between these Black African social workers and their white managers, appears to be significant in this study, going by the number of participants who commented on this. This finding is significant, as it highlights the crucial role played by front-line managers and how they are failing Black social workers. In this study, participants were united in their views that transactional relationship between them and their white managers is the norm. They reported that the employing organisation (vis a vis their managers) do not 'see them as individuals;' rather, they are seen as being 'only there to do a job.' A participant at the focus group expressed this well:

I think it's just really that sometimes those relationships are not built with our managers. You need to build that relationship and get to know them, because that's how people open to you, in the same way we work with our service users. But if that's lost from our managers, then just makes us feel like, well, you know what, they don't value me? I'm just a worker. So, I think that's some of the experiences that, you know, our people face, like you're pretty much seen as a number, you are pretty much your payroll number. How do you open to someone that you do not think they even consider you as a person, they just see you as a worker?

Amal expressed how this transactional relationship with white managers, have led to Black African social workers receiving less 'emotional' support:

I think one thing I have experienced; with Black social workers we not being supported emotionally compared to the white group. If a white social worker is going through, hell, let

us put it that way, and then there is a Black person, they expect us to be more resilient than the white group, which again this is all about microaggressions isn't it? That is how I see it. So why would you support your white colleague, ohh have a time off, you know, and the other one, obviously we have got the right to have those time off, but you get the managers prompting them and checking on them regularly. You come in the office, they call you in, you have 10, 15 minutes if it's needed. Then a Black colleague, you have expressed what is going on through your life, the manager does not want to know. So, those are the bits I have seen, I have experienced some of it.

Consequently, differences in managers' responses to these Black African social workers' vulnerability were noted, compared to how they responded to the same when it comes to white workers. However, participants also acknowledged that cultural differences between them and white managers, plays a role on the quality of their relationship. Participants spoke of their African upbringing, noting how this influences their 'behaviour' at work. For example, participants spoke of African upbringing and how this does not encourage 'open' show of emotional vulnerability at work, as well as encouraging closed boundaries between home and work. Participants acknowledged that this does play a role regarding the extent to which they can 'open' up to their managers, for them to be supported. Lina said:

The difficulty is in a way you were taught. When we go to work is to work and come back home. We are not going to work to put our lives in like an open book for everyone to read. So even though you would ask me so many questions, there's a minimum to what I can tell you. Because of the barriers that we have built. Even though they might try. We were taught Keep your cards on your chest, you do not just let everything up. You know, you might not even have something to eat for dinner. But that do not mean you go to work crying.

Amal echoed this sentiment:

It could be a bit of yes, the culture does play a massive. It does, yes, it does. I think it does. And we tend to separate work with our own issues. Which again is good and is bad. So, you often realize the communication is hardly there. You just wanna get on with your job and go.

But for others, like one of the participants at the focus group, the issue lies on the assumption made about the 'resilience' of Black people:

I think our white privilege people, they know how to get emotional support as compared to Black people. Black people we put on this cap that we can do it. Our resilience level is very high. So even when we are asked are you OK, you are not OK, but you will respond. Yes, I am

OK, knowing that I'm not ok I need help. A white person will let you know that no, I'm not OK. I'm breaking down, and I need a level of support, but a Black person even taking one week off, you will feel this guilt that like you've taken a long time off.

Ivy supported this view:

I was just wondering, listening to all our experiences, whether a part of it is whether as Black people, we are viewed to be Black strong people, you know Black strong woman, like we can put up with a lot, because like I've definitely witnessed that if a white counterpart is having a bad day, or is struggling, they seem to be able to get away with it. And I learned when I was working in my previous job that these things they can get away with, that we can't get away with.

And sometimes it's difficult to tell whether it's because you are Black. Or maybe it's your personality. Or maybe you are the kind of person who would say yes when other people say no. So, there's those kinds of things where it's felt as a Black person, you are strong, you are able to deal with more demanding caseload than others.

Consequently, participants reported that division of labour is eschewed negatively on them by their managers, while expecting them to 'endure.' They reported differences in case allocation between them and their white counterparts, not just in term of volume, but also in complexity. For example, Lina reported differences in experiences between Black and white newly qualified social workers (ASYE), in terms of not just the nature of cases allocated to them, but also in terms of support they receive from managers. She said:

And for example, there was, you know, CHC checklist. AB (a newly qualified white social worker) has never done it. CD (white manager) had to ask me like ohh, can you help? That's fine and I'll help her through the process. Then the next time it was EF (a newly qualified Black social worker). Same case. She hasn't done it the same level with AB. And she (EF) asked me, oh, how do I do this? And I'm just thinking like, why is that for AB, CD had to ask me to help AB, but for EF, they just allocated to her, she is newly qualified, Same level as AB? So how do they expect her (EF) to know all these things?

For Ivy, she wondered that if we are all doing the same job in the same organisation, "what other possible explanation for the difference in experiences, other than the fact that they are white, and I am Black"?

But for others like Lina and Kawa, a correlation exists in the quality of relationship with Black social workers and white managers with prior exposure to Black people. Lina said:

I think because our manager relates more with Black people. Because they grew up with predominantly Black people. So, I think the narrative would have been different if it were like a purely, purely white person, who had never had any interaction with Black people, prior to the post of being a manager.

Speaking of this white manager, Lina observed that this manager has been able to 'push' Black workers from places of obscurity. She explained that this is because the said manager has had prior interaction with Black people, prior to them coming into management, and they therefore 'knew' that such happens. Lina compared this with another white manager, by narrating a story about a time when her and another Black colleague were in a meeting with two other white colleagues, of which one was the said white manager. She said the latter started talking about their dogs, and Lina and the other Black colleague 'just sat there.' Lina observed that if this manager had received cross-cultural training, they would have been familiar with some of these cultural particularities. She said:

In a way, you need to find balance of having interacted with Black people. You know what to say, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Sometimes these people, the white people that get in trouble, is because some of them is because they generally didn't know that they can't say these things. They genuinely didn't know. If you grow up in a very white neighbourhood, where there's not this kind of Black music being played or anything, so, how then do you know this lingo?

Similarly, Kawa highlighted why experiences with white managers without any prior interaction with Black people is different:

When I was in college, my college mate, said he was born in one of the counties, a predominantly white environment. He went all white environment, all white school and everything, until he went, I think in Birmingham and started encountering Black people. Because their parents used to tell them, don't mix with them. So, until he came into contact then he said, what are my people talking about? So, they've installed this racist ideology on their children. So, the awareness and having been in contact with Black people, will tend to help people, because it opened people's eyes that what they've been told when they're growing up is not true.

Still for others, the question was on whether the manager will 'back up' the Black social worker, should things go wrong. And whilst this can be true for any worker, participants

however expressed increased vulnerability as Black African social workers. This mirrors an investigation by Mithran (2021) reported in CommunityCare[5] whereby it evidenced that Black and ethnic minority social workers are disproportionately subject to fitness to practise investigations. Ivy said:

You start to realize that as a Black person that if something goes wrong and you make a mistake, you won't be backed up by your white manager or something, so you start to see it differently, you know. And then there's that whole thing, if it's not recorded, it never happened. You start getting afraid to get to do something that you know you would, I don't know, get into trouble, or lose your PIN. So, all those things you don't think about them when you're thinking about going to social work, but once you get in there, you kind of feel vulnerable actually. You can feel vulnerable and afraid, yeah.

Amal echoed same sentiments as Ivy:

I don't mind losing my job with Xshire. There could be other jobs anywhere else. You just must protect yourself. Protect your PIN. Often you don't know whether anyone is going to believe you or not. That's my worry. Will I be believed if something happens? I don't know. Will I be supported if anything happens? That's a question I have. Will my manager stand there and defend me? That's the whole question. So, I do what I can to protect myself as much as I can. Hoping that nothing's gonna happen.

Discussion so far has been attending to the racial violence in the organisation, as experienced by Black African social workers involved in this study. In what follows, discussion will reveal the surveillance exerted on these workers:

8.3.5 Paradoxical hypervisibility and invisibility

So far, discussions points to the difficulties in reconciling 'authenticity' and managing the demands placed upon Black African workers due to racism. On this, participants spoke about how racism produces paradoxical hypervisibility of Black bodies in white spaces, and the social invisibility of the same. For example, Lina spoke of 'staying in the background' to

[5] Samuel, M. (2020) Black and ethnic minority social workers disproportionately subject to fitness to practise investigations Black and ethnic minority social workers disproportionately subject to fitness to practise investigations - Community Care

reduce visibility to keep safe. For others like Ivy and Amanda, they reported how their professional role occupancy is diminished when in the presence of a white colleague. Amanda said:

I've experienced something similar where in the work environment, where I went to assess one of my service users with another social worker who is white. I'm the social worker, but she accompanied me. It was mentioned I was the social worker for the client, but the mother of the client was not having it. She kept on focusing on the white social worker I came with. Then the social worker will tell her that I am the allocated social worker so to consult with me, and she says no, she keeps, you know, going back to the other white social worker. So, to me is exactly what you touched on about microaggressions, the way they are done in a way that is not visible. In this case, the mother was indirectly trying to shove me aside and focus on my colleague who is white.

Tia also spoke of invisibility rendered upon her by other professionals. She narrated how upon the advent of working online, she was subconsciously used to look for lighting so that professionals cannot say that they can't see her. She acknowledged the experiences of working online and what this means to a dark-skinned person, speaking of "being forced to 'showcase' herself, feeling as if she is putting herself on display for the sake of others, yet at the same time feeling invisible when it comes to being recognised for her professional worth". Tia said:

I'll move from room to room, as people were saying "I can't see you. You are doing extra! You call meetings on Teams, you see people just being themselves because they're not saying, ohh I can't see you! Telling me because I'm Black, you can't see me, that's dirty! That's painful. And then the tone in which it comes across makes you understand, hang on a minute, it's not because they can't see you, but they choose not to, or they want to remind you that they can't see you.

Tia's comments were echoed by another participant who took part at the focus group:

I've just realized that it's become maybe subconsciously, that I am very, very conscious of my lighting. So, it's like the moment I have a meeting coming up, I am trying to move my laptop. It's a different angle. I'm trying to turn on my lights. I test my camera before the meeting 3,4,5 times. It's like in as much as no one has ever said that directly to me, but I know it. That somebody will say they can't see me. So, it's actually interesting, that though we might not have had those direct words towards us, but it's like subconsciously we are aware that you know people would think they can't see us, or it might be too dark, or do I need to wear something that you know I'm going to be quite visible?

Summarising this section, the experiences of these participants with their managers can be better understood using a critical realist model of complexity theory (see for example in Hood, 2012). From this theory, the concept of dissipative systems which tends to lose energy over time is helpful. From this, we know that any system that tends to lose energy over time, quickly reaches 'thermodynamic equilibrium' which in terms of living systems means death (see in Warren et al., 1998). If this understanding is then applied to discussion at hand, the consequences for front line managers failing to recognise the dependency on them, in situation of racial trauma experienced by these Black African social workers when doing their job is clear. In these circumstances, the possibility for these workers to reach the said 'thermodynamic equilibrium' (burnout, loss of morale, excessive staff turnover etc), is a real possibility. I suggest that these are some of the conditions giving rise to what Ivy expressed:

I was talking to my colleague from another team. we're talking about how white counterparts stay in jobs for years and they work their way up from ASYE to senior to advanced and they became manager in that team. They stay on for years and years because maybe they are comfortable and then we're saying that why do Black people not do that? It's because we chop and change, we are here, we are there, we are everywhere, we're always changing. So yeah, I think that's known that we just move on if we don't like it, rather than face and confront what the issue is, we just leave.

I suggest that this partly occurs because the sense of 'equilibrium' for Black social workers is destabilised after encountering racial prejudice in the line of duty, made worse by their managers failing to provide support to shore them up, for them to regain their equilibrium. The trickle- down effects of this on service delivery, needs to be overstated:

The online Cambridge English dictionary defines trickle-down as "a situation in which something that starts in the high parts of a system spreads to the whole of the system. On this and by giving Tia's experience as an example, she explained what would have happened with the racist service user, had her manager not dealt with the issue appropriately:

I would have stayed on with the case because that's…do you get? and then it will be a case whereby the case is not being addressed because no one is supporting the service user. I wouldn't do it, and then it just sitting on my tray. Hopefully, one day I leave and then it gets passed on.

Therefore, it is critical to recognise and acknowledge that the effects of racial discrimination are not only suffered by the individual person involved, but this has a detrimental trickle-down effect on service delivery. I therefore emphasise that when ethnic workers disclose racial discrimination experienced in the course of their work, how their managers respond to this, plays a huge role in how they move forward.

So far, the discussion has 'surfaced' the racial violence in the setting. In the final third section of this chapter, I will discuss how these racialised social workers navigate hostile environments daily, as they go about meeting their professional responsibilities and uphold their professional values.

Section 3; Navigating hostile environments.

Following the' lack of containment' from managers as the preceding section has shown, this third section of this chapter will discuss 'development of second skin,' to denote means by which these participants survive in hostile environments; for example, Tia' narrative evokes an intense sense of organisations as hostile and unsafe places. Surviving in hostile environments, but at a cost. Her narrative evokes a strong image of 'kitting oneself' -almost putting on a 'second skin' to go in 'hostile' territories. This suggests that due to the constant need to keep oneself safe, it is almost impossible to show up in such organisations authentically.

But this said, it has already been evidenced that participants in this study (and many other Black people) have continued to find means to exercise their agency, I want to briefly touch

on ‘refusal’ as a mean through which many oppressed people find means of resisting, reframing, and redirecting colonial and capitalist logics, as an important political strategy and an assertion of diverse sovereignties and life worlds (Wright, 2018). As argued by Wright, refusal is deployed neither as a negation of the need for dialogue nor a withdrawal from the need to counter colonialism, but a refusal to be drawn into politics that enable colonialism, a strong assertion of sovereignty and the terms of dialogue itself. Throughout this study and from the decolonial standpoint informing this study, I have made efforts to retain consciousness of the traditional social work pedagogy which tends to assess challenges faced by Black people through a pathological lens (Johnson,2022). From this awareness, I found that in thinking about this subject of refusal, I ‘grappled’ with some of my analysis (see for example my analysis of ivy’s narrative on page 133 about Black people frequently changing jobs). I wondered whether assigning this as a manifestation of oppression, is in fact an indication of my continued coloniality in theorizations of agency?

In what follows, discussion will highlight how participants in this study have continued to find ways to assert their agency, and to resist hopelessness and a nihilist position. The work of Esther Bick (1968, 1986) on functions of the skin in early object relations, informs this discussion.

8.4; ‘Second skin’ functioning

Bick’s work discusses the primal function of the skin in its role of holding together parts of the personality. Bick points that in the event of defective development of this containment function, other ‘secondary skin’ devices may arise. I apply Bick’s work to the ‘containing’ function of organisations for employees, arguing that in instances where there is absence of this, this leads to a development of a ‘second skin’ formation through which dependence on

the object is replaced by a pseudo-independence, by the inappropriate use of certain mental function (Bick, 1968). I argue that this is the case in this study:

As discussions in this chapter has already demonstrated, participants in this study have found that they cannot 'rely' on their managers (and by extension their employing organisation) 'containing function,' when incidents of racism occur. Drawing from Bick's work, I assert that in the absence of this 'containing' from employing organisation, 'normal' functioning of these participants by necessity leads to the development of a 'second skin' formation. Bick made observations that "when the baby is born, he is in the position of an astronaut who has been shot out into outer space without a spacesuit" (1986; 295). I thought that the 'vulnerability' of the said baby, is like the 'vulnerability' expressed by Kay, when discussing being a Black African newly qualified social worker (ASYE):

I think then I was penetrating the practice and with lots of fear of the unknown, lots of anxieties, lot of how is gonna be, how my journey going to be you know, my feet were not that strong on the floor, a little bit of wind would want to knock you down.

Bick (1986) notes that where 'second skin' formation is a prominent feature of character, anxieties of falling into space haunts every demand for change, hence engendering a deep conservatism. This is due to an awareness of the risk that this 'second skin' can collapse under stress, no matter how well-adjusted it may appear; this mirrors what Tia said:

And then you are still within that nutshell of, Ohh I don't want to say anything. Sometimes you write good morning on the Team chat. You clean it up because I can't be bothered. I don't want to, let me quietly do my job. Because for me, I felt like ohh, I am in my hiding place. I need to stay away from all this. Let's just do the job and get away.

If Tia's narrative is seen in the light of Bick's notion of 'second skin', what becomes discernible is her awareness of the 'vulnerability' of her 'second skin', and her recognition that this can 'suddenly collapse' when put under strain; hence her emphasis that "I need to stay away from all this". In my view, it is quite something to come to understand that

developing ‘second skin’ is not the preference; the preference is for employees who are ‘securely held’ by their organisations, hence no need for the ‘second skin’ in the first place. And this does make me to question the ‘gospel of resilience’ as currently being framed, whereby the ‘problem’ is seen as ‘located’ in those experiencing racial oppression.

The discussion that follows will give some examples of functioning from a ‘second skin’ formation. But I want to make it clear that these formations do not represent unintegration as a passive experience of total helplessness; rather, I insist that they are active formations of defensive operation in the service of ‘survival.’ Such is the spirit in which these examples of functioning from ‘second skin’ formations are offered:

8.4.1 Spiritual and cultural values

The decolonial lens adopted in this study made it possible to appreciate participant’s’ spiritual and cultural values, which would otherwise have been rendered invisible within Western ideologies. This was especially critical in bearing open a distinct differentiation of participants cultural heritage, and that which is a product of internalised colonization. To illustrate this, I offer a diary reflection:

> During the early phase of data gathering, I presented interview data for one of the participants (Kay), to my supervisors for analysis and metabolising. What I presented to my supervisors is that Kay’s interview felt quite different to all the other interviews I had completed. I observed that it felt as if this interview has two sections; the first section which has the known challenges, sadness, and anger, usually experienced when thinking about experiences of racism. But the other part is quite triumphant, spiritual, mythical, powerful- something I have not experienced in any of the interviews I have completed so far.
>
> A lengthy discussion with my supervisors followed. The White supervisor asked me to consider whether what I interpreted as “triumphant, spiritual, mythical, powerful” – what I interpreted as Kay’s ‘power’ over racism, was on the contrary suggestive of psychic retreat

(Steiner, 1993)? The white supervisor was of the view that these psychic retreats provide temporary relief. She wondered whether with Kay, taking these psychic retreats regularly, also means not having any chance for professional development and upwards move?

I thought of Kay's spirituality and considered the possibility of this as a psychic retreat (Steiner, 1993) as a defence mechanism. Indeed, Kay's spiritual stance could be a psychic retreat. Or his coping mechanism via spirituality or both. But I argue that holding only the binary positions (strength vs defence), only goes to replicate the risk I have found in many of the psychoanalytic informed racism studies I have read; the risk of overlooking the fight for freedom which the oppressed are also engaged in. I argue that only holding this binary view without a consideration for an alternative view, does not do justice to Black people.

To my mind, this spirituality could be Kay's strength, redemption, and recovery; this was my initial thoughts and impression when I did the interview with him. I remember feeling awed and inspired by him. In fact, an African centred view (see in Glocke, 2011; Smith, 2021; Gilbert, 2009) would appreciate the primacy of spirituality in African people, and as a site of critical resistance (Smith, 2021). In this study, majority of the participants indicated their reliance on their spirituality, to cope with racial oppression. This is not surprising when understood from an African ontology, and the fact that African people, in general, are a spiritual people (see Glocke,2011). For example, Amal said:

First, I'm a very spiritual person. Very highly spiritual. I cannot function without recognizing I have a higher Maker who is above me. Because if not for him, I wouldn't be where I am right now.

Kay equally expressed the significance of cultural and ancestral heritage, when it comes to resisting negative connotations regarding his African identity:

When you know that source, you would know where this is coming from. You will know the forefathers that has owned that skin. You will know those who you cannot trace, but who are part of your history. That's make you feel like you didn't drop from heaven from the sky.

You were brought to this world by generation that has been existing for millions of years, you're representing them. Lot of spiritual connotations to that, lot of religious interpretations to that, lots of cultural values.

8.4.2 Increase in professional experience

Participants indicated that increase in professional experience serves as a 'protective factor' and as a 'resistance' tool. For example, Lina spoke about how with increased professional confidence, she can now 'challenge' unfair treatment:

When you are newly qualified, you don't wanna ruffle feathers… but now I know I do my job well. And you can complain until the cows come home, but I'm practicing in a very legal way, I am not ruffled by it. I know I have done the right thing, so there'll be making noise. Does that noise bother me? No! Cause I've got my headphones on. My noise cancellation headphones on, which are called experience!

Likewise, Ivy observed how an increase in professional experience provides Black workers confidence 'to move on' if environment is not favourable:

When you're qualified and now you've got quite a lot of experience. You feel that ability to move on if you don't like where you are.

8.4.3 Support from other Black peers

For most participants, discussing racial experiences with other Black colleagues provides strong coping mechanisms and a source for validation. Ivy said:

In the workplaces I've worked, I've always found myself, maybe with people who look like me, who would understand the experience. So, whenever I've confided these feelings with someone, it's been with another Black African person, maybe not Black African, but another Black person, where we would just always talk and they'll say, oh, this is going on or why or, you know, we'll just confide in each other.

8.5 Conclusion and implication

Discussion in this chapter have demonstrated that experiences and responses of racial oppression is never a straightforward matter. This is especially important in this study, owing to its decolonial stance and its commitment to frame participants' narratives as

instances of simultaneous racial oppression and refusal. In chapter six, I introduced the view on 'complex personhood' (Gordon, 2008) to capture the complex and oftentimes contradictory humanity and subjectivity. This demonstrated the complexity experienced by these participants, as they navigate existing in two worlds and the resultant tensions between how they have come to see themselves as influenced by the dominant culture, compared against their true sense of self and how these are hard to distinguish (Smith,2022). What is revealed is the complexities of these subject positions, the ways they shift, and the ways they interact and redefine, as they refuse colonialism (Wright,2018). Du Bois (1903) theory of the double consciousness, sheds light on this. Du Bois outlines the struggles Black people face, in holding 'two souls' or 'two worlds,' to denote the pressures of responding to the double mastery of reconciling the two worlds- that of holding to their cultures and heritage and the need to belong to the white world. This 'double consciousness' is evident in several ways in participants narratives. But staying close to my decolonial commitment helped me to 'see and hear' various ways participants remained connected to their ancestral homeland. I borrowed from Robert and Armstrong (2005) concept of the 'organisation in the mind', to 'coin' the concept of "ancestral homeland- in the mind" of the participants. This is to consider how these participants 'experience' the workplace from a non-Eurocentric point of view. From this, I was able to discern how cultural aspects such as 'respect' from African perspective, as well as 'separation of work and private life' as informed by their African upbringing, influences their work life.

For example, participants indicated that the cultural element in relation to how they perceive 'respect,' plays a significant role in their interactions within the organisation and their professional practice. Tia said:

The cultural bit does play a whole lot of roles in the way we interact; in the way we seek what is rightfully ours. In the way we request for our own position

For Ivy, she expressed 'pride' in her cultural upbringing and the influence of this to her view on authority. Lina echoed this, and how this influences her interaction, for example with her managers at work:

So, this was ingrained in us since we are growing up when in high school, primary school, you don't answer to someone that is in place of authority more than you, someone who is supervising you and stuff like that. So, it's very hard for us to come out of that because those are some of the kinds of way of life that we were taught.

And we brought up not to let's face it, most people that are managers to us are elderly than us. We were brought up to respect our elders. You know. We're not brought up to challenge our elders. So, in as much as we are in this country for a long time, we still got that root of saying, you'll respect your elders.

Surfacing how participants in this study 'experience' the workplace from a non-Eurocentric point of view, is helpful as it captures how their cultural upbringing bears forth in their work life. In so doing, the complexity of holding 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1903), regarding holding to their African values, while at the same time meeting the demand placed upon them by the professional practice, is surfaced. Thus, to adopt a purely Eurocentric view when considering some of these issues, is a disservice to people of African cultural backgrounds. In fact, when some of these issues are surfaced, it becomes all too clear why ethnic minority workers, struggles with organisations' talk about inclusion. As King (2023) opined, as organisations increasingly ask employees to "bring your whole self to work", the costs of obliging that seemingly progressive request, are inequitable to Black people. The concluding chapter which follows expands on this. In the process, the inadequacies of equal opportunity policies in the organisation will be exposed.

Chapter 9: Attending to the 'phantasmagoria' of equal opportunities policies in organisations.

9.1 Introduction

Having 'surfaced' the racial violence in the setting as done in the previous chapter, the focus on the theme reported in this chapter, turns the 'gaze' on organisations. This is to honour what Dar and Ibrahim (2019) advocated, in their assertion that organisations need to stand in their own naked apparition of shame, stripped from its fantasies and phantasmagoria of equality. Studies on this have brought forward the counter intuitive idea that covert discrimination can be even more likely to occur, when successfully installed equal opportunity policies are made salient (see for example in Lennartz, 2019).

The focus in this chapter considers what participants in this study have found in the organisational policies, culture, and practices that either enhances or negates their experience of racial microaggressions. Discussion in this chapter delineates the inadequacy of equal opportunity policies to bring about fairness and calls for vertical change as opposed to a horizontal change, in the argument that it is the top structure of the organisation that can result in real power and change against racist policies.

9.1.1 The extent to which the organisational environment is shaped by white dominant culture.

On the questions regarding the policies and politics of 'diversity' in the organisation, participants in this study acknowledged that over the years, their current employing organisation has strived for a 'diverse workforce,'. They cited an increase in Black and ethnic minority workers employed in the organisation. An increase in Black frontline managers has also been reported. But whilst this has been seen as a positive and welcomed by

participants, they however questioned the extent to which this is indicative of an organisation committed to racial justice and parity for all. Mirroring this, Shain (2020) questioned the policies and politics of diversity within institutions, arguing that this often prioritises targets of insertion, inclusion, and representation, over a genuine engagement with the structures of oppression.

I concur with Shain because as narrative from participants indicates, an increase for example in Black managers, has not 'removed' racially induced challenges faced by Black African social workers in this study. I argue that the expectation that racially matched dyad (for example Black worker with a Black manager/ supervisor) will work simply because they are racially matched, is a fallacy. Speaking further on this, in chapter eight, I pointed to the widely reported Black-on-Black discrimination widely reported in this study and emphasised the need to see this as stemming from colonial structures. Fanon discerned this in his discussion of the bourgeoisie (Wretched of the Earth,1967;34). Echoing Fanons' view on the bourgeoise, Maree Stanley (2020) makes a relevant observation:

"An illusion of inclusion into White society is offered to nonwhite people by denying that being "White" shapes anything at all. Members of nonwhite communities are then forced into the position of monitoring and controlling members of their own group under the auspices of respectability by enforcing the ideology that if one behaves correctly in terms of class, gender, and sexuality, then one will be treated as an equal" (pg. 213).

In a similar fashion, participants in this study echoed similar sentiments. For instance, participant like Amal reported "complicated" relationship between Black managers and Black staff, hence expressing preference for having a white manager 'in her corner,' for when things go wrong:

When it comes to maybe if you have a good white manager, I will have more trust in them. Because for sure you know they would, the way they would communicate with above, they literally are confident enough. You know, whereby the one who is a Black one, he's trying to prove himself as well, and then that trust wouldn't be there 100%. Somehow, because white

managers they're not fighting for anything themselves, they are there in the job. With a Black man or Black woman, they'll be in the same position; I need to prove that myself have done this. Umm, but with the white one, I think they are much more confident on taking things forward. In terms of, if anything was to go wrong, I would rather have a white manager, because they've got nothing against themselves. They've got nothing to prove.

But for other participants, their narratives indicate their belief that race carries a 'tethering' effect when it comes to career options and progression. On this subject, Tinarwo (2017) highlighted racism perpetuated by institutional policies, that have remained unchallenged for years but have continuously served to undermine foreign qualifications and devalue work experience of those recruited from the Global South. Such has been the experiences of Black African social workers in this study:

For example, Lina vividly evoked how race serves as a tethering mechanism. This refutes what the ideology of meritocracy (see Konrad, 2021) would have us believe, regarding upward mobility being based on merit. Part of this thesis title is derived from what Lina said about 'going to the deep end when you can't swim.' For her, despite attaining social worker qualification, she said her skin colour still 'confines' her within a certain specialism – in this case adult social worker. The fact that these 'mechanisms' are 'unseen' or as Lina calls them "the unwritten rules," is what this discussion is concerned about. Most importantly, the discussion questions the effectiveness of equal opportunity policies in organisations. On this, Lina questions how some of the white people get to senior positions despite the apparent lack of skills. She gave an example of a white senior manager in the organisation. She said:

This man will be waffling and mumbling and everything and you look at his position and you just wonder; how did you get where you are? Another example is a senior nurse who asked me something, it was a terminology for nursing, something that a student nurse would know, then I was like, oh my God, my mind was like how did you, and they were a band 7! …and I reminded myself, they have the right colour! Because there's no way a Black person who doesn't know that simple terminology will get to Band 7! How would you get that?

But her narrative also powerfully digs deep into why not so many Black people are in senior positions. She suggested that whilst the preference for white people exists when it comes to career progression, lack of confidence eroded by racism on the part of Black people, plays a part in this. Lina attributed this to the need in Black people to 'minimise visibility' to keep safe, and how this limits self-expression:

You see the example I have given, xx and xx you know, they will have that confidence, that you'd think they've got a bag of knowledge but when you get to talk to them, you then realize, Oh my God. There is nothing there. It's a shame. But we must work twice as hard. We must showcase our knowledge. We must earn the position. And in as much as you'd say Ohh it's fair and everything. Not fair. It's not really fair. We are taught to sort of. Keep it inside. We're not want to show how we feel. We're told to get on with life, you know. So, sometimes. It's hard for us to showcase this, oh I feel this, I feel that we're told to brush it off.

But for some other participants, their concern was focused on the makeup of the higher management structures in the organisation. For example, in Amal's case, she narrated an incident whereby she was being racially discriminated by her white manager, to an extent that a white colleague took it upon themselves to escalate this to the department's senior management. However, Amal said that whilst the complaint was 'somewhat' responded to, this was not done satisfactorily as no action was taken against the manager. Amal said:

It could have been dealt in different way. But they dealt in their own way to show it has been responded. They kind of brushed it under the carpet. You just do 1 bit to say, oh, we've dealt with it. Let's brush it under the carpet.

Well, It's a long way. The person to whom you're complaining. It's one of this organization where people have been. You know the high… The team above, they've been there for years and years. Some kind of friendship. Uh, will find the head and the deputies here they all became friends. They might follow things on a piece of paper, but something down the line, it's not being followed 100%. They covered it up and yeah, so yeah, it's a long way to go.

Tia too implicated the top management structures of the organisation:

So, it is vital for us to bear in mind of the impact of how the top board affects the bottom. We've got quite good, very much talented social workers that are like quite capable that needs that grassroots support to grow and blossom. You see people get comfortable where they are because they are afraid to lose what they already have. Meanwhile, there are

opportunities out there. But it's looking like a side-line for a particular person. When a certain group is not applying for that position, why are they not questioning it?

So, the changes we're looking has to come from the top, and not just putting in writing and sending emails and putting them, Ohh. We are Black aware, we do this, zero tolerance to racism. How is that implemented? When we do face it, how is that being treated? How is that being addressed? How are the people being supported? do they feel like, OK, I can comfortably say this has happened at work? Or is this something we'll still have to include to our mental health by adding it on and not doing anything about it?

Conclusion and implications

The discussion has pointed to the fact that organizational policies aimed at reducing disparities for ethnic minorities do not necessarily work. Rather, what is being alluded to is what King (2023) discussed, regarding many of the ideologies (e.g., meritocracy) and seemingly neutral standards (e.g., professionalism), and how these reflect and reproduce racial dominance. What has been evidenced in the discussion is the extent to which the organisational environment, is shaped by white dominant culture, emphasized, and reflected in the interpersonal interactions reported by participants. It is evident that participants in this study do not trust the broader professional/ organisational structures to support them. These findings are consistent with other studies (see for example Weinberg and Fine, 2022; Hollingsworth et al. 2018; Davis, 2022).

In the last chapter that follows, I will offer suggestions towards addressing some of these concerns.

Chapter 10: Concluding thoughts and recommendations.

This study sought to bring understanding of experiences of racial microaggressions on first generation Black African social workers in Britain. This is with a view to bring understanding to the distinctiveness of racial microaggressions as experienced by this specific racial group. This is premised on the suggestion that there is an inherent complexity in experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers who are first generation immigrants to Britain, arising from not only the specificity of their racial socialisation in African settings in the context of colonial legacy, but also from the experiences of racialisation post migration. Underpinned by a critical realist ontology, the study deployed a decolonial epistemology, to guard against the colonising tendencies in research, particularly when research is in the context of individuals who have been casted in the role of the marginalized 'Other' (Cortez, 2013). Given what is known concerning the significant influence of racial socialisation on experiences of racism (Jernigan & Daniel, 2011), the study sought to understand the conditions under which participants' racial socialisation occurred in their native African settings.

This study has found that the knowledge production systems informing the racialisation process of the African child in African settings, continues to be a site through which colonial indoctrination persists. Consequently, internalised racism is embedded in the African child at an early age through racialisation processes. Because of this, the opulence of white people in African setting is seen as a 'natural' condition of being white. As shown in this study, this means that racial oppression in the African setting is not grasped or named as such. The significance of racial socialisation on experiences of racial microaggressions, is based on what this study has found, that participants' early racial socialisation is a context

they often' revert' to, when navigating racialised settings in their present. Thus, I offer that when considering experiences of racial microaggressions (or any racism) on first generation immigrants to Britain who are Black Africans, it is important to consider their specific racial socialisation context and the linked internalised racism, and the role this plays in shaping how they experience and respond to racial oppression.

One could argue that the internalisation of racism during the socialisation stage is not isolated to only in African settings, given that Black African children (or any Black child for that matter) born and socialised in a Western setting could also be prone to this. Whilst this is true, the key difference with participants in this study, lies in the fact that their racial socialisation occurred in a Black homogeneous African setting; as has been discussed in this study, race is not as salient in African settings as it is in western context (Nilinjana & Zhang, 2017). The significant contribution made by this study, is its unfolding of the process of coming alive to racialisation, for those who migrate from African setting as adults to a majority Western white setting. As this study has pointed out, participants in this study did not know themselves to be 'Black' prior to migrating to Britain. For them, the complexity was when they came to the realisation that their Black body embodies different meanings that their 'race' carries in Britain, in comparison to where they are coming from in Africa. I thus suggest that when it comes to attending to racism on first generation Black African social workers, it is important to bear in mind that when it comes to their social identity, this consists not only of the identities they assert for themselves, but also the identity that has been assigned to them by others. What this study has articulated is the racism summoned when the racialised categories of 'immigrant', 'Black' and 'African' are summoned. As such, this study has troubled the notion that a homogenous Blackness exists in all groups racialised as Black. On the contrary, what this study has demonstrated is the complexity

involved, and the need to bear in mind that when it comes to Black African social workers and experiences of racism, having an African-born status carries even greater disadvantage.

An emphasis throughout this study has been to resist framing Africanness from the normative white/black binary. This study has made efforts to resist the hegemonic tendency to frame Africanness through processes of inferiorisation. In attunement with this, this study worked with Blackness as an imposed identity that inferiorises dark bodies as subhuman (Fanon,1952), but also Blackness as a site of liberation, connecting, and healing for people of African descent and ascendant (Nimo, Abdi & Yousuf, 2022). The latter has been a central focus in this study, in the assertion that theorisation of experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, needs also to resist reinforcing the hegemonic belief in Black African's inferiority and inability to assert agency. An intention in this study has been to align with the potential in decolonial researchers to be "transformative 'healers' who use research to improve the lives of the marginalised" (Barnes, 2018:383). This is reflected in the research design of this study; for instance, the design of the focus group was specifically to facilitate a space for mutual personal growth and transformation. Consequently, chapter eight of this study articulates various means through which participants assert their agency and sovereignty as Africans. Therefore, drawing learning from this study, I assert that any intervention or work targeted towards addressing racism on Black African social workers (or any Black Africans), needs to have 'transformation' and 'resistance' as a core focus. In the discussion below, I offer suggestions on how this can be realised:

Resistance and transformation

For this study, a core focus was not only to study the experiences of racial microaggressions on the target group, but it was also to model a way out to disentangle oneself from the ideologies that fuel this. Said simply, I suggest that the purpose of exposing and understanding racial oppression is to change it. I therefore assert that working towards transformation and resistance is a crucial role in any racism related practice or intervention. To describe what this looks like as learnt from this study, I will use the work of Lugones (2010) on colonised gender. Lugones talks of "being at the fractured locus of the colonial difference "(pg. 748). Lugones powerfully captures the process and impact of colonization, but rather than viewing this as succeeding to totally reduce the colonized to less than human primitives, she discusses the oppressing ←→resisting process, whereby the colonial control is continually resisted (pg.748). Considering the learning from this study, I suggest that if one is to inhabit the location conceived by Lugones as "being at the fractured locus of the colonial difference", epistemology is a helpful strategy through which this kind of transformative and resistance work can be achieved.

In concert with this, a central concern in this study has been to attend to colonisation of knowledge production, with a view to troubling research proclivity which tends to privilege white Western epistemologies at the expense of non-Western epistemologies. In resistance to this, this study took up decolonial epistemology as a useful conceptual tool to facilitate a different way of thinking. As a result, this counteracted the normative positions which tends to reinforce a white/black dependency dynamic (Hunter, 2005). For the African subjects involved, this study retained consciousness that "the white Western perspectives do not reflect values and knowledge systems in other contexts such as the African Obuntu/Ubuntu"

(Tusasiirwe, 2023: pg.1). In so doing, the interests and voices of the African subjects involved in this study has been centred, as has their agency. For example, this study has demonstrated that spirituality and African cultural values are some of the means through which African subjects resist and assert their diverse sovereignties and life worlds. What this study has crystalised is that if social work research and practice is to benefit various diverse cultural groups with whom work is undertaken, then it "should be driven by indigenous worldviews, cultural values and a language that is relevant to the indigenous group with whom work is undertaken" (Marovah & Mutanga, 2023:1). On this front, this study has articulated how decolonial thought can be utilised to counteract traditional social work pedagogy, which tends to assess challenges faced by marginalised people through a deficit lens (Johnson,2022).

What this study has demonstrated is that efforts to decolonise social work practice is not only ideal, but it is crucial, if at all culturally relevant social work with African families and communities is to be optimised. Specifically in relation to Black African social workers and their experiences of racial microaggressions or any other forms of racism, this study has accentuated that in valuing other ways of knowing outside the Eurocentric thought, this will help to counteract the anti-racist perspective in social work, which as Graham (2000) noted "reflects a European project that fails to understand, recognise, or respond to Black autonomy" (pg. 424). This is crucial for the profession of social work, if the views of Black African social workers involved in this study on social work as an anti-racist profession is anything to go by:

This study has found that participants were attracted to the profession of social work, hugely due to the profession's stated values anchored in social justice and anti-oppressive

practice. But what they found upon entering the profession, is like what Murcia and Eduardo (2019) described as 'home as a tension between here/ there/ nowhere'. Such has been the experiences of the Black African social workers involved in this study, both in their professional identity, and as employees. Thus, they hold strong rejection of social work as an anti-racist profession. This study also considered what these Black African social workers have found in the organisational policies, culture, and practices that either enhances or negates their experience of racial microaggressions. This study has found that Black African social workers do not trust the broader professional/ organisational structures to support them when they experience racial microaggressions. Rather, this study has revealed the crucial role played by frontline managers and how they are failing Black social workers. One area this study has specifically identified for targeted work is with white frontline managers. I therefore make recommendation for a tailored response targeting white front line managers, focusing on the issues identified in this study. I hope to expand knowledge in this area through future research.

The study has evidenced the extent to which the organisational environment is shaped by white dominant culture, emphasized, and reflected in the interpersonal interactions reported by participants in this study. Furthering this, a significant concern identified in this study is on the emotional responses, when Black African social workers face racism in the line of their work. As observed by Smith and Mak (2023), when talking about race and racism, the affective experiences often highlighted are usually of white peers and colleagues, with a specific emphasis on the overall discomfort the subject matter evokes. Smith and Mak highlight that an important area to note is that the conversation around attending to the affective experience and the resistance to doing so, is usually directly toward understanding the emotions of white peers in this regard. This is what was found in

this study. Chapter eight of this study discussed amputation of Black African social workers' 'affects', when racist incidents occur at work. But in addition to this, the study has found that not only is affective experiences of Black African social workers not attended to in racist incidents, but also that those experiencing racism also collude with white people in sustaining racism. One way this study has found through which this collusion takes place, is through silence:

Silence

This study has demonstrated how silence functions to maintain race-related dynamics and unjust power structures. Silence has been found to be a persistent feature throughout the study, starting from findings reported in chapter 6. As has been shown in this study, experiences of racism are often met with silence, from both the perpetrators of racism and those experiencing it. I find Morgan (2021) analysis of how colorblindness works to sustain racism in Western settings, helpful in explaining why silence is a powerful mechanism for sustaining racial oppression. Morgan discusses how disavowal functions to maintain the privilege of whiteness, explaining that disavowal for the white liberal splits the investment in white privilege together with its racist underpinning on one side, and the need to maintain a sense of oneself as good on the other (pg.418). For Morgan, because of the numbing effect of colour-blindness, a void is created between the two- a silent gap- which lacks the capacity for mourning or symbolisation (pg. 418).

This silent gap and the fact that it disables capacity for mourning or symbolisation, is what I want to focus on. To give this meaning, I deploy Audre Lorde's writings on silence (Lorde, 1984). In the chapter titled 'The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action' (pg. 29), Lorde provides a framework for the transformation of silence into language and action,

through her modelling of how self-revelation albeit fraught with danger, can be used to "war against the tyrannies of silence" (pg.30). Lorde asserts that "your silence will not protect you" (pg.30) and demonstrates the power of 'community' to break the silence that has immobilised Black women. The power of community is echoed by Lugones (2010) who asserts that communities rather than individuals enable the colonial resistance. Mirroring this, the design of the focus group in this study (see chapter four), which was inspired by the Ubuntu African world view, proved to be a very effective space, for shifting our focus towards naming and subverting the dynamics of power that allow for the culturally different to be deemed as 'Other' in the first place (Sakamoto, 2007). This in return facilitated personal growth and transformation for the Black African social workers involved in this study. The space created for the focus group became a powerful medium through which participants voices were heard, thus providing an opportunity for those who had been injured by racial microaggressions to discover that they are not alone in their marginality. Specifically, the space facilitated the shattering of silence by naming racial microaggressions, and this empowered participants as they heard their own stories and the stories of others, thus validating their experiences. This was beneficial for participants in this study in immunizing them against the constant onslaught of microaggressions.

In step with this, this study advocates breaking the culture of silence, which this study has found to be prevalent in racism related matters. I therefore recommend that organisations support creation for professional spaces where Black African social workers (and other Black people) can come together as a form of resistance, and a disruption to what Jemal et al. (2023) identifies as the individualistic norms of Western societies steeped in white supremacy, patriarchy, and neoliberal values. As noted by Jemal et al., community provides the armour when battling colonial violence, allowing transitions from centering oppressive

violence and harm to resistance, resilience, and healing. In advocating for counter-spaces to be created for Black African social workers, I concur with McCubbin et al. (2023) conceptualisation of learning spaces for indigenous peoples. McCubbin et al. describes these spaces as “safe” “safer” and “safe from the Host” (pg.304). McCubbin et al. explains that these exist because the Host was neither designed nor built with Indigenous peoples, students nor scholars in mind; rather, the Host was (and remains) a place not intended for them to engage or belong (pg. 304).

Additionally, I call for a need to shift racism discussion from focusing on the impact of racism on the target group, to turning the gaze on racist people and seeing them for who they really are. And when I say a ‘racist person,’ I mean perpetration of all acts of racism, whether overt or covert. I call for this to be seen from a Kleinian Object relations point of view, because in so doing, a racist act will be seen for what it is: a primitive and omnipotent infantile level of functioning, full of paranoid affects born out of schizoid splitting (Lowe, 2008). This will then serve to expose the lie for what it is: that there is nothing superior about a racist person, rather their behaviour is because of lack of integration of parts into whole, hence adopting defensive mechanisms of splitting, projection, and projective identification (Lowe, 2008). This was well put by one of the participants in this study (Kay), who defined racism as:

“And when it comes to racism, it’s mal- appropriateness of, formulating value, it’s kind of a defect.”

One category of Black African social workers whom this study identified as critically vulnerable, is Black African students and Black African social workers in their first year in

employment (ASYE). I therefore recommend that learning institutions and employing organisations put in place targeted support for this group.

Lastly, concerning the term 'microaggressions', I echo Huber and Solorzano (2015) who argues that the terms 'micro' and 'macro' should not define acts of racism as subtle or blatant. In this study, though microaggressions have been hitherto understood to be subtle and covert, instances of open racism have been prevalent in this study. This study thus confirms Huber and Solorzano's (2015) view, that microaggressions are in fact a form of 'everyday suffering' that have become socially and systemically normalized and effectively minimized. Therefore, I suggest that in using the term 'micro', caution is called for to guard against depreciating everyday racism experienced by racialised groups. I suggest future research to explore whether the use of this terminology limits the complexities of racism and the harm it causes, as has indeed been evidenced in this study.

Limitation of this study

This study focused on race, excluding all other social categories. I agree with Weinberg and Fine (2022) that this is contestable since it essentializes an individual to one trait when one's other social categories may be of equal significance. Particularly, this study acknowledges the omission of gender in its analysis, especially considering the well-known criticism on Fanon's portrayal of women (see for example in Burman, 2018). Nonetheless, whilst it is important to recognise the multiple axes of differentiation Black African people holds, and that these intersects with racial oppression, I however agree with Masocha (2015) point. Masocha argues that although this intersectionality should be explicitly acknowledged, this should not result in the watering down of the centrality of race and racism in these negative experiences. This has been the basis for focusing solely on race in this study. But that said, I

recommend that future research should consider how these other social categories intersects with racial oppression.

Last thoughts:

In my opinion, the ability to live with the duality of both the two sides of the oppression (oppressed and the oppressor) is the real strength of many Black African people. In this study, the experiences of Black African social workers in the context of marginality and innovation whilst occupying borderland spaces, have been highlighted. Linking this to boundary spanners (see in Kesney, 2028) to refer to persons who operate at the periphery or boundary of an organisation, I argue that organisations could benefit a lot if they are able to leverage this strength inherent in Black African people (or any of those who are racially oppressed) yet who for hundred years have continued to exist and flourish.

Bibliography

Accounting for colonial complicities through Refusals in researching agency across borders. (2022). [Article]. *Journal of Social Issues*, *78*(2), 413-433. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12473

Adams, J., & Gorton, D. (2004). Southern Trauma: Revisiting Caste and Class in the Mississippi Delta. *American anthropologist*, *106*(2), 334-345. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.2004.106.2.334

Addae, D., & Quan-Baffour, K. P. (2022). Afrophobia, "black on black" violence and the new racism in South Africa: the nexus between adult education and mutual co-existence. *Cogent social sciences*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2130458

Adjei, S. B., & Mpiani, A. (2023). Decolonising Mind and Being Associated with Marriage: Perspectives from Ghana. *Psychology and developing societies*, *35*(1), 87-109. https://doi.org/10.1177/09713336231152311

Agathangelou, A. M. (2016). Fanon on Decolonization and Revolution: Bodies and Dialectics. *Globalizations*, *13*(1), 110-128. https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2014.981056

Agboka, G. Y. (2014). Decolonial Methodologies: Social Justice Perspectives in Intercultural Technical Communication Research. *Journal of technical writing and communication*, *44*(3), 297-327. https://doi.org/10.2190/TW.44.3.e

Ahmed, B. (2008). Teaching critical psychology of 'race' issues: problems in promoting anti-racist practice [Article]. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, *18*(1), 54-67. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.912

Ahmed, S. (2007). A phenomenology of whiteness. *Feminist theory*, *8*(2), 149-168. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700107078139

Ahmed, S. (2014). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203700372

Allana, S., & Clark, A. (2018). Applying Meta-Theory to Qualitative and Mixed-Methods Research: A Discussion of Critical Realism and Heart Failure Disease Management Interventions Research [Article]. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *17*(1), 1-9. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918790042

Allman, J. (2013). Kwame Nkrumah, African Studies, and the Politics of Knowledge Production in the Black Star of Africa. *The International journal of African historical studies*, *46*(2), 181-203.

Almeida, R. V., Werkmeister Rozas, L. M., Cross-Denny, B., Lee, K. K., & Yamada, A.-M. (2019). Coloniality and Intersectionality in Social Work Education and Practice. *Journal of*

progressive human services, *30*(2), 148-164. https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2019.1574195

Anderson, L. (2018). "Shithole Countries": The Wretched of the Earth, Frantz Fanon [Article]. *Social Research*, *85*(3), 487-502.

Andrews, K. (2016). The problem of political blackness: lessons from the Black Supplementary School Movement. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *39*(11), 2060-2078. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1131314

Applegate, J. S. (1997). The holding environment: An organizing metaphor for social work theory and practice. *Smith College studies in social work*, *68*(1), 7-29. https://doi.org/10.1080/00377319709517514

Archard, P. J. (2021). The psychoanalytically-informed interview in social work research. *Journal of social work practice*, *35*(2), 191-203. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1700492

Armstrong, D., & Obholzer, A. (2005). *Organization in the Mind: Psychoanalysis, Group Relations, and Organizational Consultancy* (1 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429478079

Arowosegbe, J. O. (2016). AFRICAN SCHOLARS, AFRICAN STUDIES AND KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION ON AFRICA. *Africa (London. 1928)*, *86*(2), 324-338. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0001972016000073

Asante, G., Sekimoto, S., & Brown, C. (2016). Becoming "Black": Exploring the Racialized Experiences of African Immigrants in the United States. *The Howard journal of communications*, *27*(4), 367-384. https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2016.1206047

Aymer, C. (2009). Reflections at the Waterhole: Black Professionals Researching Together. *Journal of social work practice*, *23*(4), 443-450. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650530903374986

Aymer, C., & Bryan, A. (1996). Black Students' Experience on Social Work Courses: Accentuating the Positives. *The British journal of social work*, *26*(1), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.bjsw.a011057

Banks, K. H., & Stephens, J. (2018). Reframing Internalized Racial Oppression and Charting a way Forward. *Social issues and policy review*, *12*(1), 91-111. https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12041

Bardhan, N., & Zhang, B. (2017). A Post/Decolonial View of Race and Identity Through the Narratives of U.S. International Students from the Global South. *Communication quarterly*, *65*(3), 285-306. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463373.2016.1237981

Barnes, B. R. (2018). Decolonising research methodologies : opportunity and caution. *South African journal of psychology*, *48*(3), 379-387. https://doi.org/10.1177/0081246318798294

Bass, A. (2002). Historical and Unconscious Trauma: Racism and Psychoanalysis. *Constellations (Oxford, England)*, *9*(2), 274-283. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8675.00280

Bell, D., Canham, H., Dutta, U., & Fernández, J. S. (2020). Retrospective Autoethnographies: A Call for Decolonial Imaginings for the New University. *Qualitative inquiry*, *26*(7), 849-859. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419857743

Benson, M., & Lewis, C. (2019). Brexit, British People of Colour in the EU-27 and everyday racism in Britain and Europe. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *42*(13), 2211-2228. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1599134

Bhaskar, R. (2008). *A Realist Theory of Science*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203090732

Bhati, A. (2023). What can postcolonial theory contribute to the study of social equity? *Public administration review*, *83*(1), 203-209. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13523

Bick, E. (1968). The Experience of the Skin in Early Object-Relations [Article]. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, *49*, 484-486.

Bick, E. (1986). Further Considerations on the Function of the Skin in Early Object Relations: Findings from Infant Observation Integrated into Child and Adult Analysis [Article]. *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, *2*(4), 292-299. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0118.1986.tb01344.x

Bick, E. (2011). *Chapter Nine: The Experience of the Skin in Early Object Relations (1968)* [Book Extract].

Bizzell, C. V. (2023). How does it feel to be a problem: tokenization of black women student affair professionals in white academic spaces. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2023.2181459

Blechner, M. J. (2020). Racism and Psychoanalysis: How They Affect One Another. *Contemporary psychoanalysis*, *56*(2-3), 245-254. https://doi.org/10.1080/00107530.2020.1756133

Boal, A. (2008). *Theatre of the oppressed* (New ed.). Pluto.

Bourdieu, P. (1999). *The weight of the world : social suffering in contemporary society*. Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. J. D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Polity Press.

Boydell, L. (2009). Analysing discourse psycho-socially. In (1 ed., pp. 241-266). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429479564-11

Boykin, C. M., Brown, N. D., Carter, J. T., Dukes, K., Green, D. J., Harrison, T.,…Williams, A. D. (2020). Anti-racist actions and accountability: not more empty promises. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, *39*(7), 775-786. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-06-2020-0158

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, *11*(4), 589-597. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021a). Can I use TA? Should I use TA? Should I not use TA? Comparing reflexive thematic analysis and other pattern-based qualitative analytic approaches. *Counselling and psychotherapy research*, *21*(1), 37-47. https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12360

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021b). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis? *Qualitative research in psychology*, *18*(3), 328-352. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1769238

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Everything changes… well some things do: Reflections on, and resources for, reflexive thematic analysis. *QMiP Bulletin*, *1*(33), 21-29. https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsqmip.2022.1.33.21

Brown, S. L., Johnson, Z., & Miller, S. E. (2019). Racial microaggressions and black social work students: a call to social work educators for proactive models informed by social justice. *Social work education*, *38*(5), 618-630. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2019.1594754

Bulhan, H. A. (2015). Stages of Colonialism in Africa: From Occupation of Land to Occupation of Being. *Journal of social and political psychology*, *3*(1), 239-256. https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v3i1.143

Burman, E. (2018). *Fanon, education, action : child as method* (First edition. ed.). Routledge, an imprint of Taylor and Francis.

Butler, D. G. (2019). Racialized Bodies and the Violence of the Setting. *Studies in gender and sexuality*, *20*(3), 146-158. https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2019.1641935

Butts, H. F. (1979). Frantz Fanon's contribution to psychiatry: the psychology of racism and colonialism. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, *71*(10), 1015-1018.

Campt, T. M. (2019). Black visuality and the practice of refusal. *Women & performance*, *29*(1), 79-87. https://doi.org/10.1080/0740770X.2019.1573625

Cane, T. C., & Tedam, P. (2022). 'We didn't learn enough about racism and anti-racist practice': newly qualified social workers' challenge in wrestling racism. *Social work*

education, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-23. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2022.2063271

Canham, H., & Williams, R. (2017). Being black, middle class and the object of two gazes. *Ethnicities*, *17*(1), 23-46. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796816664752

Castilla, E. J., & Benard, S. (2010). The Paradox of Meritocracy in Organizations. *Administrative science quarterly*, *55*(4), 543-576. https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.2010.55.4.543

Cha, S., Roberts, L., Hewlin, P., Buckman, B., Leroy, H., Steckler, E.,…Cooper, D. (2019). Being Your True Self at Work: Integrating the Fragmented Research on Authenticity in Organizations. *The Academy of Management annals*, *13*(2), 633-671. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0108

Channer, Y., & Doel, M. (2009). Beyond Qualification: Experiences of Black Social Workers on a Post-Qualifying Course. *Social work education*, *28*(4), 396-412. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615470802280675

Chapman, R. T. (2006). Internalized Racism of the Clinician and the Treatment Dynamic [Article]. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, *6*(2/3), 219-228. https://doi.org/10.1300/J135v06n02_13

Chigangaidze, R. K. (2021). An exposition of humanistic- existential social work in light of ubuntu philosophy: Towards theorizing ubuntu in social work practice. *Journal of religion & spirituality in social work*, *40*(2), 146-165. https://doi.org/10.1080/15426432.2020.1859431

Chigangaidze, R. K. (2022). Utilising ubuntu in social work practice: ubuntu in the eyes of the multimodal approach. *Journal of social work practice*, *36*(3), 291-301. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2021.1981276

Chilisa, B., & Ntseane, G. (2010). Resisting dominant discourses: implications of indigenous, African feminist theory and methods for gender and education research. *Gender and education*, *22*(6), 617-632. https://doi.org/10.1080/09540253.2010.519578

Choudhury, B. (2016). *Reading postcolonial theory*. Crc Press.

Clarke, S. (2002). Learning from experience: psycho-social research methods in the social sciences. *Qualitative research : QR*, *2*(2), 173-194. https://doi.org/10.1177/146879410200200203

Clarke, S. (2018). *Researching Beneath the Surface : Psycho-Social Research Methods in Practice* (First edition. ed.). Taylor and Francis.

Clarke, S., & Hoggett, P. (2009). Researching beneath the surface: a psycho-social approach to research practice and method. In (1 ed., pp. 1-26). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429479564-1

Cleary, M., Horsfall, J., & Hayter, M. (2014). Data collection and sampling in qualitative research: does size matter? *Journal of advanced nursing*, *70*(3), 473-475. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.12163

Colpani, G., Mascat, J., Smiet, K., Studies, L. S. G. a. P., & Studies, I. G. (2022). Critical Dialogues: Postcolonial Responses to Decolonial Interventions. *Postcolonial studies*, *25*(1), 1.

Cooper, A. (2009). Hearing the grass grow: Emotional and epistemological challenges of practice-near research. *Journal of social work practice*, *23*(4), 429-442. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650530903374960

Cooper, H., Coutanche, M. N., McMullen, L. M., Panter, A. T., Rindskopf, D., & Sher, K. J. (2023). *APA handbook of research methods in psychology: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological, Vol 2, 2nd ed*. American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000319-000

Cornish, C. (2021). When racism, poverty, power and prestige collide in social work education and practice: a case study of a working class, Mixed-race female student studying at a prestigious White university in South Africa and employed in England as a social worker. *Social work education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2021.1972095

Curtis, H. (2015). *Everyday life and the unconscious mind : an introduction to psychoanalytic concepts*. Karnac Books.

Dar, S., & Ibrahim, Y. (2019). The Blackened body and White governmentality: Managing the UK academy and the production of shame. *Gender, Work and Organization*, *26*(9), 1241-1254. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12395

Darder, A. (2019). *Decolonizing Interpretive Research: A Subaltern Methodology for Social Change* (1 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351045070

David, E. J. R., Schroeder, T. M., & Fernandez, J. (2019). Internalized Racism: A Systematic Review of the Psychological Literature on Racism's Most Insidious Consequence. *Journal of social issues*, *75*(4), 1057-1086. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12350

Davids, M. F. (2011). *Internal Racism: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Race and Difference*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Davids, M. F. (2020a). *Internal racism: a psychoanalytic approach to race and difference*. Red Globe Press.

Davids, M. F. (2020b). Psychoanalysis and black lives. *International journal of psychoanalysis*, *101*(5), 1039-1047. https://doi.org/10.1080/00207578.2020.1816471

Davis, A. (2019). Historical Knowledge of Oppression and Racial Attitudes of Social Work Students. *Journal of social work education*, *55*(1), 160-175. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2018.1498419

Davis, A., & Mirick, R. G. (2022). Microaggressions in Social Work Education: Learning From BSW Students' Experiences. *Journal of social work education*, *58*(3), 431-448. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2021.1885542

Davis, D. (2019). Fanon, violence, racism and embodiment: Making raced bodies and practising a new dialogue of raced bodies in situation? *Social alternatives*, *38*(4), 5-15.

Delgado Bernal, D., Burciaga, R., & Flores Carmona, J. (2012). Chicana/Latina Testimonios: Mapping the Methodological, Pedagogical, and Political. *Equity & excellence in education*, *45*(3), 363-372. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.698149

Derald Wing, S., Cassandra, Z. C., Narolyn, M., Sarah, A., & Elizabeth, G. (2021). *Microintervention Strategies : What You Can Do to Disarm and Dismantle Individual and Systemic Racism and Bias* [Book]. Wiley.

Diallo, O.-K., & Miskow Friborg, N. (2021). Subverting the white cis gaze: Towards a pedagogy of discomfort, accountability and care in the anthropology classroom. *Teaching Anthropology*, *10*(4), 17-35. https://doi.org/10.22582/ta.v10i4.622

DiAngelo, R. J. (2019). *White fragility : why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism*. Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books.

Dominelli, L. (1997). *Anti-racist social work : a challenge for white practitioners and educators* (2nd ed.). Macmillan Press.

Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2000). Aversive Racism and Selection Decisions: 1989 and 1999. *Psychological science*, *11*(4), 315-319. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9280.00262

Du Bois, W. E. B., & Edwards, B. H. (2007). *The souls of Black folk*. Oxford University Press.

Dumas, T. L., Phillips, K. W., & Rothbard, N. P. (2013). Getting Closer at the Company Party: Integration Experiences, Racial Dissimilarity, and Workplace Relationships. *Organization science (Providence, R.I.)*, *24*(5), 1377-1401. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1120.0808

Duncan, C. (2014). *Containing States of Mind: Exploring Bion's 'Container Model' in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*. Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315800561

Dutta, M. J. (2018). Autoethnography as Decolonization, Decolonizing Autoethnography: Resisting to Build Our Homes. *Cultural studies, critical methodologies*, *18*(1), 94-96. https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708617735637

Ekkanath, S. (2020). Understanding Currents and Theories in Indian and African Postcolonial Literature: Themes, Tropes and Discourse in the Wider Context of Postcolonialism. *Interlitteraria*, *25*(2), 379-393. https://doi.org/10.12697/IL.2020.25.2.10

Elder, C.-H. (2021). Microaggression or misunderstanding? Implicatures, inferences and accountability. *Journal of pragmatics*, *179*, 37-43. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2021.04.020

Erel, U., Murji, K., & Nahaboo, Z. (2016). Understanding the contemporary race-migration nexus. *Ethnic and racial studies*, *39*(8), 1339-1360. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1161808

Eribo, O., Ume, C., Saleh-Hanna, V., Nagel, M., Agozino, B., Elechi, O. O.,…Idem, U. (2008). *Colonial Systems of Control : Criminal Justice in Nigeria*. University of Ottawa Press / Les Presses de l'Universite d'Ottawa. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1ckph37

Erica, B. (2018). *Fanon, Education, Action: Child as Method*. Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315108896

Eriksen, K. G. (2022). Decolonial methodology and the reflexive wrestles of whiteness [Article]. *Reconceptualizing Educational Research Methodology*, *13*(2), 99-116. https://doi.org/10.7577/rerm.4666

Estrada-Reynolds, V., Freng, S., Schweitzer, K., & Leki, E. L. (2023). Is all prejudice created equal? The role of modern and aversive racism in mock juror decisions. *Psychiatry, psychology, and law*, *30*(5), 579-599. https://doi.org/10.1080/13218719.2022.2073283

Fairtlough, A., Bernard, C., Fletcher, J., & Ahmet, A. (2014). Black social work students' experiences of practice learning: Understanding differential progression rates. *Journal of social work : JSW*, *14*(6), 605-624. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468017313500416

Fanon, F. (1967). *The wretched of the earth*. Penguin.

Fanon, F. (1982). *Black skin, white masks*. Grove Press.

Fanon, F., & Philcox, R. (2021). *Black skin, white masks*. Penguin Books.

Fernando, N. (2021). Getting Close to Other Others: Doing Difference Differently. *Journal of intercultural studies*, *42*(1), 46-67. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2020.1859207

Fletcher, A. J. (2017). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: methodology meets method. *International journal of social research methodology*, *20*(2), 181-194. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1144401

Flick, U. (2018). *Designing Qualitative Research*. SAGE Publications, Limited. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529622737

Flikschuh, K., & Ajei, M. (2014). Colonial Mentality. In. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199669622.003.0010

Fraiture, P.-P. (2013). *V. Y. Mudimbe : Undisciplined Africanism*. Liverpool University Press.

Freire, P. (1972). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Penguin Books.

Frie, R. (2014). Learning to Respond Affectively to Prejudice and Racism: Discussion of Lynne Jacob's "Learning to Love White Shame and Guilt: Skills for Working as a White Therapist in a Racially Divided Country". *International journal of psychoanalytic self psychology*, *9*(4), 313-320. https://doi.org/10.1080/15551024.2014.948366

Fryer, T. (2022). A critical realist approach to thematic analysis: producing causal explanations. *Journal of critical realism*, *21*(4), 365-384. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2022.2076776

Gabriel, Y. (2020). Placing emotion and fantasy at the heart of the researcher-researched relationship: The contribution of psychosocial studies. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, *15*(2), 192-196. https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-02-2019-1728

Gandhi, R. S. (2021). Being brown: An autoethnographic exploration of internalised colonisation. *Psychodynamic practice*, *27*(2), 127-143. https://doi.org/10.1080/14753634.2021.1893211

Gardner, P. L., Bunton, P., Edge, D., & Wittkowski, A. (2014). The experience of postnatal depression in West African mothers living in the United Kingdom: A qualitative study. *Midwifery*, *30*(6), 756-763. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.midw.2013.08.001

Gatwiri, K. (2021). Racial Microaggressions at Work: Reflections from Black African Professionals in Australia. *The British journal of social work*, *51*(2), 655-672. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa145

Gilbert, D. J., Harvey, A. R., & Belgrave, F. Z. (2009). Advancing the Africentric paradigm shift discourse: building toward evidence-based Africentric interventions in social work practice with African Americans. *Social Work*, *54*(3), 243-252. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/54.3.243

Glocke, A. (2011). The Path Towards Literary Liberation: The Role of the African Worldview in Conducting an African Centered Analysis of Jacob's Ladder. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *4*(5), 196-217.

González, F. J. (2019). Necessary Disruptions: A Discussion of Daniel Butler's "Racialized Bodies and the Violence of the Setting". *Studies in gender and sexuality*, *20*(3), 159-164. https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2019.1641939

Goodwin, M. J. (2009). Can we promote cohesion through contact? Intergroup contact and the development of community cohesion. In (pp. 91-110). Policy Press. https://doi.org/10.46692/9781847422194.008

Goozee, H. (2021). Decolonizing Trauma with Frantz Fanon. *International political sociology*, *15*(1), 102-120. https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/olaa014

Gordon, A. F., & Radway, J. (2008). *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (NED - New edition, Second ed.). University of Minnesota Press. https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctttt4hp

Graff, G. (2011). Everything Has Changed, But Nothin' Has Changed: Shame, Racism, and a Dream Deferred. *The Journal of psychohistory*, *38*(4), 346.

Gregory, J. R. (2021). Social Work as a Product and Project of Whiteness, 1607-1900. *Journal of progressive human services*, *32*(1), 17-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2020.1730143

Grills, C., Cooke, D., Douglas, J., Subica, A., Villanueva, S., & Hudson, B. (2016). Culture, Racial Socialization, and Positive African American Youth Development. *Journal of black psychology*, *42*(4), 343-373. https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798415578004

Gunaratnam, Y. (2003). *Researching race and ethnicity : methods, knowledge and power*. SAGE.

Hach, M. (2020). Tracing the Past, Uncovering the Present: Intergenerational Hauntings among Cambodian-Australian Women. *Journal of intercultural studies*, *41*(6), 740-755. https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2020.1831456

Haro, B. N. (2020). From Invisibilized to Conocimiento: When Injustices Happen by and with "Our Own". *Women, gender, and families of color*, *8*(2), 134-140. https://doi.org/10.5406/womgenfamcol.8.2.0134

Harrell, S. P. (2000). A Multidimensional Conceptualization of Racism-Related Stress: Implications for the Well-Being of People of Color. *American journal of orthopsychiatry*, *70*(1), 42-57. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0087722

Hartman, S. (2020). Binded by the White: A Discussion of "Fanon's Vision of Embodied Racism for Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice". *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, *30*(3), 317-324. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2020.1744965

Healy, G., & Oikelome, F. (2011). *Diversity, Ethnicity, Migration and Work International Perspectives* (1st 2011. ed.). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230321472

Hebl, M., Cheng, S. K., & Ng, L. C. (2020). Modern Discrimination in Organizations. *Annual review of organizational psychology and organizational behavior*, *7*(1), 257-282. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012119-044948

Henry, J. S. (2014). *The Unique Promotive and Protective Effects of Racial Socialization: A Comparison of Racial Socialization and General Positive Parenting Practices for African American Youth Exposed to Racial Discrimination* ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].

Herbert, J., May, J., Wills, J., Datta, K., Evans, Y., & McIlwaine, C. (2008). Multicultural Living?: Experiences of Everyday Racism Among Ghanaian Migrants in London. *European urban and regional studies*, *15*(2), 103-117. https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776407087544

Hingley-Jones, H. (2009). Developing practice-near social work research to explore the emotional worlds of severely learning disabled adolescents in 'transition' and their families. *Journal of social work practice*, *23*(4), 413-428. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650530903374952

Hinshelwood, R. D., & Skogstad, W. (2000). *Observing Organisations: Anxiety, Defence and Culture in Health Care*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203135150

Hockey, N. (2010). Engaging Postcolonialism: Towards a Critical Realist Indigenist Critique of an Approach by Denzin and Lincoln. *Journal of critical realism*, *9*(3), 353-383. https://doi.org/10.1558/jcr.v9i3.353

Hodson, G., Hooper, H., Dovidio, J. F., & Gaertner, S. L. (2005). Aversive racism in Britain: the use of inadmissible evidence in legal decisions. *European journal of social psychology*, *35*(4), 437-448. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.261

Hoggett, P. (2008). What's in a Hyphen? Reconstructing Psychosocial Studies. *Psychoanalysis, culture & society*, *13*(4), 379-384. https://doi.org/10.1057/pcs.2008.26

Hollingsworth, L. D., Patton, D. U., Allen, P. C., & Johnson, K. E. (2018). Racial microaggressions in social work education: Black students' encounters in a predominantly White institution. *Journal of ethnic & cultural diversity in social work*, *27*(1), 95-105. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2017.1417942

Hollway, W., & Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing qualitative research differently : free association, narrative and the interview method*. SAGE.

Holmes, D. E. (2021). “I Do Not Have a Racist Bone in My Body”: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on What is Lost and Not Mourned in Our Culture’s Persistent Racism. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, *69*(2), 237-258. https://doi.org/10.1177/00030651211009518

Hood, R. (2012). A critical realist model of complexity for interprofessional working. *Journal of interprofessional care*, *26*(1), 6-12. https://doi.org/10.3109/13561820.2011.598640

Hook, D. (2008). The 'real' of racializing embodiment. *Journal of community & applied social psychology*, *18*(2), 140-152. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.963

Hook, D. (2020). Fanon via Lacan, or: Decolonization by Psychoanalytic Means ... ? *JBSP. Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, *51*(4), 305-319. https://doi.org/10.1080/00071773.2020.1732575

Hook, D., & Truscott, R. (2013). Fanonian ambivalence: On psychoanalysis and postcolonial critique. *Journal of theoretical and philosophical psychology*, *33*(3), 155-169. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033557

Houzel, D. (1996). The Family Envelope And What Happens When It Is Torn [Article]. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, *77*, 901-912.

Huber, L. P. (2011). Discourses of Racist Nativism in California Public Education: English Dominance as Racist Nativist Microaggressions. *Educational studies (Ames)*, *47*(4), 379-401. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2011.589301

Huber, L. P., & Cueva, B. M. (2012). Chicana/Latina Testimonios on Effects and Responses to Microaggressions. *Equity & excellence in education*, *45*(3), 392-410. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.698193

Hui, A. (2023). Situating decolonial strategies within methodologies-in/as-practices: A critical appraisal. *The Sociological review (Keele)*. https://doi.org/10.1177/00380261231153752

Hunter, S. (2005). NEGOTIATING PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL VOICES IN RESEARCH PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE. *Journal of social work practice*, *19*(2), 149-162. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650530500144709

Hunter, S. (2021). Decolonizing White Care: Relational Reckoning with the Violence of Coloniality in Welfare. *Ethics and social welfare*, *15*(4), 344-362. https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2021.1990370

Hurtado, A. (2003). Theory in the flesh: Toward an endarkened epistemology. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *16*(2), 215-225. https://doi.org/10.1080/0951839032000060617

Hwami, M. (2016). Frantz Fanon and the problematic of decolonization: perspectives on Zimbabwe. *African identities*, *14*(1), 19-37. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2015.1100107

Ibrahim, A. (2017). Don't Call Me Black! Rhizomatic Analysis of Blackness, Immigration, and the Politics of Race Without Guarantees. *Educational studies (Ames)*, *53*(5), 511-521. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131946.2017.1303496

Ibrahima, A. B., & Mattaini, M. A. (2019). Social work in Africa: Decolonizing methodologies and approaches. International Social Work, 62(2), 799–813. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872817742702

Ifowodo, O. (2013). *History, Trauma, and Healing in Postcolonial Narratives: Reconstructing Identities*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137337986

Ivey, G. (2023). Interpreting hidden meaning in qualitative research interview data: opportunities and challenges. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *20*(1), 21-51. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2022.2067509

James, D. (2020). Health and Health-Related Correlates of Internalized Racism Among Racial/Ethnic Minorities: a Review of the Literature. *Journal of racial and ethnic health disparities*, *7*(4), 785-806. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-020-00726-6

James, J. (2013). "Concerning Violence": Frantz Fanon's Rebel Intellectual in Search of a Black Cyborg. *The South Atlantic quarterly*, *112*(1), 57-70. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-1891233

Jamison, D. F. (2008). Through the Prism of Black Psychology: A Critical Review of Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Africology as Seen Through the Paradigmatic Lens of Black Psychology. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *2*(2), 96-117.

Jamison, D. F. (2010). Fanon Revisited: Exploring the Relationship Between African-Centered Psychology and Fanonian Psychology. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *3*(8), 179-193.

Jemal, A., Melendez, D., Hunte, O., Ballesteros, D., & Mehrotra, G. R. (2023). From the Margins to the Center: Cultivating Collective Healing with Soulcial Work Praxis. *Smith College studies in social work*, *93*(2-4), 130-159. https://doi.org/10.1080/00377317.2023.2263572

Jernigan, M. M., & Daniel, J. H. (2011). Racial Trauma in the Lives of Black Children and Adolescents: Challenges and Clinical Implications. *Journal of child & adolescent trauma*, *4*(2), 123-141. https://doi.org/10.1080/19361521.2011.574678

Jesica, S. F. (2018). Toward an Ethical Reflective Practice of a Theory in the Flesh: Embodied Subjectivities in a Youth Participatory Action Research Mural Project. *American journal of community psychology*, *62*(1-2), 221-232. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12264

John Archard, P. (2020). Psychoanalytically informed research interviewing: notes on the free association narrative interview method. *Nurse researcher*, *28*(2), 42-49. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.2020.e1718

Johnson, K. F. (2022). *Developing anti-racist practices in the helping professions : inclusive theory, pedagogy, and application*. Springer.

Jones, A. M. (2023). Self-Silencing as Protection: How the "Angry Black Woman" Stereotype Influences How Black Graduate Women Respond to Gendered-Racial Microaggressions. *Equity & excellence in education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2023.2201480

Keating, F. (2000). Anti-racist perspectives: What are the gains for social work? *Social work education*, *19*(1), 77-87. https://doi.org/10.1080/026154700114676

Keikelame, M. J., & Swartz, L. (2019). Decolonising research methodologies: lessons from a qualitative research project, Cape Town, South Africa. *Global health action*, *12*(1), 1561175-1561175. https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2018.1561175

Kennelly, J. (2017). Symbolic violence and the Olympic Games: low-income youth, social legacy commitments, and urban exclusion in Olympic host cities. *Journal of Youth Studies*, *20*(2), 145-161. https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2016.1206868

Keszey, T. (2018). Boundary spanners' knowledge sharing for innovation success in turbulent times. *Journal of knowledge management*, *22*(5), 1061-1081. https://doi.org/10.1108/JKM-01-2017-0033

Khalifa, M. (2015). Can Blacks be racists? Black-on-Black principal abuse in an urban school setting. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *28*(2), 259-282. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2014.916002

King, D. D., Hall, A. V., Johnson, L., Carter, J., Burrows, D., & Samuel, N. (2023). Research on Anti-Black Racism in Organizations: Insights, Ideas, and Considerations. *Journal of business and psychology*, *38*(1), 145-162. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-022-09804-4

Klein, M. (1996). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. *The journal of psychotherapy practice and research*, *5*(2), 160-179.

Knight, Z. G. (2019). The researcher's transference in psychoanalytically informed qualitative research. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *16*(4), 602-623. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2019.1577520

Knoblauch, S. H. (2020). Fanon's Vision of Embodied Racism for Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice. *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, *30*(3), 299-316. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2020.1744966

Knowledge production and the search for epistemic liberation in Africa. (2022). Springer.

Konrad, A. M., Richard, O. C., & Yang, Y. (2021). Both Diversity and Meritocracy: Managing the Diversity-Meritocracy Paradox with Organizational Ambidexterity. *Journal of management studies*, *58*(8), 2180-2206. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12752

Kutateladze, B. L., & Liu, L. (2022). Is Internalized Racism One More Piece of the Puzzle in Racial Disparities in Prosecution? *Justice quarterly*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2022.2125048

Ladhani, S., & Sitter, K. C. (2020). The Revival of Anti-Racism. *Critical social work*, *21*(1), 54-65. https://doi.org/10.22329/csw.v21i1.6227

Landry, A. (2018). Black Is Black Is Black?: African Immigrant Acculturation in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Americanah and Yaa Gyasi's Homegoing. *Melus*, *43*(4), 127-147. https://doi.org/10.1093/melus/mly044

Langan, M. (2017). *Neo-Colonialism and the Poverty of 'Development' in Africa*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58571-0

Laubender, C. (2020). Fanon, education, action: Child as method: by Erica Burman, New York, Routledge, 2019, 244 pp., $35.96 (paperback), ISBN: 9781138089952. In (Vol. 22, pp. 291-294): Routledge.

Lennartz, C., Proost, K., & Brebels, L. (2019). Decreasing overt discrimination increases covert discrimination: Adverse effects of equal opportunities policies. *International journal of selection and assessment*, *27*(2), 129-138. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijsa.12244

Lesane-Brown, C. L. (2006). A review of race socialization within Black families. *Developmental review*, *26*(4), 400-426. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2006.02.001

Lesane-brown, C. L., Brown, T. N., Caldwell, C. H., & Sellers, R. M. (2005). The Comprehensive Race Socialization Inventory. *Journal of black studies*, *36*(2), 163-190. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934704273457

Lewis, G. (2000). *'Race', gender, social welfare : encounters in a postcolonial society*. Polity Press.

Lewis, G. (2010). 16 Animating hatreds: Research encounters, organisational secrets, emotional truths. In (1 ed., pp. 211-227). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203927045-21

Lilienfeld, S. O. (2017). Microaggressions: Strong Claims, Inadequate Evidence. *Perspectives on psychological science*, *12*(1), 138-169. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691616659391

Lindseth, A., & Norberg, A. (2022). Elucidating the meaning of life world phenomena. A phenomenological hermeneutical method for researching lived experience. *Scandinavian journal of caring sciences*, *36*(3), 883-890. https://doi.org/10.1111/scs.13039

Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider : essays and speeches*. Crossing Press.

Lowe, F. (2008). COLONIAL OBJECT RELATIONS: GOING UNDERGROUND BLACK-WHITE RELATIONSHIPS. *British journal of psychotherapy*, *24*(1), 20-33. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0118.2007.00061.x

Lowe, F. (2014). *Thinking space : promoting thinking about race, culture, and diversity in psychotherapy and beyond*. Karnac.

Lugones, M. (2010). Toward a Decolonial Feminism. *Hypatia*, *25*(4), 742-759. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1527-2001.2010.01137.x

Macedo, D. (2000). The Colonialism of the English Only Movement. *Educational researcher*, *29*(3), 15-24. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X029003015

Maldonado-Torres, N. (2007). On the Coloniality of Being: Contributions to the Development of a Concept. *Cultural studies (London, England)*, *21*(2-3), 240-270. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601162548

Maldonado-Torres, N., France, M. F. M., Suffla, S., Seedat, M., & Ratele, K. (2021). Fanon's Decolonial Transcendence of Psychoanalysis [Article]. *Studies in Gender & Sexuality*, *22*(4), 243-255. https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2021.1996727

Maree Stanley, J. (2020). Intersectional and Relational Frameworks:Confronting Anti-Blackness, Settler Colonialism, and Neoliberalism in U.S. Social Work. *Journal of progressive human services*, *31*(3), 210-225. https://doi.org/10.1080/10428232.2019.1703246

Masocha, S. (2015). Reframing Black Social Work Students' Experiences of Teaching and Learning. *Social work education*, *34*(6), 636-649. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2015.1046429

Matias, C. E. (2016). White Skin, Black Friend: A Fanonian application to theorize racial fetish in teacher education. *Educational philosophy and theory*, *48*(3), 221-236. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2014.989952

Mawere, M. (2017). *Underdevelopment, Development and the Future of Africa*. Langaa RPCIG.

Mawere, M., & Nhemachena, A. (2013). Frantz Fanon in South Africa and Beyond: A Critical Review of Nigel Gibson's Fanonian Practices in South Africa. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *6*(6), 225-234.

Maxwell, M., Brevard, J., Abrams, J., & Belgrave, F. (2015). What's Color Got To Do With It? Skin Color, Skin Color Satisfaction, Racial Identity, and Internalized Racism Among African American College Students. *Journal of black psychology*, *41*(5), 438-461. https://doi.org/10.1177/0095798414542299

Mbarushimana, J.-P., & Robbins, R. (2015). "We have to Work Harder": Testing Assumptions about the Challenges for Black and Minority Ethnic Social Workers in a Multicultural Society. *Practice (Birmingham, England)*, *27*(2), 135-152. https://doi.org/10.1080/09503153.2015.1014336

Mbembe, A. (2012). Metamorphic Thought: The Works of Frantz Fanon. *African studies (Johannesburg)*, *71*(1), 19-28. https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2012.668291

Mbembe, A. (2013). Frantz Fanon's Oeuvres: A Metamorphic Thought. *NKA (Brooklyn, N.Y.)*, *2013*(32), 8-17. https://doi.org/10.1215/10757163-2142332

Mbembe, A. (2019). Future Knowledges and Their Implications for the Decolonisation Project. In (pp. 239-254). Wits University Press. https://doi.org/10.18772/22019083351.17

Mbembe, A., & Dubois, L. (2017). *Critique of Black reason*. Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822373230

Mbembe, A., & Ginsburg, D. (2021). *Out of the Dark Night: Essays on Decolonization*. Columbia University Press. https://doi.org/10.7312/mbem16028

McCaffrey, G., Raffin-Bouchal, S., & Moules, N. J. (2012). Hermeneutics as Research Approach: A Reappraisal. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *11*(3), 214-229. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940691201100303

McConahay, J. B. (1983). Modern Racism and Modern Discrimination: The Effects of Race, Racial Attitudes, and Context on Simulated Hiring Decisions. *Personality & social psychology bulletin*, *9*(4), 551-558. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167283094004

McCubbin, L. D., Town, M. A., Burns-Glover, A., & Butay, E. M. (2023). Creating Spaces for Decolonization and Indigenization Among Mental Health Professionals in Higher Education. *Smith College studies in social work*, *93*(2-4), 296-314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00377317.2023.2220802

McGregor, H. E., Madden, B., Higgins, M., & Ostertag, J. (2018). Braiding Designs for Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Theory, Practice, Ethics. *Reconceptualizing educational research methodology*, *9*(2). https://doi.org/10.7577/rerm.2781

McGregor, J. (2008). Abject spaces, transnational calculations: Zimbabweans in Britain navigating work, class and the law. *Transactions - Institute of British Geographers (1965)*, *33*(4), 466-482. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2008.00319.x

McKelvey, R. (2017). Language Provision in Education: A View from Scotland. *Social inclusion*, *5*(4), 78-86. https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i4.1150

Meeussen, L., Otten, S., & Phalet, K. (2014). Managing diversity: How leaders' multiculturalism and colorblindness affect work group functioning. *Group processes & intergroup relations*, *17*(5), 629-644. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430214525809

Mehta, P., & Buckley, C. D. (2022). “Your people have always been servants”: internalised racism in academic medicine. *The Lancet (British edition)*, *400*(10368), 2045-2046. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(22)02486-2

Mejia, A. (2004). The problem of knowledge imposition: Paulo Freire and critical systems thinking. *Systems research and behavioral science*, *21*(1), 63-82. https://doi.org/10.1002/sres.558

Memmi, A. (1965). *The colonizer and the colonized*. Orion Press.

Mignolo, W. (2000). *Local histories/global designs : coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton University Press.

Mignolo, W. (2011). *The darker side of Western modernity : global futures, decolonial options*. Duke University Press.

Mignolo, W. (2012). *Local histories/global designs coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking* (With a New preface by the author ed.). Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400845064

Mignolo, W. D. (2002). The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference. *The South Atlantic quarterly*, *101*(1), 57-96. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-101-1-57

Mignolo, W. D. (2009). Epistemic Disobedience, Independent Thought and Decolonial Freedom. *Theory, culture & society*, *26*(7-8), 159-181. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276409349275

Mignolo, W. D. (2012). *Local histories/global designs: coloniality, subaltern knowledges, and border thinking*. Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400845064

Mignolo, W. D., & Tlostanova, M. V. (2006). Theorizing from the Borders: Shifting to Geo- and Body-Politics of Knowledge. *European journal of social theory*, *9*(2), 205-221. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368431006063333

Minhas, R. S. (2020). The elephant in the Zoom: recognizing and reconciling my internalized racism. *Canadian Medical Association journal (CMAJ)*, *192*(40), E1169-E1170. https://doi.org/10.1503/cmaj.201737

Mlcek, S. (2017). Decolonizing methodologies to counter 'minority' spaces. *Continuum (Mount Lawley, W.A.)*, *31*(1), 84-92. https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2016.1262104

Moana, A. H. (2022). The Ethnographer Unbared: Looking at My Own History Book [Article]. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *23*(1), 1-22.

Moffic, H. S. (2020). Is There a Cure for Anti-Semitism? In (pp. 343-359). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-37745-8_28

Montle, M. E. (2022). Racial alienation in Africa: A post-colonial reading of Doris Lessing's No Witchcraft for Sale. *Journal of public affairs*, *22*(S1), n/a. https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2756

Moraga, C., & Anzaldúa, G. (1983). *This bridge called my back : writings by radical women of color* (2nd ed.). Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press.

Morgan, H. (2021). Decolonising psychotherapy. Racism and the psychoanalytic profession. *Psychoanalytic psychotherapy*, *35*(4), 412-428. https://doi.org/10.1080/02668734.2021.1990114

Mowatt, R. A., French, B. H., & Malebranche, D. A. (2013). Black/Female/Body Hypervisibility and Invisibility: A Black Feminist Augmentation of Feminist Leisure Research. *Journal of leisure research*, *45*(5), 644-660. https://doi.org/10.18666/jlr-2013-v45-i5-4367

Moyo, L. (2020). Decolonial Research Methodologies: Resistance and Liberatory Approaches. In (pp. 187-225). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52832-4_6

Mudimbe, V. Y. (1988). *The invention of Africa : gnosis, philosophy, and the order of knowledge*. Indiana University Press.

Mugumbate, J. R., Mupedziswa, R., Twikirize, J. M., Mthethwa, E., Desta, A. A., & Oyinlola, O. (2023). Understanding Ubuntu and its contribution to social work education in Africa and other regions of the world. *Social work education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2023.2168638

Mulumba, J., & Carvalho, M. I. (2023). Ubuntu-based social work: what can social workers in Global South learn from Ubuntu to promote children welfare in communities? *European journal of social work*, 1-14. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2023.2256485

Mustaffa, J. B. (2017). Mapping violence, naming life: a history of anti-Black oppression in the higher education system. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *30*(8), 711-727. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2017.1350299

Mutua, E. M. (2012). You were not born here.(knowledge about being black in America). *Women and language*, *35*(2), 91-94.

Nadarajah, Y., Martinez, E. B., Su, P., & Grydehoj, A. (2022). Critical reflexivity and decolonial methodology in island studies: Interrogating the scholar within. *Island studies journal*, *17*(1), 3-25. https://doi.org/10.24043/isj.380

Naicker, V. (2019). RESSENTIMENT IN THE POSTCOLONY. *Angelaki : journal of theoretical humanities*, *24*(2), 61. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725X.2019.1574079

Nail, P. R., Harton, H. C., & Decker, B. P. (2003). Political Orientation and Modern Versus Aversive Racism: Tests of Dovidio and Gaertner's (1998) Integrated Model. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *84*(4), 754-770. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.754

Nakaoka, S., & Ortiz, L. (2018). Examining racial microaggressions as a tool for transforming social work education: the case for critical race pedagogy. *Journal of ethnic & cultural diversity in social work*, *27*(1), 72-85. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2017.1417947

Nayak, S. (2014). 'Black feminism is not white feminism in blackface': the question of Black-women-only services and spaces. In. Taylor & Francis Group.

Ndimande, B. S. (2012). Decolonizing Research in Postapartheid South Africa: The Politics of Methodology. *Qualitative inquiry*, *18*(3), 215-226. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800411431557

Ndimande, B. S. (2018). Unraveling the Neocolonial Epistemologies: Decolonizing Research Toward Transformative Literacy. *Journal of literacy research*, *50*(3), 383-390. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X18784699

Ndlovu, M. (2018). Coloniality of Knowledge and the Challenge of Creating African Futures. *Ufahamu*, *40*(2). https://doi.org/10.5070/F7402040944

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social research methods : qualitative and quantitative approaches* (Seventh edition, Pearson new international edition. ed.). Pearson.

Newman, N. (2007). The new frontier of racism. *Public policy research*, *14*(2), 80-89. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-540X.2007.00470.x

Nguyen, N. T., & Chia, Y.-T. (2023). Decolonizing research imagination: a journey of reshaping research epistemology and ontology. *Asia Pacific education review*, *24*(2), 213-226. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-023-09822-8

Ngũgĩ wa, T. (2008). *Decolonising the mind: the politics of language in African literature*. James Currey.

Ngũgĩ wa, T. o. (1997). *Writers in Politics: A Re-engagement with Issues of Literature and Society*. Boydell & Brewer Ltd. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv28m3gk9

Nikalje, A., & Çiftçi, A. (2021). Colonial mentality, racism, and depressive symptoms: Asian Indians in the United States. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1037/aap0000262

Nkrumah, K. (1965). *Neo-colonialism : the last stage of imperialism*. Nelson.

Nwoye, A. (2021). Decolonizing moral injury studies and treatment approaches: An Africentric perspective. *Theory & psychology*, *31*(6), 912-931. https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543211027228

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2012). Blinded by Sight: Divining the Future of Anthropology in Africa. *Afrikaspectrum*, *47*(2-3), 63-92. https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971204702-304

Nyoni, J. (2019). Decolonising the higher education curriculum : an analysis of African intellectual readiness to break the chains of a colonial caged mentality. *Transformation in Higher Education*, *4*(1), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.4102/the.v4i0.69

Obasi, C. (2022). Black social workers: Identity, racism, invisibility/hypervisibility at work. *Journal of social work : JSW*, *22*(2), 479-497. https://doi.org/10.1177/14680173211008110

Obholzer, A., & Roberts, V. Z. (1994). *The Unconscious at work : individual and organizational stress in the human services*. Routledge.

Offermann, L. R., Basford, T. E., Graebner, R., Jaffer, S., Graaf, S. B. D., & Kaminsky, S. E. (2014). See No Evil: Color Blindness and Perceptions of Subtle Racial Discrimination in the Workplace. *Cultural diversity & ethnic minority psychology*, *20*(4), 499-507. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037237

Okello, W. K. (2023). "Look a Negro!": self-authorship, self-definition, and the wake of anti-blackness. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2023.2178684

Olmos-Vega, F. M., Stalmeijer, R. E., Varpio, L., & Kahlke, R. (2023). A practical guide to reflexivity in qualitative research: AMEE Guide No. 149. *Medical teacher*, *45*(3), 241-251. https://doi.org/10.1080/0142159X.2022.2057287

Ombagi, E. (2016). Notes on the Nation: A Conversation with Sara Ahmed's Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality, The Cultural Politics of Emotion and Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others. *Agenda (Durban)*, *30*(2), 147-152. https://doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2016.1218124

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (2014). *Racial Formation in the United States* (Third edition. ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203076804

Osha, S. (2014). *African Postcolonial Modernity Informal Subjectivities and the Democratic Consensus* (1st 2014. ed.). Palgrave Macmillan US. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137446930

Oyedemi, T. D. (2021). Postcolonial casualties: 'Born-frees' and decolonisation in South Africa. *Journal of contemporary African studies*, *39*(2), 214-229. https://doi.org/10.1080/02589001.2020.1864305

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods, 2nd ed*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Penketh, L., & Lavalette, M. (2014). *Race, racism and social work : contemporary issues and debates*. Policy Press.

Perez Murcia, L. E. (2019). 'The sweet memories of home have gone': displaced people searching for home in a liminal space. *Journal of ethnic and migration studies*, *45*(9), 1515-1531. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1491299

Pham, D., & Gothberg, J. (2020). Autoethnography as a Decolonizing Methodology: Reflections on Masta's What the Grandfathers Taught Me. *Qualitative report*, *25*(11), 4094-4103. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4362

Piper-Mandy, E., & Rowe, T. D. (2010). Educating African-Centered Psychologists: Towards a Comprehensive Paradigm. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *3*(8), 5-23.

Powell, D. R. (2018). Race, African Americans, and Psychoanalysis: Collective Silence in the Therapeutic Conversation. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, *66*(6), 1021-1049. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003065118818447

Połońska-Kimunguyi, E. (2022). Echoes of Empire: racism and historical amnesia in the British media coverage of migration. *Humanities & social sciences communications*, *9*(1), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-021-01020-4

Pérez Huber, L., Robles, G., & Solórzano, D. G. (2023). "Life was brought back into my body": a critical race feminista analysis of racial microaffirmations. *Race, ethnicity and education*, *ahead-of-print*(ahead-of-print), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2023.2165514

Pérez Huber, L., & Solorzano, D. G. (2015). Racial microaggressions as a tool for critical race research. *Race, ethnicity and education*, *18*(3), 297-320. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2014.994173

Quah, S. E. L. (2020). Navigating Emotions at the Site of Racism: Feminist Rage, Queer Pessimism and Fire Dragon Feminism. *Australian feminist studies*, *35*(105), 203-216. https://doi.org/10.1080/08164649.2020.1830703

Quijano, A. (2007). COLONIALITY AND MODERNITY/RATIONALITY. *Cultural studies (London, England)*, *21*(2-3), 168-178. https://doi.org/10.1080/09502380601164353

Quijano, A., & Ennis, M. (2000). Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America. *Nepantla*, *1*(3), 533-580.

Rabelo, V. C., Robotham, K. J., & McCluney, C. L. (2021). “Against a sharp white background”: How Black women experience the white gaze at work. *Gender, work, and organization*, *28*(5), 1840-1858. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12564

Reid, W., & Maclean, S. (2021). *Outlanders : hidden narratives from social workers of colour (from black and other global majority communities)*. Kirwin Maclean Associates Ltd.

Riggs, D. W., & Augoustinos, M. (2005). The psychic life of colonial power: racialised subjectivities, bodies and methods. *Journal of community & applied social psychology*, *15*(6), 461-477. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.838

Riley, R. W. (1996). Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.). Handbook Of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994. *Journal of leisure research*, *28*, 132-134.

Rosiek, J. L., Snyder, J., & Pratt, S. L. (2020). The New Materialisms and Indigenous Theories of Non-Human Agency: Making the Case for Respectful Anti-Colonial Engagement. *Qualitative inquiry*, *26*(3-4), 331-346. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419830135

Rowe, S., Baldry, E., & Earles, W. (2015). Decolonising Social Work Research: Learning from Critical Indigenous Approaches. *Australian social work*, *68*(3), 296-308. https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2015.1024264

Ruokonen-Engler, M.-K., & Siouti, I. (2016). Biographical Entanglements, Self-Reflexivity, and Transnational Knowledge Production. *Qualitative inquiry*, *22*(9), 745-752. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800416658071

Said, G. (2018). READING FRANTZ FANON'S THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH (1965) AS A SOCIAL DRAMA PERFORMANCE. *Sinestesieonline*(22), 11-19. https://doi.org/10.14273/unisa-1058

Samuel Ojo Oloruntoba, A. A. O. Y.-H. (2020). *Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Development in Africa*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34304-0

Santos, B. d. S. (2018). *The end of the cognitive empire : the coming of age of epistemologies of the South*. Duke University Press.

Scott, D. (2010). Fanon's Muscles. In. NYU Press. https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9780814740941.003.0002

Seehawer, M. K. (2018). Decolonising research in a Sub-Saharan African context: exploring Ubuntu as a foundation for research methodology, ethics and agenda. *International journal of social research methodology*, *21*(4), 453-466. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2018.1432404

Seunghyun, S. (2017). Bridging Epidermalization of Black Inferiority and the Racial Epidermal Schema: Internalizing Oppression to the Level of Possibilities. *DiGeSt: Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, *4*(1), 49-61. https://doi.org/10.11116/digest.4.1.3

Shain, F. (2020). Race matters: confronting the legacy of empire and colonialism. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *41*(2), 272-280. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2020.1717104

Sheehi, L. (2020). The Reality Principle: Fanonian Undoing, Unlearning, and Decentering: A Discussion of "Fanon's Vision of Embodied Racism for Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice". *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, *30*(3), 325-330. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2020.1744972

Sheils, B., & Walsh, J. (2017). Dr Fanon on Colonial Narcissism and Anti-Colonial Melancholia. In (pp. 185-210). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63829-4_8

Shellae Versey, H., Cogburn, C. C., Wilkins, C. L., & Joseph, N. (2019). Appropriated racial oppression: Implications for mental health in Whites and Blacks. *Social science & medicine (1982)*, *230*, 295-302. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2019.03.014

Silva, J. M., Fernández, J. S., & Nguyen, A. (2022). "And now we resist": Three testimonios on the importance of decoloniality within psychology. *Journal of social issues*, *78*(2), 388-412. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12449

Singh, S. (2019). What do we know the experiences and outcomes of anti-racist social work education? An empirical case study evidencing contested engagement and transformative learning. *Social work education*, *38*(5), 631-653. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2019.1592148

Smith, L., & Mak, C. (2022). The Trajectory of Awareness: A Tool to Dismantle Anti-Black Racism in Social Work Education. *Journal of teaching in social work*, *42*(2-3), 120-141. https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2022.2048337

Smith, L. L. (2022). Speaking the Unspoken: Understanding Internalized Racial Oppression from the Perspective of Black Women Psychotherapists. *Smith College studies in social work*, *92*(1), 48-72. https://doi.org/10.1080/00377317.2022.2026855

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies : research and indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). Zed Books.

Smith, L. T. (2021a). *Decolonizing methodologies : research and indigenous peoples* (Third edition. ed.). Zed Books. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350225282

Smith, L. T. (2021b). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books.

Solms, M. (2021). A Revision of Freud's Theory of the Biological Origin of the Oedipus Complex. *The Psychoanalytic quarterly*, *90*(4), 555-581. https://doi.org/10.1080/00332828.2021.1984153

Solorzano, D., Ceja, M., & Yosso, T. (2000). Critical Race Theory, Racial Microaggressions, and Campus Racial Climate: The Experiences of African American College Students. *The Journal of Negro education*, *69*(1/2), 60-73.

Solorzano, D. G., & Bernal, D. D. (2001). Examining Transformational Resistance Through a Critical Race and Latcrit Theory Framework: Chicana and Chicano Students in an Urban Context. *Urban education (Beverly Hills, Calif.)*, *36*(3), 308-342. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085901363002

Solorzano, D. G., Huber, L. P., & Huber-Verjan, L. (2020). Theorizing Racial Microaffirmations as a Response to Racial Microaggressions: Counterstories Across Three Generations of Critical Race Scholars. *Seattle journal for social justice*, *18*(2), 185.

Spanierman, L. B., Clark, D. A., & Kim, Y. (2021). Reviewing Racial Microaggressions Research: Documenting Targets' Experiences, Harmful Sequelae, and Resistance Strategies. *Perspectives on psychological science*, *16*(5), 1037-1059. https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916211019944

Speight, S. L. (2007). Internalized Racism: One More Piece of the Puzzle. *The Counseling psychologist*, *35*(1), 126-134. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006295119

Srivastava, N. (2010). Towards a critique of colonial violence: Fanon, Gandhi and the restoration of agency. *Journal of postcolonial writing*, *46*(3-4), 303-319. https://doi.org/10.1080/17449855.2010.482382

Stam, R. (1997). Permutations of the Fanonian Gaze: Isaac Julien's "Black Skin, White Mask". In (Vol. 1, pp. 186-186). New York: Institute of African American Affairs.

Stanton, B. (2018). Musicking in the Borders toward Decolonizing Methodologies. *Philosophy of music education review*, *26*(1), 4-23. https://doi.org/10.2979/philmusieducrevi.26.1.02

Steiner, J. (1993). *Psychic retreats : pathological organizations in psychotic, neurotic, and borderline patients*. Routledge.

Steiner, J. (2003). *Psychic Retreats: Pathological Organizations in Psychotic, Neurotic and Borderline Patients*. Taylor and Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203359839

Stephens, M. (2018). Skin, stain and lamella: Fanon, Lacan, and inter-racializing the gaze. *Psychoanalysis, culture & society*, *23*(3), 310-329. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41282-018-0104-1

Stevens, G., Duncan, N., & Hook, D. (2013). *Race, Memory and the Apartheid Archive: Towards a Transformative Psychosocial Praxis* (1 ed.). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137263902

Stevens, G., & Sonn, C. C. (2021). Africa's Knowledge Archives, Black Consciousness and Reimagining Community Psychology. In (pp. 21-38). Springer International Publishing AG. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-72220-3_2

Strega, S., & Brown, L. A. (2015). *Research as resistance : revisiting critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches* (Second edition. ed.). Canadian Scholars' Press.

Stromquist, N. P. (2014). Freire, literacy and emancipatory gender learning. *International review of education*, *60*(4), 545-558. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-014-9424-2

Sue, D. W. (2004). Whiteness and ethnocentric monoculturalism: making the "invisible" visible. *The American psychologist*, *59*(8), 761-769. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.8.761

Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming Racial Microaggressions: Microintervention Strategies for Targets, White Allies, and Bystanders. *The American psychologist*, *74*(1), 128-142. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000296

Sue, D. W., Nadal, K. L., Capodilupo, C. M., Lin, A. I., Torino, G. C., & Rivera, D. P. (2008). Racial Microaggressions Against Black Americans: Implications for Counseling. *Journal of counseling and development*, *86*(3), 330-338. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2008.tb00517.x

Sue, D. W., & Spanierman, L. B. (2020). *Microaggressions in everyday life, 2nd ed*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sullivan, S. (2014). *Good white people : the problem with middle-class white anti-racism*. SUNY Press.

Swartz, S. (2018). Counter-Recognition in Decolonial Struggle. *Psychoanalytic dialogues*, *28*(5), 520-527. https://doi.org/10.1080/10481885.2018.1506227

Swartz, S. (2019). A Mingling of Ghosts: A Response to Daniel Butler's "Racialized Bodies and the Violence of the Setting". *Studies in gender and sexuality*, *20*(3), 165-170. https://doi.org/10.1080/15240657.2019.1641941

Sykes, K. (2002). The Gift of Shame: The Invention of Postcolonial Society [research-article]. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, *46*(1), 12-25.

Tedam, P. (2014). When Failing doesn't Matter: A Narrative Inquiry into the Social Work Practice Learning Experiences of Black African Students in England. *International journal of higher education*, *3*(1). https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v3n1p136

Tedam, P. (2015). *Black African Students' Experiences of Social Work Practice Learning in England : a Critical Race Inquiry* ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].

Tedam, P. (2021). To Shield or Not to Shield? There Should Be No Question—Black African Social Workers Experiences during COVID-19 in England. *The British journal of social work*, *51*(5), 1720-1738. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcab107

Tedam, P., & Cane, T. (2022). "We started talking about race and racism after George Floyd": insights from research into practitioner preparedness for anti-racist social work practice in England. *Critical and radical social work*, *10*(2), 260-279. https://doi.org/10.1332/204986022X16547711540394

Tembo, J. (2022). Do African postcolonial theories need an epistemic decolonial turn? *Postcolonial studies*, *25*(1), 35-53. https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2022.2030582

Thambinathan, V., & Kinsella, E. A. (2021). Decolonizing Methodologies in Qualitative Research: Creating Spaces for Transformative Praxis. *International journal of qualitative methods*, *20*, 160940692110147. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069211014766

The experience of the skin in early object-relations. (1988). In (pp. 195-200). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203358832-21

Timimi, S. B. (1996). RACE AND COLOUR IN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REALITY. *British journal of psychotherapy*, *13*(2), 183-192. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1752-0118.1996.tb00875.x

Tinarwo, M. T. (2017). Discrimination as experienced by overseas social workers employed within the British Welfare State. *International social work*, *60*(3), 707-719. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872814562480

Tlostanova, M., Thapar-Björkert, S., & Koobak, R. (2016). Border thinking and disidentification: Postcolonial and postsocialist feminist dialogues. *Feminist theory*, *17*(2), 211-228. https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700116645878

Torres-Harding, S. R., Andrade, A. L., & Romero Diaz, C. E. (2012). The Racial Microaggressions Scale (RMAS): A New Scale to Measure Experiences of Racial Microaggressions in People of Color. *Cultural diversity & ethnic minority psychology*, *18*(2), 153-164. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027658

Trainor, L. R., & Bundon, A. (2021). Developing the craft: reflexive accounts of doing reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative research in sport, exercise and health*, *13*(5), 705-726. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2020.1840423

Tusasiirwe, S. (2023). Disrupting colonisation in the social work classroom: using the Obuntu/Ubuntu framework to decolonise the curriculum. *Social work education*, 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2023.2246499

Vaditya, V. (2018). Social Domination and Epistemic Marginalisation: towards Methodology of the Oppressed. *Social epistemology*, *32*(4), 272-285. https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2018.1444111

Vargas, M. E. (2020). Ghostly Others: Limiting Constructions of Deserving Subjects in Asylum Claims and Sanctuary Protection. *Journal of international women's studies*, *21*(7), 77-90.

Verges, F. (1997). Creole Skin, Black Mask: Fanon and Disavowal. *Critical inquiry*, *23*(3), 578-595. https://doi.org/10.1086/448844

Vorster, J., Du Rand, J. A., & Vorster, N. (2017). *Togetherness in South Africa Religious perspectives on racism, xenophobia and economic inequality*. AOSIS.

Wachs, L., & Laura Frances, C. (2013). Explaining the Failure of an Obesity Intervention: Combining Bourdieu's Symbolic Violence and the Foucault's Microphysics of Power to Reconsider State Interventions. *Sociology of sport journal*, *30*(2), 111-131. https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.30.2.111

Wai, Z. (2020). Resurrecting Mudimbe. *International politics reviews*, *8*(1), 57-78. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41312-020-00075-w

Wainwright, J. (2009). Racism, anti-racist practice and social work: articulating the teaching and learning experiences of Black social workers. *Race, ethnicity and education*, *12*(4), 495-516. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320903364465

Walter, M. (2011). I AM WHERE I THINK: Remapping the Order of Knowing. In (pp. 159). Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv11316bq.10

Warren, K., Franklin, C., & Streeter, C. L. (1998). New Directions in Systems Theory: Chaos and Complexity. *Social work (New York)*, *43*(4), 357-372. https://doi.org/10.1093/sw/43.4.357

Weinberg, M. (2022). The Supremacy of Whiteness in Social Work Ethics. *Ethics and social welfare*, *16*(4), 347-363. https://doi.org/10.1080/17496535.2022.2058579

Weinberg, M., & Fine, M. (2022). Racisms and microaggressions in social work: the experience of racialized practitioners in Canada. *Journal of ethnic & cultural diversity in social work*, *31*(2), 96-107. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2020.1839614

Welbourne, P., Harrison, G., & Ford, D. (2007). Social work in the UK and the global labour market: Recruitment, practice and ethical considerations. *International social work*, *50*(1), 27-40. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872807071480

Werkmeister Rozas, L. (2022). Coloniality of power, critical realism and critical consciousness: the three "C" framework. *Journal of ethnic & cultural diversity in social work*, *31*(3-5), 162-172. https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2022.2070890

Whaley, A. L. (2016). Identity Conflict in African Americans during Late Adolescence and Young Adulthood: Double Consciousness, Multicultural, and Africentric Perspectives. *The Journal of Pan African studies*, *9*(7), 106-131.

White, K. P. (2002). Surviving Hating and Being Hated: Some Personal Thoughts about Racism from a Psychoanalytic Perspective. *Contemporary psychoanalysis*, *38*(3), 401-422. https://doi.org/10.1080/00107530.2002.10747173

Whitney, S. (2018). Affective Intentionality and Affective Injustice: Merleau-Ponty and Fanon on the Body Schema as a Theory of Affect. *The Southern journal of philosophy*, *56*(4), 488-515. https://doi.org/10.1111/sjp.12307

Whitsett, D. P., & Whitsett, D. A. (1996). Anti-Black Racism and Its Consequences: A Self Psychology/Object Relations Perspective [Review]. *Psychoanalytic Social Work*, *3C*(4), 61-81.

Wiegmann, W. L. (2017). Habitus, Symbolic Violence, and Reflexivity: Applying Bourdieu's Theories to Social Work. *Journal of sociology and social welfare*, *44*(4), 95. https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.3815

Williams, C. (2020). Politics, preoccupations, pragmatics: a race/ethnicity redux for social work research. *European journal of social work*, *23*(6), 1057-1068. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2020.1751590

Williams, M. T. (2020). Microaggressions: Clarification, Evidence, and Impact. *Perspectives on psychological science*, *15*(1), 3-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691619827499

Willis, J. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research : interpretive and critical approaches*. SAGE.

Willis, M. E. H. (2023). Critical realism and qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *20*(2), 265-288. https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2022.2157782

Wiltshire, G., & Ronkainen, N. (2021). A realist approach to thematic analysis: making sense of qualitative data through experiential, inferential and dispositional themes. *Journal of critical realism*, *20*(2), 159-180. https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2021.1894909

Winnicott, D. W. (1965). *The maturational processes and the facilitating environment ; studies in the theory of emotional development*. Hogarth.

Winnicott, D. W. (1984). *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development* (1 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429482410

Wong, G., Derthick, A. O., David, E. J. R., Saw, A., & Okazaki, S. (2013). The What, the Why, and the How: A Review of Racial Microaggressions Research in Psychology. *Race and social problems*, *6*(2), 181-200. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12552-013-9107-9

Wong, R., & Jones, T. (2018). Students' Experiences of Microaggressions in an Urban MSW Program. *Journal of social work education*, *54*(4), 679-695. https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2018.1486253

Woods, T. A. (2006). *Racial socialization, racial identity, and achievement in the context of perceived discrimination: Understanding the development of African American middle school youth* ProQuest Dissertations Publishing].

Wright, S. (2018). When dialogue means refusal. *Dialogues in human geography*, *8*(2), 128-132. https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820618780570

Yashadhana, A., Fields, T., Burnett, A., & Zwi, A. B. (2021). Re-examining the gap: A critical realist analysis of eye health inequity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. *Social science & medicine (1982)*, *284*, 114230-114230. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.114230

Zevnik, A. (2017). Postracial Society as Social Fantasy: Black Communities Trapped Between Racism and a Struggle for Political Recognition: Postracial Society as Social Fantasy. *Political psychology*, *38*(4), 621-635. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12430

Zhang, T. (2023). Critical Realism: A Critical Evaluation. *Social epistemology*, *37*(1), 15-29. https://doi.org/10.1080/02691728.2022.2080127

Appendix

Appendix; Ethical approval for the research project

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement
Directorate of Education & Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA

Tel: 020 8938 2699
Fax: 020 7447 3837

Mary Francis

By Email

21 January 2022

Dear Mary,

Re: Trust Research Ethics Application

Title: What does conversations with Black social workers tell us about their experiences of racial microaggressions, and how can this inform the profession of social work/ and or employing organisations?

I am pleased to inform you that subject to formal ratification by the Trust Research Ethics Committee your application has been approved. This means you can proceed with your research.

Please note that any changes to the project design including changes to methodology/data collection etc, must be referred to TREC as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.

If you have any further questions or require any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this communication to your supervisor.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Paru Jeram
Secretary to the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee
T: 020 938 2699
E: academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk

Appendix 1: Participants consent form.

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Consent to Participate in an Experimental Programme Involving the Use of Human Participants

Research main question:

What does conversations with Black social workers tell us about their experiences of racial microaggressions, and how can this inform the profession of social work/ and or employing organisations?

I have the read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research in which I have been asked to participate and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what it being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the experimental programme has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS) …….

Participant's Signature …….

Investigator's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS) ……..

Investigator's Signature ……

Date: …….

Appendix 2: Participants information sheet

The Tavistock and Portman NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

If you have any queries regarding the conduct of the programme in which you are being asked to participate, please contact:

Paru Jeram, Trust Quality Assurance Officer pjeram@tavi-port.nhs.uk

The Researcher

Mary Francis

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the information that you need to consider in deciding whether to participate in this study.

Research question:

"*What does conversations with Black social workers tell us about their experiences of racial microaggressions, and how can this inform the profession of social work/ and or employing organisations"?*

Project Description

This Doctoral research project is interested in experiences of racial microaggressions on Black African social workers, to understand how having this identity may influence one's perceptions of and responses to racial microaggressions. The focus on racial microaggressions is on the basis that in many cases, bias and discrimination go unchallenged because the behaviour and words are disguised in ways that provide cover for their expression and or the belief that they are harmless and insignificant. Using a narrative approach, this project aims to examine these microaggressions, with a view to prepare for the most effective ways to combat and handle racial microaggressions when they occur.

Participant recruitment method

Electronic mail list will be used to request research participation from the targeted group. Please rest assured that mailing will not be sent out to you until ethical approval has been received from the organisation sponsoring this research project. I also want to assure you that email requests for research participation will not disclose to participants the individual identities of other recipients. This means that all emails sent to you will be entered into the 'Bcc' email field, rather than the 'To' field.

Contribution required as participants.

Black African social workers employed in a named local authority will be invited to participate in one focus group and two individual interviews.

For the focus group, this will be based on Frank Lowe's (2014) 'Thinking Space' model, the aim being to provide participants with a safe space aimed at promoting self-expression for participants. The approach adopted for the focus group is with a view to give permission for the unacceptable experiences to be voiced, hence bringing the emotional conflict, into the open for thought and exploration.

For the individual interviews, participants will be asked to take part in two interviews, using open-ended questions. Approach to individual interviews will be based on free association narrative interviews method (FANI). I am happy to provide more information on the FANI method.

Explanation of what participants will be asked to do.

In the context of my proposed research, focus group will be utilised for 'surfacing' and working with related racial microaggressions materials, and other related issues sitting at the back of 'front of mind', and which directly consumes our cognitive and emotional energy. It is hoped that by

providing safe space for social workers with similar ethnic identity, this will enable conversations geared towards examining the exclusionary effect of whiteness, and to subvert it through the incorporation of their own indigenous knowledge.

Approach to individual interviews will be based on free association narrative interviews method (FANI), as laid down by Holloway and Jefferson (2000). I will conduct two interviews using open-ended questions, with a hope to elicit stories from participants regarding their experiences of racial microaggression. Following the principles of free association narrative method, participants will be asked to say whatever comes to their minds in relation to the subject of discussion.

Description of hazard/risk associated with taking part in the research.

I recognise that by conducting small-scale research in a setting where you as participants may know each other, this will add on another layer of complexity. This is because there is a risk that despite all efforts towards ensuring the anonymity of you as participants, it may be difficult to eliminate the risk that none of you will not be readily identifiable. I fully acknowledge this risk, which is why I am fully open and honest about it, to ensure that if you take the decision to take part in the project- and I hope you do- this is a decision you have taken being fully aware of some of the risks involved. For added reassurance, please remember that participation voluntary, and you have a right to withdraw at any time.

I am also aware that by asking you as participants to narrate your experiences of racial microaggressions, this will undoubtfully provoke pain and distress, as you relive your past experiences of this. However, I hope you feel reassured in the knowledge that based on the concepts of the ethics of researching psychosocial subjects (Holloway and Jefferson, 2013), the emphasis is not so much on avoidance of harm, but on my responsibility as the researcher for creating a safe context, in which issues of honesty, sympathy and respect are central. I am happy to discuss this further if required.

Description of any aftercare which might be required.

To support participants, firstly, as a qualified social worker, the training for this and the experience gained as practicing practitioner already puts me at a good position to respond to emotionally charged situations, as well as being able to stay with participants at the conclusion of an interview so as to contain their reactions and recommend further support if needed. Speaking from my experience of facilitating reflective safe spaces, I have found that it is always needful to provide some time at the end of the session, to 'check-in' with everyone. This often involves making myself available for a 1:1 chat with anyone who might need to de-brief after the session, or to discuss further support that the person might need and how to access this. I will take the same approach to current research process.

Confidentiality of the Data

To protect your identity as participants, participants will be pseudo-anonymised in a publication that will arise from the research. This means that myself as the researcher, I will endeavour to remove or alter details that would identify the participant. However, please be aware that because of the small

sample size in current research project, there is a distinct limitation in the level of anonymity that participants can be afforded.

To protect the confidentiality of data, research data, codes and all identifying information will be kept in separate locked filing cabinets. This will only be stored in the University of Essex OneDrive system and no other cloud storage location. Access to computer files will only be available to research team by password only.

Once the research programme has been completed, all electronic and hard copy data will undergo secure disposal.

Remuneration

There are no payments being offered to participants to take place in the research project.

Disclaimer

You are not obliged to take part in this study and are free to withdraw at any time during tests. Should you choose to withdraw from the programme you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and without any obligation to give a reason.

Appendix 3: Interview schedule

Introduction and consent

- Participants will be provided with another copy of the Participant Information Sheet and the researcher will introduce herself to the participant and the research project aims and purpose will be explained.
- Participants will be given a copy of the Consent Form. The researcher will then go through the consent form, highlighting all the issues before requesting they sign - if they are happy to proceed.

Preamble

'I am interested in finding out about your day to day lived experience of racial microaggressions. I would particularly like to hear in your own words how being a Black African social worker influences your perceptions of and responses to racial microaggressions- You may find that at times the discussion feels more like a conversation than an interview'.

1: Making sense of racial microaggressions

Would you like to begin by telling me about your immigration journey and how long you have been in this country?

(Can you) tell me about when you first experienced racism and how you made sense of that (Prompt for details)

Possible Prompts
Can you tell me how racism has impacted your life?

Racial microaggressions are usually hidden and subtle; Can you tell me of your experiences of this kind of hidden racism?

How did you cope?

2: understanding organisational responses to racial microaggressions
(Can you tell me) your experiences of racial microaggression as a Black African social worker working for Hertfordshire County Council? What was your response? Did you notify anyone of this? Did you feel supported?

Possible Prompts
What have been your experiences as a Black Social Worker working in an affluent local authority whose citizens are mostly White British?

When the word 'White privilege' is mentioned, what comes to your mind?

What can ethnic minority social workers do to decentre and decolonise the organisations and systems in which they are located?

Ending -Conclusion - We have talked quite a lot about your experiences of racial microaggressions…

• **Additional information:** Is there anything else you would like to say or add?

• **Omissions:** Is there anything else that I did not ask which you expected me to raise?

• **Reflection on interview process:** Would you like to comment on how this interview process has been for you?

• **Confirmation of Consent:** Is there anything you have told me in this interview that you do not want me to use in the analysis?

Second interview: Are you still happy to take part in a second interview to expand on some of the things we have been talking about today?

'Thank you for taking part in this research. All of the information you have shared will be treated with respect and will be remain confidential as explained in the information sheet'.

Appendix 4: microaggressions at a 'glance'

Table 1 and 2 shows this study's findings of microaggressions based on the racial microaggression taxonomy developed by Sue and colleagues (2007)

Table 1

Taxonomy of racial microaggressions (Sue et al., 2007)			
	Examples	Number of participants	Number of references made
Microassults	Tia: I've equally had an encounter with an elderly person that I went to visit in the midst of crisis who told me not to sit. And gave me straight up blunt. People like you cannot sit on my chair.	7	21
Microinsult	Ivy: All of a sudden when you come here, people start pinpointing things how your hair looks different, how you've got an accent and they start imposing their own views about how you might have grown up, you know, maybe living with the animals, Because of what they believed Africa to be.	6	24
Microinvalidation	Amanda: You realize in a workplace you are all treated differently; Black people, I have seen my colleagues, how they've been treated. Some of them you are in a team. You come in, no one want to talk to you. You look around the black member of staff who's new, another one comes in and you'll find the attitude is pretty much the same; but when a new white person comes in, even the management, I've noticed they become much more, how would I put it? A White member of staff, a white British comes in, the team is like all the arms are open, you get a very, very good welcome. A black member of staff comes in. You don't get the same welcome. You find is that there's a job here for you to do, but the welcome is not there, the support is different.	7	26

Table 2; categories of microaggressions with distinct themes, based on the categories developed by Sue and Colleagues (2007)

Name	Description	Files	References
Categories of microaggressions with distinct themes (Sue and Colleagues, 2007)	Examples	Number of participants	Number of references made on each theme
Alien in one's land	Amanda: In her learning agreement, she wrote there that we are different. That's age. Nationality. I was not born here. What she meant by nationality is I was born in xx. She is born here. So, she's from here. But meanwhile, I gave her a British passport to photocopy during my interview, so she sees herself as a white person, indirectly.	6	7
Ascription of intelligence	Ivy: We know this that when you've got an accent. Already they think differently of you. Whether they think they're not intelligent or not because you know, I mean, when you compare maybe in African accent and somebody who's speaking in a more British way, maybe already you can make a judgement about someone just based on that.	6	13
Colour blindness	Amal: You could see people with dyslexia and all of that, they know the whole system is there for them. Then when you are foreigner and learning a new language, you are just thinking who is going to help him with that? It's your own struggle. You've got to deal with it. That's one of noticed.	3	8
Criminal assumption	Kawa: You, the black man, you walk into a shop. When they will think that you're there to steal. Even where you have Black people as security men working in the store. They see their fellow black person…	3	5
Denial of individual racism		0	0

Name	Description	Files	References
Environmental invalidation	Kay: Equal opportunity in work is, I don't still feel might not have enough to say on that. Well, I don't see that equal opportunity is being promoted in this organization as I would expect it to be promoted. I remember when I first came in into social work, when we were being addressed, I don't know who addressed us, but we were told in class that ohh you from black minority. The BAME, there are certain position you cannot get into. It was said openly. I think we're trying to move the bar upwards to give more opportunity to black minority, but. Sadly, there's still limits to where you can get to. That in itself is demoralizing.	5	16
Myth of meritocracy	Tia: Like I said in my other interview, unfortunately for us, being ethnic minorities, no matter how beautiful you paint it, you have to work twice, even three times more than the average white person. The fact that it is still not being recognized and being dealt with, is the issue here. Because we still see ourselves like we have to please, please, please. I don't know where it's coming from, maybe the historical, this thing of slavery and all that. Maybe it might have, but it shouldn't be it.	6	23
Pathologising culture and communication style	Amal: You be sitting in a group of British who are making jokes and some things you think this is no joke or they realize, you know, not getting it. And if you're not getting it, they find you. It's like, you know, stupid or something and which they don't realize. Cultural.	4	11
Second-class citizen	Kay: So, when I got to the van, I was freeze almost. I was very close to freezing to death. So, when we got to the van, it was only when white lady that said. Is freezing. Let him have something on because I was not even having any. Only just one short T shirt. So, when we got to the deportation camp. It was tough. So, all these things started coming. All this bullying and harassment, you	7	24

Name	Description	Files	References
	know, being black. Why did you come here? What do want here? So, this is when I started having that heat. The realisation that I could be anywhere in this world, that my skin could put me into problem. That I would not be seen as human being.		

Appendix 5; an example of questions posed onto Ivy's data based on research questions.

1. What does data tell me about participants racial socialisation?

   Socialised with huge white presence in xxx
   socialised to know that white people are privileged.
   -spaces of affluence filled with white people and black people made to feel out of place when they venture in those spaces in their own country

   racism being recognised only when its direct? or is it perhaps confusion with racism definition? Are people defining racism the same way? What is considered racism?
   -I never really. felt racism against me because I was a majority.
   -I still feel that I haven't experienced racism in xxx because there was nothing directly that ever happened to me by a white person

   longevity of racism in the African context is due to structures laid in past generations and these continues to find means to be sustained- what is it that sustains these structures?
   -when you look at the history of a lot of African countries, there are some structures in place, in terms of them colonizing and having access to land and wealth of the country. So Maybe I could say that there was a disadvantage in some way to being a black person. considered racism to be in her parent's time when it was direct.
   -structures which existed in her parents' time continue to be in place to maintain the racism laid ; But I do reflect and see that there is probably some structures in place that disadvantaged black people

   The unspoken, invisible gate keepers/ segregation between white and black people due to colonial structures that ensures white privilege means that racism exist in the structures yet not understood or recognised by those affected.
   -it's quite difficult because those places, it wasn't exactly like there was a sign saying black people can't go. It was almost unspoken that if you did go, people would look at you like (indicated with body language surprise/ uncomfortable/ disgust) You know, so that's sort of thing. So it was unspoken so. To be honest, I think we just never bothered to go there.
   - I never noticed a difference. Maybe it's because it was only one kid in the class. I can't remember observing any preferential treatment, but I do know that there's always that. I do know that there's always that way, way people behave in Africa towards white people like you know.

   Socialised to notice class difference between herself and white people.

knowledge of racism that was ‘back of head, ‘heard’ from conversation from parents- not active knowledge, and not knowledge passed on intentionally to achieve something).

Racial socialisation as knowledge, as opposed to having an awareness of it.

Awareness of racism not activated until in UK setting.

normalisation’ of racism in Africa
-Racism in African context was not ‘named’ as such, rather it was more like common-sense knowledge, the doxology and therefore existed as ‘norm’ without being called out for what it was

2. Where is the evidence from data to indicate internalised racism?

Internalised feelings of embarrassment on people’s perception of what Africa is like unbalanced media coverage of Africa in western settings and link to feeling embarrassed of where she is from

identity change due to these new internalised feelings of difference.
-her identity changed from being a happy kid enjoying school, to being a black African child- so all of a sudden, she is burdened with thoughts that were never present when in xxx, she is no longer the carefree kid enjoying school, she now has the added burden of carrying what others are projecting to her based on their assumption of what her life was in Africa

covering to avoid the gaze from white people/ giving up the natural for the artificial to fit in the crowd, reduce the high visibility, reduce the difference.
- the need to think too much about hair
- change of attitude towards my hair because I’m in white environment (keeping hair in a certain way to suit white environment rather than out of personal choice).

negative racial public regard – extent to which individual feels that others view African positively or negatively.
- placement was only a short one in the 30 days, and my practice teacher was white, British female. You always felt that powerlessness that if she doesn't like me because I'm black, you know, African. Maybe because I've got an accent you'd always feel like if she doesn't like me, then she could fail me.

3. What does data tell me about experiences of racial microaggressions for participants who may not have experienced this in their home country and are experiencing this for the first time in a new setting?

acute awareness of being different due to being the only black person- standing out in a room, high visibility
- grew up with a huge presence of white people in xxx, yet her difference was not visible to her until she went from being in a school filled with black children to in a class where I'm the only black person

Accents become discernible in this setting didn't know herself to have accent while in xxx
- when in xxx I didn't think I've got an accent but all of a sudden when you come here, people start pinpointing things how your hair looks different, how you've got an accent and they start imposing their own views about how you might have grown up

projection by people based on negative image of Africa.

- feeling different due to other people's imposition on you
- awareness of difference because of what others projected towards me by other people Because of what they believed Africa to be

being in majority white environment makes you to start thinking and feeling…
-The end to the carefree kid enjoying school for Ivy ended when she got to UK. She was no longer a kid in school, she is this black African child.

Racism even in UK setting not felt due to being surrounded with other African people.
-the location and setting determined the extent to which awareness of racism will be experienced
- I feel like when we first moved to xxx that we were living, there wasn't many black people until a few years later. So, most of the times it might work place at my school, I would be the only black person, so I was just aware of it, just with the fact that I'm minority. in my workplaces and maybe at some point I went into support work, and I was working with other African people, so I never felt. Like all this racism here because I was working with people who are different as well, people who look like me. So, it dependent on the setting.

the higher the stakes and when competition is at the same level with white people, the more pronounced the racism.
-Started seeing racism at university setting, even though the class was diverse; so, it was not an issue of being the minority as blacks in that setting, it's something else. Maybe earlier on at job setting, this was care job, and people are saying that there are jobs black people are likely to be found, probably those which white people don't want to hold- so now, you go to university, high education, and the stakes are different here- I think the law of the jungle kicks in, the competition for scarce resources kicks in- so when both blacks and white people are now in the same fields competing for these resources or life opportunities, that's when racism becomes more pronounced

The fatigue due constant need for internal dialogues to assess whether situations are racial or not.

4. What does data tell me about recognition of racial microaggressions?

lack of recognition of racial microaggression because it's hidden behind people's curiosity
-But that being said I had a good experience at school. I was never bullied. I never went through all of those things. So people did have curiosity. They asked me questions but. I feel like that I had good experience it at the school, we are never bullied (what does an incident have to be for it to be recognised as racial microaggression?)-

Racism recognised when it is overt/outright incident.

the challenge of whether to classify an incident as racism or curiosity or ignorance (is it racism or curiosity or ignorance?)

the proof is in the feelings.
manifestation of racial microaggression as a feeling that lets you know that something is not right; but can't quite my finger on it

observing difference in interactions/relationships between white colleagues who were same level (ASYE

job as a common denominator yet different experience for black social workers
-If we are all doing the same job in the same organisation, what other possible explanation for the difference in experiences other than the fact that they are white, and I am black?
- Maybe because I'm black and the other person is white, they can pick and choose. We're all doing the same job, but they seem to be able to pick and choose and get out of things that me as a black person, I couldn't get out of
-I think what makes someone know that is when you look around and other colleagues seem to be having a different experience from you

difficulties in 'naming' 'unfair' experiences as racism when the racial factor is not made explicit.

its' not the words; the devil is in the quality of the relation.

5. What does data tell me about responses of racial microaggressions?

'Brushing off racism'
-responses to racism often left in the spheres of feeling bad about it, left in the person to feel bad about it, and then 'brushing this off' - most likely to as a self-preservation mechanism

Believe that nothing can be done.
-what can be done? So just move on/ brush off, don't recognise as racism for survival?)
takes time to learn the lay of the land, let alone process about what going on with racism, so some things just have to be brushed off and focus on the priorities).

internalize it and just deal it in their own way and move on

6. What does data teel me about black social workers views of social work as an anti-racist profession?

tinted view of what social work is prior to being in it
it is not what it says on the tin

- the shock about the view held on what social work is about, and the reality of it when you enter into it
- The shock in finding social work is not what I thought it was

social workers make social work not the other way round.
- social work is only as good as the social workers) social workers make social work not the other way round- I think there is an assumption that is goodness embodied in social work that somehow rubs into people and transform it, but what data is showing, people will not stop being racist just because they are social workers, but rather, they will not be racists because they are not racist people in the first place, being social workers will only solidify that

being anti-racist is not a form of knowledge passed on as part of the social work training, rather, it's an active process that requires continuous self 'striving' to 'become'.
-being anti oppressive takes striving; it takes active continuous self-work

feeling vulnerable and afraid
-all of those things you don't think about them when you're thinking about going to social work and they think about this student, but once you get in there, you kind of feel vulnerable actually. You can feel vulnerable and afraid.

Expectation for social work to model anti-racist practice for other professions not met.
- I expected that social work would be the one, should leading by example.

Eurocentric model in social work blamed for social work not meeting expectations.

No excuse as training is available.

rejection of interpersonal/ group professional identity by black social workers due to racial experiences had, and instead focusing on the intrapersonal professional identity
-faith in social work altruistic nature kept and sustained through individual practice, hence social workers are still able to sustain the humanistic aspirations that motivated them to join social work in their individual practice with service users to sustain.
-Sustaining black social workers motivation for joining social work is located in their individual practice and commitment to their individual values with clients not in social work as a profession (professional identity))
-Professional identity has two interconnected components; the interpersonal (group professional identity) which relates to the culture, knowledge, skills, values and beliefs of a profession that the individual has acquired; and the intrapersonal (personal professional identity), which considers the individual's perception of themselves in the context of their profession
-qualifying for social work for black students feels like a hurdle relay
-social work training for black social workers feels like hurdling- I hope I make it through this placement all. Thank God. I hope I make it through the next one. All thank God, you know, you know, because you would hear or talk to your other students who are having a really, really bad experience or maybe they felt something, and they have to go through something again.

7. What does data tell me of black social workers experiences in an organisation linking this to equal opportunities policies in the organisation?

   Management response:
   denying black social workers space or opportunity to be vulnerable.
   -Normalisation of vulnerability for white colleagues, but not the same for black social workers.
   -the normalisation of white workers' fallibility, but not the same for black social workers
   -difference in manager's responses and reactions to white worker's vulnerability compared to Black workers'
   - issue with black workers not seeking help from managers due to difficulties in being vulnerable with them
   - The issue is not lack of confidence or ability to say no, the issue is whether we are listed when we say no.

   the crucial importance of a 'well rounded' manager for a good experience at work

   Manager being responsive to the white family who were racist but not proving the same support to the worker involved; the voice of the family heard at the expense of the worker involved.

   Difficulties in expression of vulnerability at work due to upbringing
   The constrain on expressing vulnerability due to cultural differences in the boundaries between work and private life.

   expectation on black social workers to cope.

   The insolent disregard of propriety or courtesy of white colleagues towards black colleagues

   then when confronted, they downplay it as a joke!

   the assumption by white colleagues that black workers are an easy target.

   Inability to act due to powerlessness because of being black, but also powerlessness because of being an ASYE.

   hierarchy in treatment with experiences of those with African accents being at the bottom.
   - Those born or grew up here and have British accents having better experiences that those with African accents
   - the most devaluation, occurring for those with African accents-for example ascription of less intelligence

   the liberty others take to trespass on your private spere.

   Use of difference for example accents, for others to mask their projection of their own issues onto a black worker.

the extra ‘load’ on black workers during any verbal communications.
-may result in preference for written communication which does add the load
-assumption of ‘stability’ and ability to absorb ‘extra’ load

the efforts of black workers not deemed good enough no matter how much they try.

the question on competency and assumption of less intelligence

Being in a diverse team does not always mean better experiences for black workers.

differences in behaviour at work between white and black workers due cultural differences for example in attitudes towards work

poor job retention rates for Black social workers)
- *we chop and change, we are here, we are there, we are everywhere, We're always changing*
they are moving on because they feel that they are not their responses, or they are what they are asking for is not being granted. They are not listened to. And because they don't want to keep fighting on, it's easier for them, for their own good to Move on
- because they don't want to stay in your team too long to get involved in politics sort of thing. So. So yeah, I think that that's known that we just move on if we don't like it rather than face and confront what the issue is we just leave because the cost of staying to fight on is not worth your wellbeing.

Room for experimental learning limited due to no room for mistake for a Black worker.

Black person rendered invisible/ pushed in the background/ in the periphery once whiteness comes into the scene.
-professional viewpoint of black social workers ignored, whilst accepting the same viewpoint from a white worker

8. What does data tell me about facilitating or hindering factors in organisation in disarming microaggressions in organisations?

- Facilitating factors to disarming microaggressions

experience as a protective factor because you have options to walk away.

-with experience, you can move on

-increase in professional experience as a protective factor

Feelings of safety in supervisory relationship when the manager is Black.

Confidence that you are assessed/ judged on ‘merit’ when manager is Black.

-confidence that poor supervisory relationship is not based on racial factors when the manager is Black

peers from the same background a valuable source of support because they will understand.

George Floyd seen as a positive catalyst for racism talk and led to ongoing continued conversation in her current team.

- Hindering factors to disarming microaggressions
  unreliability of white managers as structural reinforcement for black social workers
  -realisation that you will not be backed up by white manager
  -if push came to shove, my manager would not 'step up' to have my back

  over recording due to lack of confidence in management back-up) and over-recording due to fear of losing PIN).

  the avoidance to 'explicitly' naming racism even when this is identified.

  exposing racism and discussing this left to Black people.

  racism 'explained away' by those that are not targets of racism by giving other reasons not linked to racism.

  Denial of racism

  Naming of racism not just avoided by others not experiencing racism, but those that are affected too).

  racism reported only when explicit.
  -thus, considering that majority of racial microaggressions are not visible, what does this tell us about exposing this? It means that occurrences of this type of racism will continue to thrive because it is not exposed and therefore not dealt with

  workers not reporting racism due to fear that they will not be believed, or it will be assumed that they are trying to get out of a case.

  difficulties in reporting racism because the 'burden of proof' is on the worker to provide evidence for something that is very hard to provide 'hard evidence'.

  racism is done in other ways, not directly.
  the 'gut feeling' may look silly to a white person and assumption that feeling felt is 'imagined'; *And yet, for the most part, that is all what we've got.*

  supervision framed as the 'it' in terms of support, yet black workers not considering it an effective source of support.

9. Coping
   confiding in Black colleagues for feelings felt to be validated.
   time off work and identifying hobbies outside of work.

   call for more research and continued conversation about racism.

Appendix 6; generating initial themes.

Anchor codes	Codes clustering to develop themes
Socialisation/internalised racism codes	**1.Conditions of Euphemised colonialism in African setting through:** **1. Colonial history taught merely an ideological apparition.** **(a)Education system as a colonial machination in its role for continued zombification of the African subject** -Too young to understand history taught -Education system not providing 'good enough' mothering favourable to address internalised racism (this was also observed in UK setting as indicated in Ivy's narrative) -History taught not specific to the country, rather covered whole of Africa (Africa is a continent not a country -Veiled/ passive colonial knowledge -You can't recognise what you don't know (b) black to black racism because of history that merely 'acts out' the trauma of oppression while also repressing what actually happened -slavery implicated yet its link to black-to-black racism obscured -Running thread of slavery in black-to-black racism - Slavery at the core of internalised inferiority **Sub theme: Epistemic foundations in knowledge production in Africa and the crisis of repetition without change** -Colonialization taught as 'echoes of the past' -Colonial events relegated to the past rather than as ongoing event -Colonial happenings assigned to the past without applying their impact on today **2. The structural reality of white supremacy in African setting (the reality that whiteness is secured, supported and propped up in African setting** **(a) white privilege/ affluence seen as a 'natural' condition of being white** - The opulence of white lives in African setting -Normalisation of white privilege in African setting -Proximity to whiteness lenders one to be a 'stranger' even at 'home' - -White superiority as norm in African setting -Socialized to understand the violence of whiteness hence avoidance for survival **(b) In structures which ensures economic hierarchies between white and black people in African setting**

	-Structures in place which keeps white people in affluent spaces in Africa whilst effectively 'locking Africans out' from these spaces in their own country -Unspoken and Invisible gate keepers ensuring segregation and sustaining white privilege in African setting (this was also observed in UK setting whereby racism was seen as being orchestrated by unseen structures that directs people's places in the social order of things) -Heightened awareness of markers of racialised differences (affluent neighbourhood for whites, wealth etc **3. Installation of Internalised racism** **-g**iving up indigenous ways of living not questioned **-Racial inferiority installed at an early age** **-self-abnegating behaviours of Africans towards white people in African setting** **Activation of Internalized: internalised racism which had hitherto laid dormant 'coming' comfortably into sight once in in UK setting** (a) Experiencing racism in the new UK setting more like a 'veil' being lifted off rather than it being a new experience, described in idioms such as racism hitting home, my eyes opened to racism (b) Triggering of 'repressed/ forgotten' white atrocities which had hitherto been held back at unconscious levels while in country of birth by various protective factors (c) Being in the setting invalidates the 'mind masks' which hitherto made it possible to augment the reality (protective factors removed/weakened **4. The status of being in the majority in home country and its contribution to racism opacity** -The opacity of racism in African setting -Differences in perception in what counts as racism -Protective factors and their dulling effect on racism -setting and its potential to mask racism (This is also observed in UK setting whereby experiences of racism 'tempered' when occupying spaces populated by other black people
Experiences in the new setting (UK)	**5. Navigating the white gaze, like what Fanon in Wretched of the Earth referred to as 'colonialism as a clash of gazes'** (a) The politics of the term 'black' (Is it 'Africannness' or 'Blackness'? difference in meaning when used in Africa, compared to when used in UK. Also different responses to racism due to this.) (b) The burdening element in holding 'double consciousness'(for example retaining 'black' in its positive element as used in Africa , whilst resisting the racist tones in the same term when used in UK setting)

	(c) The hauntings of blackness on borders (mapping unbelonging in relation to blackness and mobility across and within European borders (Ghostly borders) **6. The paradoxical hypervisibility of African bodies in white spaces and the social invisibility of the same** **The 'power of the seating arrangements'; to signify the unseen forces and mechanisms that ensures that people 'fall in line' in their respective places in society** Racism everywhere in UK orchestrated by unseen structures that directs people's places in the social order of things **-Does being an immigrant mean that one is never 'home'? And what does that do in terms of accessing opportunities compared to those regarded as 'belonging'?** **The fatigue due constant need for internal dialogues to assess whether situations are racial or not**
Black African social workers views on social work as an anti-racist profession	**7. Dissonance between social work values learnt at university and how this is actualised in practice** Antidiscrimination training left behind in the periphery of training not let in practice field Social work acknowledged existence of racism but does not provide solutions on how to tackle this Being anti oppressive takes striving; it takes active continuous self-work, not just the anti-racist knowledge learnt during qualifying training **8. Dissonance in social work values and the experiences had by Black social workers** -Anti-racist profession 'just talk', no practical application social work is a bit of acting -Complete rejection of social work's stated AOP, ADP, frameworks -The shuttering of the 'hope' that social work is going to offer 'safe home' to black social workers -Tinted' view of what social work is prior to being in it -Impact of racial microaggressions felt more when this is coming from fellow social workers or other professionals in the helping profession -Strong rejection of social work anti-discriminatory frameworks (it's some crap!) **9. Is social work attracting right people in the profession?** the profession is only as good as the social workers practicing it Dissonance in how the profession is described and how social workers themselves embodies that? The profession has the right values; the issues are the people who are meant to espouse and embody those values White social work colleagues treating black SWs differently

	Social workers make social work not the other way round **(a) Stratification in social work specialities based on race** Stratification based on race even withing the profession, for example children services for white people **(b) rejection of interpersonal/ group professional identity by black social workers due to racial experiences had, and instead focusing on the intrapersonal professional identity** Sustaining black social workers motivation for joining social work is located in their individual practice and commitment to their individual values with clients not in social work as a profession (professional identity) Feeling proud about being a social worker, but not the profession In your individual work, that is when you make the difference, not the 'group social work' **(a) The impact of racism from a profession heralded as anti-racist** Due to social work professed core value of being an anti-racist profession, racism from fellow social workers carries much more impact than that coming from service users Expectation for social work to model anti-racist practice for other professions not met Eurocentric model in social work blamed for social work not meeting expectations Impact of technocratic aspect of work, reducing social work to 'a job like any other job'
Black social workers experiences in Organization	**Experiences in current employing organisation** 10. Experiences with front line managers **1.Relationship with managers hindered due to cultural differences** - White staff given priority over black staff by managers - Inaccessibility of managers to black staff -Relationship with managers hindered due to cultural differences -Sense of exclusion due to lack of shared interest **2. Significance of front-line managers and how they are failing black social workers** - Black social workers able to process or make sense of racism from service users, because they can appropriate this to their mental condition; the struggle is receiving the same from those meant to support them, for example their managers -- when ethnic workers disclose racial discrimination experienced in the course of their job, how their managers respond to this hugely determines what happens next

	- The humanity, feelings and emotions of black social workers not considered when conversations around racist incidents from families are held - erosion of professional confidence of black social workers and developing self-doubt due to their managers constantly questioning their decision making -management responses caries a huge implication **2. Positive experience being managed by a white manager with exposure to experiences of Black people** **3. Less confidence in a white manager without exposure to experiences of Black people** **4. Having Black managers is not the solution either** -Complicated relationship between black managers and black staff; smooth with white staff -in times of 'things going wrong' more confidence in white manager than in black manager, because the former 'has nothing to prove' - difference in how a black manager manages the team, probably under the same pressure and so ends up making it harder for their own black staff members, relationship with white British staff is so smooth, **6. Explicit racism from white managers** - explicit discrimination by a white manager - experiences of explicit racism- the overt type of racial microaggressions **Sense of being beast of burden** 1. **division of labour eschewed negatively on Black people** -Division of labour eschewed negatively on Black people -Difference in complexity of cases 2. **expectation to endure placed on blacks** -Expectation to endure placed on blacks 11. Cultural influences /African cultural norms and values **Operating from the internal African social norms' templates** Closed book at work 1. **Socialisation which does not encourage open show of emotional vulnerability at work** 2. **Closed boundaries between home and work** - the influence of upbringing in ability to accessing what is available for us - applying 'respect' from the African perspective being convoluted with 'assertiveness'. **For the sake of survival but at a cost** - Black social workers forced to move on to get away from racial discrimination, but then meeting the more of the same in the new setting - the adoption of cryptic coloration (camouflage) forced on black social workers as a defence or tactic to minimise visibility hence reduce chances

	of 'being picked on' , but this is at the expense of retaining their authentic self at the work place - for black social workers, the option is either to 'fight' through to make it, or to 'stay out of trouble' at the expense of job satisfaction; either way, both options have a price to pay- black social workers not utilising employments rights available to them - the unseen and unrecognised labour forced upon black workers to accommodate the sense of entitlement from white colleagues/ professionals/ the extra I must do for you to see me! -too tired by the time you get a job; once you secure it, 'you hold too tight as you would on a plank of wood' not to drown - Need to foresee danger and avoid possibility of attack **12. English not being a first language** - navigating the workplace as a person who speaks English with an "African accent"; the issue is not 'accents', the issue is deemed by others to be with 'African accent" -the positioning of English as a superior language/ universal language -The double labour of thinking in our mother tongue, but communicating this in English **13. Presence of Chronic patterns of internalised racism** - need to prove ourselves hence not utilising polices disposable to us -Socialisation/African culture and attitude towards job - Normalised believes that has become part of black culture (eg working hard) without much interrogation to this -Acceptance of racism; an everyday occurrence hence 'numbed' to it - Chronic patterns of internalised racism (for example need to work hard) are consistently present in operation, so much so that they have come to be seen as inherent part of Black culture - pushing the body to the limit due to this need to work three or four times harder than others **14. Experiences of racism exacerbated due to unresolved trauma from past racial incidents** -Experiencing racism changes the sense of who I was in my home setting, to this new person likened to a 'jellyfish', broken/like a skeleton scarecrow walking in the road of London - Impact of racism is magnified due to unresolved trauma from past racism related experiences -racial trauma experienced in the line of job being carried around by black social workers because there is no avenue open to them to work through racial incidents when experienced **Effectiveness of supervision** -having to make judgment on 'the right person' to show your vulnerability - how much can you disclose to your supervisor? **15. Experiences of professional expertise being devalued**

	- Devaluing of professional expertise of Black social workers by clients and families, whilst this is hidden behind 'not understanding because the accent is too strong'. - Competence of Black social workers judged on ethnicity rather than their professional qualification - Black social workers having to fight at the door for the right to use your professional status for entry, and then fighting even harder once entry is gained to evidence their professional capabilities - The devaluing of black workers professional role occupancy when in the presence of a white colleague - the presence of accents used by clients and families to justify their treatment of black workers when a white worker is present - professional expertise devalued by client in their preference for white workers **16. Higher management structures** - incidents of racism when escalated to higher management 'dealt only on paper' and 'brushed under the carpet' - senior managers are friends they might follow things on a piece paper, but something down the line, it's not being followed 100%, they cover it up. -Organisation is promoting black managers, but we don't know whether there is extra pressure on them - Policies in place only on paper - Inclusion in the organisations takes much more than just having polices in place, it takes practical support for people - Organisations: hidden in plain sight- when discrimination is happening between black to black - the crucial need in black social workers seems to be a longing to belong in organisation and a longing to be treated as equals by other professionals - where does change lie? With the organisations not with black social workers who are targets of this - issue with the language of 'resilience' deployed in organisations 17. Progression Progression 'scales' weighted differently. - White colour as currency for progression - Black workers not putting themselves forward more of a case of a bird in the hand being worth two in the bush rather than mediocrity? ASYE Being very vulnerable when on ASYE