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Black Mixed-race British Males and the Role of School Teachers: New Theory and Evidence

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Whilst there remains a crisis of black marginality both inside and outside of the British academe, the Black mixed-race[1] male is yet further overlooked in scholarly work. To advance our understanding of Black Britain, as this collection seeks to do, we must consider the growing Black mixed-race population. Whilst education has been a key site for Black activism (Andrews, 2014; Warmington, 2014), the Black mixed-race male, despite notably low attainment and high exclusion rates, remains a salient omission from the activist and scholarly work focusing on ethnic minority educational experiences (Tikly et al., 2004; Williams, 2011). In highlighting both commonalities and differences between Blackness and Black-mixedness, this chapter does not seek to do the politically damaging work of fragmenting Britain's Black population but rather, to move towards a reconceptualisation of Blackness that adequately reflects the experiences of a growing segment of its population. As Stuart Hall (1996, 443) teaches us:

> [t]here is no sense in which a new phase in black cultural politics could replace the earlier one. Nevertheless it is true that as the struggle moves forward and assumes new forms, it does to some degree *displace*, reorganize and reposition the different cultural strategies in relation to one another.

Drawing on new data from twenty semi-structured interviews, carried out with Black mixed-race males aged between 18 and 27, this chapter seeks to respond to the scarcity of literature focusing on Black mixed-race educational experiences.

[1] This term is used here to refer to the male population of mixed Black and white parentage

According to school census data the Black mixed-race male population have lower levels of attainment than the average, white students and Black mixed-raced females average at GCSE level[2] (DfE, 2014a). Black mixed-race males are also overrepresented in school exclusions (DfE, 2014b). These rates greatly exceed the average and are comparable to the rates of Black males (of two Black parents). Such disproportionality in exclusion rates has presented long-standing tensions between Black communities and the education system (Coard, 1971; Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). The marketisation and neoliberalisation of education has seen the re-emergence of this problem with schools increasingly likely to remove pupils who may impact negatively upon league table scores (Osler and Hill, 1999). Whilst there has been some low level recognition from policy initiatives (DfES, 2003; Richardson, 2005), significant and sustained interventions are yet to be made. In offering a contribution to this sparsely theorised area it is hoped that this chapter can add to growing pressure for intervention.

This chapter focuses on the role of teachers in the education and racialisation of the Black-mixed-race male. The first half of the chapter will highlight problems in the teaching force; low teacher expectations, self-fulfilling prophecies and teachers' handling of racist incidents. The second half of the chapter will consider potential interventions. Here the chapter will consider to what extent a racial diversification of the workforce can be effective in raising attainment and improving experiences. Throughout, the chapter will seek to demonstrate how the Black mixed-race male must be considered as part of a more nuanced conception of Blackness.

Educational barriers

[2] General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) is an academic qualification gained by pupils at the age of 14-16. GCSE attainment is traditionally used as a determinant for further study.

Low teacher expectations and stereotypes

Low teacher expectations have long been cited as a barrier facing Black communities in education. More recently this has been recognised to be a barrier for the Black mixed-race male (Tikly et al., 2004; Williams, 2011). Low expectations have been noted to limit the achievements of pupils in a number of ways. Bernard Coard (1971) demonstrated how Black pupils (at a time when Black mixed-race pupils would often have been considered Black (Tizard and Phoenix, 2002)) were disproportionately and unfairly filtered in to schools for the *educationally subnormal*. Teacher stereotypes have also led to disproportionately high rates of exclusion. Low teacher expectations have seen low achieving ethnic minority groups entered for lower-tier GCSE examinations, which restricts the grade that can be achieved. On this point, Gillborn (2014, 34) states that teacher expectations:

> tend to be systematically lower than warranted by their performance in class. These stereotypes exert a powerful influence on students' opportunities to succeed, making it less likely that they will gain access to high status courses and resulting in their being disproportionately placed in the lowest teaching groups, where teachers cover less of the curriculum, thus giving students a reduced chance of achieving the highest grades.

The introduction of the English baccalaureate has perpetuated the disadvantages of tiered exam entrances and 'immediately widened inequalities of achievement' (Ibid, 33). As a mark of academic achievement, the baccalaureate requires higher pass grades in core subjects as oppose to the previous five GCSEs that were a marker of success. This new assessment becomes intertwined with racialised barriers when we realise that the baccalaureate is unattainable for the majority of students; only 21.6% of students are entered in to all the subject examinations required to attain the qualification (Gillborn, 2014).

Low teacher expectations are often built upon stereotypical views and 'teachers' perceptions are often limited and misinformed' (Williams, 2011, xiii). Whilst findings supported Tikly et al.'s (2004, 50) claim that 'times have gone where… it [racism] would be a blatant comment', there were instances in which teachers displayed 'a little underlying racism'. This was recognised by Josh, a participant in my research:

> It's hard sometimes but I think teachers often speak to mixed kids differently, or suspect we might have issues. Not as if a teacher is going to run up to me and call me a nigger but they do treat you different, they make assumptions. It's just hard to challenge with it being more subtle.

In the excerpt from Josh above, we see that although he believes his mixedness results in his differential treatment, he also makes reference to an insult predicated upon his Blackness. This racialisation is dependent upon phenotype and physical clue; some participants recognised being racialised predominantly as Black whilst others felt their appearance meant that they were predominantly racialised as mixed. However, the vast majority felt that they were racialised simultaneously and interchangeably as Black and as mixed-race. This is consistent with findings from Aspinall and Song (2013) who found that much like the Black male, the Black mixed-race male has limited identity options. For the Black mixed-race male, these were generally confined to mixedness and Blackness.

Research participant James noted the commonalities with Blackness but also the unique aspects of being racialised as mixed-race:

> Mixed-race people and black people are in the same boat, they're both discriminated, both stereotyped but a mixed-race person could be even more stereotyped.

Stereotypes facing Black males predicate on notions of rebellious, anti-school attitudes and hyper-masculinity (Sewell, 1997). Such stereotypes have also proven pervasive in the Black

mixed-race context (Tikly et al., 2004). These stereotypes facing Black mixed-race males, as James testifies, coalesce with the somewhat less recognised, yet longstanding, stereotypical views of Black/white mixedness. Born out of fears over the degenerative embodiment of miscegenation, these pathologies, though heavily jettisoned from academic thought, can be traced, in 'sociological' work, to Everett Stonequist's (1961) marginal-man thesis in which he posited that the Black mixed-race individual suffers from maladjustment and identity confusion due to their positioning between Black and white worlds. Williams (2011, 30) study finds evidence of such views amongst teachers; 'they are bound to struggle with their identity. They can't see where they fit in.'

Trevor Phillips, then head of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, shows how such notions have permeated contemporary British society. In 2007 he described mixed-race people as being susceptible to 'identity stripping' due to their precarious position between two communities (Aspinall and Song, 2013). Given his recent misleading and racist assault on Black Britain[3], both on the screen in a Channel 4 documentary *Things We Won't Say About Race That are True* and accompanying article in the right wing *Daily Mail* it should come as no surprise that he pathologises mixedness in such a way (Phillips, 2015). We also see the recurrent notion of troubled home lives, attributable to the incompatibility of the two distinct cultures of their parents, often leaving single parent families. This stereotype, a residual effect of anti-miscegenation rhetoric, is evident in the 1930 pseudo-academic *Fletcher Report* in which Fletcher (1930, 26) contends of the Black mixed-race children of Liverpool, 'there is little harmony between the parents… and there appears to be little future for the children'. Williams (2011, 32) again shows how such views are held by teachers today, with one participant in her study saying, 'I think where things are unsettled at home – like they can be –

[3] His position was so extremely conservative that he was dubbed a 'modern day Uncle Tom' by activist group, the Organisation of Black Unity (2015).

it has a negative impact on the child.' Despite their prevalence, such views have been debunked by academic work (Caballero and Edwards, 2008; Twine, 2010).

Participants were also keen to note that whilst race was a salient factor, such stereotypes were often bound up with social class. The combination of being Black mixed-race, working-class and male resulted in further disadvantage:

> I think a lot for me was being working-class or being off the estate, I mean there was stuff about race as well but being working class was significant (Kyle).

The importance of class has been highlighted in work on Black students; further research needs to look more closely at the intersection of social class for Black mixed-race students.

As stereotypes of mixedness exist alongside, and often coalesce with, stereotypes of Blackness, educators' understanding of Black mixedness must reflect this. Where viewing the Black mixed-race population as mixed, as some scholars and activists have sought to do, may preclude salient experiences of Blackness, viewing these pupils as a specific section of the Black population can create interventions in which mixedness can be acknowledged without an inadvertent disregarding of Blackness. Such an intervention would negate potential divisiveness between Black and Black mixed-race students, and in Black politics.

Self-fulfilling prophecies

Participants felt they were often the victim of low teacher expectations. Such low expectations have the potential to create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Merton (1968, 477) defines this state that has pervaded understandings of the Black male in education,

> The self-fulfilling prophecy is, in the beginning, a false definition of the situation evoking a new behaviour which makes the original false conception come 'true'. This

> specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. For the prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

Commentators like Sewell (1997) have recognised the damaging role of low teacher expectations on Black male achievement. Heidi Mirza (BBC News, 2008) asserts this point:

> We see structures that categorise black boys as failing and having bad behaviour – and then it's borne out… We need to talk about expectations and self-fulfilling prophecies. We need to reverse some of these entrenched stereotypes.

Importantly here, Mirza notes the systemic nature of low teacher expectations. Such processes are not the result of individual teacher attitudes but, more worryingly, are a consequence of an institutionally racist, white supremacist system. The current study found evidence of such processes predicating, for the Black mixed-race male, on Blackness *and* mixedness. Participant Reece refers to the negative perception of his Blackness:

> I know while I was at school they just see us as the Black lads. Black lads that aren't interested in school and just want to cuss, but the school wasn't interested in us either so I'm not sure where that starts. They didn't care about me because they already marked me as disinterested and not the school-type, so I didn't care about them.

Rather than challenging and exploring disinterest in an attempt to raise attainment, the school was perceived to reciprocate, perpetuate and perhaps even create disinterest. Prudence Carter (2003, 148), in her work on working class African American students, argues that culturally illiterate teachers' misreading performances of Blackness oftentimes resulted in a misguided stereotype. The imposition of this stereotype was perceivable to the students. As one of her participants puts it, 'I had friends that… were very smart. They were very, very smart, and the teachers think that they are not smart.' Taylor, a research participant in my study, shows how

negative perceptions of mixedness led to his adoption of what might be considered an anti-school attitude:

> They acted like I was troubled, like it would be harder for me to learn and didn't treat me with the same respect as other kids. They spend too much time listening to stereotypes and believing them, and not enough time getting to know the kid and finding out about them. As it happens I wasn't particularly confused and my parents were cool but I'm not pissing about with teachers who've already got me marked. There are other routes than education.

In this extract from Taylor we see how he feels the imposition of a confused state was misguided and unjust. We also see how the imposition led to his rejection of school and his move towards *other routes*. Through these two excerpts we see how stereotypes of Blackness and mixedness both have the potential to lead to self-fulfilling prophecies for this population.

Williams (2011, xiv) suggests that low teacher expectations often leave Black mixed-race pupils 'far too prepared to live down to the stereotype'. However scholars must be wary of pathologising the Black mixed-race male and must maintain an awareness of the systemic racialised failures of the education system that manifest as barriers to achievement. Aaron spoke in my research about resisting low teacher expectations, using such views as motivation to achieve:

> They don't expect mixed-race pupils to do well. So that's why I made sure I did, made sure I'd make it to university. I like proving people wrong. I enjoyed challenging the stereotypes, so then maybe teachers will rethink! Having said that though, I don't think that should take the emphasis away from the schools and the teachers. It still should be the schools that make changes to accommodate the students. Not the other way round. Kids are just kids, and for some the stereotypes might go the other way.

Whilst this is a positive attitude, and a success story (assuming educational attainment is the primary goal), we must be wary of heralding such exceptional cases as evidence of an absence of racialised barriers. Such examples must not be used as a stick with which to beat those Black mixed-race males who are unable, for a range of reasons, to overcome barriers. The onus must remain firmly on the education system. A teacher in Williams (2011, 31) research suggests that school changes can challenge barriers presented by low teacher expectations:

> It's important for schools to help them see their backgrounds as a positive thing. It supports all our work with families and helping pupils achieve their full potential. If they see we value them and where they've come from they will be happier in school and they'll be more prepared to learn.

Given the shared history and experiential commonalities, such learning for Black mixed-race students can take place alongside that of Black peers. What is important however, is that the complexity of Blackness and Black mixedness is unpacked in a mutually-supportive, non-ascrpitive, environment. One participant, Trent, spoke of being included in a project targeting Black Caribbean males that failed to unpack the complexity of his identity:

> that whole project was engineered to do with race. Now, I wouldn't say it was racism because usually people associate racism with a negative undertone, a negative outcome. This wasn't that it was a positive thing but it made me think of that, erm, I loved the project and I loved the teacher, I got along with her really well the only thing I didn't like about it was, it was engineered for Black Caribbean boys.

Here, Trent acknowledges the positivity of the intervention, he 'loved the project'. What concerned him however, was the ascription of a racial identity. He continues:

> I just didn't like the fact that I was classified, I was very much aware of the fact that I was classified as being a Black Caribbean boy, I always thought well, no I'm not. I'm a little bit different to them in the sense that I'm mixed-race.

It must be seen as a pedagogical error for a teacher to ascribe an identity to a student. This is of fundamental importance to any intervention made. Indeed, Black mixed-race students may identity in a number of different ways, including white, and should be facilitated to do so (Root, 1996). Emancipatory teaching should seek to work *with* students to create an environment in which identity discussions can be held (Freire, 2005).

Trent goes on to explain how, since his peer group were black and he felt that he was often seen as Black, that he would be comfortable in such a group. Trent does not argue for a specifically mixed group, but for an expansion, or reconceptualisation of Blackness. Speaking hypothetically about a prospective child in such a group he felt questions must be posed:

> my child is mixed-race, what would you intend to do to represent them within this project?' because that's important, they're not just Caribbean… is there anything we can do with the name?

Historical figures such as Malcolm X, Mary Seacole and WEB Du Bois, and more contemporarily, Barack Obama could all be used to facilitate discussions around Blackness and Black mixedness. Such discussions may have enabled Trent to feel a greater sense of validation within the project.

Handling of racist incidents

Teachers' handling of racist incidents was a major site of participant criticism. Despite Tikly et al., (2004, 44) highlighting the 'need to protect all mixed heritage pupils from racist

bullying', several participants felt 'let-down' and unsupported by teachers when racist incidents occurred. Where racist incidents did occur they were too often dealt with in a manner that failed to reflect the seriousness. Discussing an incident in which he felt let down, Josh held that rather than a 'talking to', the pupil who had called him a racist name should have received, 'at least a suspension, second time would be exclusion. No doubt about that in my mind'. Other participants shared Josh's views that the handlings of racist incidents were insufficient. Owing to a perception of a soft approach to racism two participants resorted to violence. Talking of an incident where he was called 'nigger' Harry elucidated:

> well, punishment probably wouldn't be enough; I wouldn't feel like justice had been done if the teachers dealt with it, what's an afternoon detention?.. I ended up smashin' him up at the bus stop but then I got suspended for that.

We may observe here how the failures of teachers to deal with incidents in a manner proportionate to the seriousness attributed by the victim can lead to a downward spiral for the Black mixed-race male. Harry, felt that he needed to take the matter into his own hands. In doing so Harry may have inadvertently fulfilled the stereotypes attributed to him as a Black mixed-race male; confused, angry, confrontational and anti-school. We see here the complex way in which self-fulfilling prophecies may play out. A robust initial response from the school may have negated the violence and the perpetuation of the stereotype. Reflecting on the incident, Harry said, 'I thought that was wrong because he didn't get suspended I thought we both should of.' Although Harry's example is a particularly pertinent one, several participants recalled similarly negative experiences and a subsequent lack of faith in the school and teachers. Whilst participants primarily directed their criticisms at individual teachers, it became clear that a more robust school level policy for dealing with racist incidents would prove effective. It is unclear to what extent individual teachers, educated in a fundamentally racist education system, would have the expertise to deal with such incidents (Bourdieu, 1974,

Tomlinson, 2008). Invisibility from policy proved to be to the detriment of the Black mixed-race male in these instances. We may see how such invisibility operates through what Delgado and Stefancic (2001) describe as *structural determinism.* As teachers are socialised in a racist structure that seeks to preserve conditions of inequity, they are unable to 'envision and name a new or different concept that could lead to greater racial justice' (Anderson, 2015, 4). Whilst racist abuse was generally invisible, an awareness of the unique experiences of the Black mixed-race population, who received racial prejudice from both white and Black peers, was further invisible. Tikly et al. (2004, 84), in their study of Black mixed-race pupils, found that the high-achieving schools in their sample had 'effective systems in place for recording of racist incidents and bullying and for responding to these'.

Lloyd, a participant educated in an inner city, racially mixed school suggested another solution,

> I think one advantage of having more ethnic minority staff is that they'd understand racism and perhaps be more empathetic. I'd feel better approaching a minority teacher to discuss racism.

The idea of a diversification of the workforce was a recurrent theme throughout the research. As responses showed however, this was more complex than merely introducing a few teachers of a darker hue.

Interventions: A diverse workforce?

'Children learn more from what you are than what you teach' W.E.B. Du Bois (Griffin, 2012, 60)

The recruitment of teaching staff from diverse backgrounds has long been cited as an intervention to challenge the underachievement of certain groups (Gordon, 2002; Ross, 2001). Research conducted in 2012 found that only 93.3% of the school workforce were white (DfE, 2013), compared to 85.5% of England's total population (ONS, 2011). A multitude of barriers the retention of teachers who are not white have been noted (McNamara et al., 2009; Mirza and Meetoo, 2012). A disproportionate number of staff of colour occupy non-teaching and unqualified positions (BBC News, 2002) and there is recognition of a 'glass ceiling' preventing these reaching more senior roles (Menter et al., 2003; Osler, 1997). Participants problematised the underrepresentation of Black, Black mixed-race and all teachers of colour.

Black role models

'If they see black teachers, they will aspire to be teachers themselves' (Asthana, 2007).

The complex relationship between Blackness and mixedness is evident when we consider the function of role models. When asked about role models Jamie said this:

> Yeah I think Black teachers do good for mixed-race kids in school. I mean we have one Black parent and one white. We got the white role models so just need some Black as well.

Tyrone, identifying with Blackness, expressed similar views:

> more Black teachers need to be in schools because of the Black people in the schools, they need someone to look up to and relate to, they might be looking up seeing all these rucks and thinking 'where are the black teachers?', subconsciously giving the message that we're not good enough, we're not successful.

In both these instances participants feel that the introduction of more Black role models would prove advantageous. We see the vast commonality between Black and Black mixed-race males. The response from Tyrone suggests that white teachers are unable to provide 'someone to look up to' for him. In referring to a 'we', Tyrone positions himself outside of the white hegemonic education system and as part of a Black mixed group. Indeed, the privilege and security of whiteness is not an option Tyrone feels is available; he finds his identity in Blackness and mixedness. This becomes problematic when we see the British education system (and Western society at large) transmits a message that Blackness is inferior. Here we see, once more, how stereotypes and self-fulfilling prophecies come to fruition. The failure of the education system to provide role models for pupils leads to the internalisation of the idea that 'we're not good enough, we're not successful'. In many cases, the internalisation of the idea means it is borne out.

Whilst the above excerpts highlight the commonalities with Blackness, other participants did recognise the specific needs of the Black mixed-race male. Whilst for Jamie (above) the provision of role models was merely additive (a white role model plus a Black role model is sufficient) for others mixed-race was something more than this and needed to be reflected in any diversification:

> I guess ideally you'd have the broadest range of teachers that is at least as diverse as the population; mixed-race should be included in that (Daz).

> We need mixed-race role models in schools, the population is growing and we need people to look up to (Jack).

Not only do these comments show the need to move beyond simplistic understandings of Blackness and mixedness but also the vast heterogeneity in Black mixed-race experiences. Like Daz, participants felt that the school workforce should reflect society and provide

representation for all pupils. Maylor (2006, 2) suggests, '[h]aving a teaching force that better represents society is critical because of the character, ubiquity, pervasiveness, duration and importance of teaching as a social activity.' The specific importance of a diverse teaching force for those of mixed-race was further highlighted by Tikly et al. (2004, 9) who found the schools in which mixed-race students were 'high achieving' were those that 'reflected diversity… amongst the staff'. The report recommended that schools look to recruit more black and mixed-race teachers as part of a wider diversification, suggesting that this 'can help to affirm mixed heritage identities and challenge the negative stereotypes'.

More than just race

'It is a mistake to assume that because someone is from a particular ethnic group… that they will respond in a generalistic way' (Morrison, 2008)

'Research suggests that it is not enough for the teacher to be someone of the same colour, but it needs to be someone that does not believe the stereotypes' (Phoenix, 2014).

Whilst maintaining that workforce diversification was ideal, participants also felt that it should be about more than race and that teaching ability should be the primary criterion. Jamal made this point, 'the teacher's ability doesn't matter to skin colour'. Positive relationships with white teachers and negative relationships with Black teachers further undercut simplistic assumptions that the introduction of ethnic minority teachers would offer an instantaneous solution. Tyrone, talking of positive experiences with a white teacher, challenges such assumptions:

> I had a teacher that came to the school at the time I was starting to fail and I ended up in her class, she was such an inspiration, she was genuinely interested in me and she even found out about my performances in other classes… she also helped out a couple

> of other mixed-race kids, I really think she targeted us like that and I'll never forget that.

A number of scholars have sought to (at least partially) shift the focus away from the calls to recruit more Black teachers, and have emphasised the importance of 'culturally responsive teaching' (Gay, 2000) or, as Ladson-Billings (1995) puts it, 'culturally relevant pedagogy'. Such an intervention affirms that teachers, regardless of racial background, must 'develop the knowledge, skills, and predispositions to teach children from diverse racial, ethnic, language, and social class backgrounds' (Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003, 270; Kirkland, 2003; Mirza and Meeto, 2012). In the misguided ascription of stereotypes, it is conceivable that culturally responsive teaching, more so than a diverse teaching force, can offer an intervention. To refer back to the earlier example from Carter's (2003) work, a culturally responsive teacher would have disentangled students' potential from performances of Blackness.

Examples of negative experiences with Black teachers also brought to the fore the flaws in the assumptions that a more diverse workforce, alone, would offer the solution. This is exemplified by a respondent in Tikly et al.'s (2004, 48) research, who recalled an incident with a Black teacher:

> We [teacher and pupil] was like arguing at the classroom, and she wants to start cussing me, so I cussed her back, and she said at least she's fully Black or something like that

Not only does this trouble the assumption that more staff of colour will offer an absolute solution but it also reminds us that there are times when specific provisions need to be made for Black mixed-race pupils.

Further concerns were raised over the tokenism of Black representation. 'Making sure the teaching force is simply 'representative' could be seen just as tokenism - making sure there

are enough black faces around' (Maylor, 2006, 2). Concerns over such tokenism were evident in participants' experiences,

> I remember we got this black guy coming in… I don't know what his role was actually, he was just there… he just came out of nowhere; they just dropped a black guy in (Isaac).

Jermaine shared a similar experience:

> this Black guy called Earl, he was supposed to be a mentor but he really didn't do much, didn't really have a proper role, he was just there… You're meant to 'relate' and to 'build a bridge' but it just doesn't work like that.

For both participants the authenticity of the integration was important. It became clear that merely recruiting more staff of colour would not automatically meet their needs. In the two instances above tokenism could be seen as counterintuitive transmitting the idea that Black staff are not worthy of a 'proper role'. This therefore runs the risk of such ideas being internalised by pupils. As Tyrone observed in an earlier excerpt, this can not only fail to break down barriers but can actually create a barrier 'subconsciously giving the message that we're not good enough'. Although Tikly et al. (2004) recognise such mentoring and role model schemes as positive interventions participant responses suggest experiences are more complex. Whilst Diane Abbott's claim that by having a 'critical mass of black teachers in the workforce you get a more culturally literate workforce overall' may be true, this offers far from a holistic picture (Asthana, 2007). Indeed, given that many of the teachers of colour will have been educated and raised in a white supremacist society, it should not be taken for granted that they will not perpetuate hegemonic Whiteness. Training and the raising of teacher awareness, alongside a continued drive to recruit staff of colour, offers the way forward. As a focus group member in Williams (2011, 41) advises, schools should 'Give teachers more training on

understanding the needs of mixed-race students'. This point is of fundamental importance, culturally relevant pedagogy must recognise the complexity of what it means to be Black mixed-race.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to highlight some of the needs of a significant, yet massively under researched, proportion of the Black British population. The chapter has considered the role of low teacher expectations, the handling of racist incidents, and to what extent a more diverse workforce might offer an intervention. Whilst the great commonalities between Black males and Black mixed-race males must be considered, there remain unique aspects of mixedness that are unaccounted for in work on Black male educational experiences. It is hoped that this chapter will help us move towards a more nuanced understanding that simultaneously recognises the Black mixed-race male as part of the Black population, and recognises the unique aspects of their mixed identities. As Williams (2011, 17) notes:

> There are times when it is expedient to view black and mixed-race as one group, as there are some obvious and pertinent connections to be made with pupils of black British heritage. However common stereotypes and assumptions made about mixed-race pupils should mean there are also distinct strategies employed for the mixed-race group.

Further work needs to consider the impact of social class on the racialisation of the Black mixed-race male (Aspinall and Song, 2013). There also needs to be consideration given to the Black mixed-race female in education. Finally, work needs to look more closely at the way in which Blackness and mixedness interact to create unique and specific barriers for the Black mixed-race male.

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