

# THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC TEACHERS IN WALES – A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY.

Dr Susan Davis, Chantelle Haughton, Sammy Chapman, Dr Rom Okeke, Martin  
Smith, Dr Aylwin Yafele, Kin Yu.

# Acknowledgements

The research team would like to wholeheartedly thank all research participants for sharing their testimonies and lived experiences with us during the course of this research.

There were many people who supported us in this work, some of whom are listed below. We would also like to acknowledge funding from the Welsh Government and in entrusting us with this work.

Grateful thanks to:

- Mr Julian Konten, Design and Technology leader, Willows High School, Cardiff
- Dr Cecilia Hannigan Davies, Deputy Dean, Cardiff School of Education and Social Policy
- Members of the BAMEed Network Wales
- Brett Davis for proof reading and constructive comments
- All other organisations and people in Wales who liaised with us

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### 3. Glossary of Terms

**Allophilia** - the opposite of prejudice, having an active like or regard for a group you do not belong to. It is a term coined by Pittinsky (2005) derived from Greek words meaning 'liking or love of another'.

**Colonialism/ Colonial practices** - The concept of colonialism is closely linked to that of imperialism, which is the policy or ethos of using power and influence to control another, it is ascribed to a white power dynamic.

**Consortia** – There are four regional consortia in Wales who work with schools to raise standards and provide support.

**Courageous conversations** – These were difficult conversations we had with the ME research participants about their experiences and ones which we envisage need to occur widely going forward.

**Diverse background** – people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds other than white.

**Emotional buffeting** – the emotional toll of others offloading and sharing experiences of racism or unfairness directed against them or their family members.

**Minority Ethnic (ME)** – we acknowledge that this is an imperfect term, as it compresses the ethnic differences between those categorised and labelled. It is used in this report as advised by Welsh Government and as it is broadly understood by most people, including in educational research, policy and practice.

**Gaslighting** – (racial gaslighting) when an ME person experiences racism or racist incidents that have happened to them or when they are told that they are either 'overthinking, being 'sensitive', incorrect or being made to feel uncomfortable for bringing up the issue.

**Gatekeeping** – The process of controlling and usually limiting general access to a system, documentation, data or personnel.

**Initial Teacher Education (ITE)** – Education of students in Higher Education on either BA primary programmes or PGCE programmes

**Micro-aggression** – actions or words which marginalise ME people and leave them feeling uncomfortable, insulted or excluded. Actions are subtle rather than overt, for example, 'when I look at you, I don't see colour' or 'where do you **really** come from' or body language such as rolling of eyes and turning away from people.

**Mixed heritage** – people with a heritage and family /ancestral background that is from more than one ethnicity.

**People of colour** – people of various diverse ethnicities other than white.

**Racial Literacy** – refers to the willingness of teachers to engage, empathise and understand the ways in which race and racism operates within education and wider society. Teachers need to develop skills, knowledge and confidence to implement this knowledge in their everyday teaching practice and professional role.

**Racial Trope / Racial Stereotyping** - mental ideologies and categorisations that are assigned meaning, which are often based on bias or assumption, for example, black male teachers are good at sport; black women teachers are aggressive.

**Racial Weathering** – a term coined by Geronimus (1992) to describe the effects on mental health and wellbeing of ME people from the effects of racism and other inequalities.

**Racial Trauma** – or race-based traumatic stress (RBTS), refers to the mental health consequences incurred as a result of racism and discrimination.

**White privilege** – The absence of having to live with the consequences of racism.

## 4. Acronyms

**EWC** – Education Workforce Council

**FE** – Further Education

**HE** – Higher Education

**HEI** – Higher Education Institution

**ITE** – Initial Teacher Education

**ME** – Minority Ethnic

**NAEL** – National Academy for Educational Leadership

**NQT** – Newly Qualified Teacher

**P** – Participant e.g. (P10, Teacher)

**PGCE** – Post Graduate Certificate in Education

**PG** – Postgraduate

**UG** – Undergraduate

**WG** – Welsh Government



## 5. Executive Summary

This report commissioned by Welsh Government examines recruitment and retention of teachers from Minority Ethnic (ME) backgrounds in Wales. Drawing upon the perspectives of learners aged 14 plus, students and teachers from ME backgrounds, it focuses on participants' perceptions and the lack of diversity in the education workforce in Wales.

**Research Challenges** - Data collection was undertaken over a period of nine school weeks. Data generation was impacted by factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic and national lockdown with schools working remotely. Gatekeeping issues within organisations and difficulties in sourcing and accessing registered ME teachers in Wales were encountered. The research also took a cumulative 'emotional toll' on the diverse research team, hearing about experiences of racism suffered by participants.

**Role Models and Representation** - The teaching workforce in Wales is overwhelmingly white and there is a need to increase the representation of teachers from ME backgrounds in leadership roles, to inspire and motivate the next generation of younger ME teachers.

**Mental Health / Wellbeing** – Participant voice reflected on how racial issues had impacted on their mental health / wellbeing. This was either during participants' own education or when they became teachers. It became clear that racist incidents affected the confidence and self-esteem of some participants well into adulthood. Mental health was also impacted on in a professional context.

**Racism (As a Learner/As a Teacher)** – It must be stressed that research participants were not 'victims' of racism; they were subjected to it. In some instances, participants did not fully acknowledge that a racist incident had taken place, when it clearly had. Research data collected and testimonies of participants pointed to racism occurring, either as an ME learner or a teacher or both. Participants reported having experienced either direct or indirect racist behaviours in school, from staff or from pupils. Robust whole-school anti-racist practice must be a feature in all Welsh schools going forward.

**Rejection** – Participants provided evidence of rejection as a lived experience. Many of the

participants experienced rejection as 'a state of being'. They felt undervalued, frustrated, and stressed. This impacted on their confidence and wellbeing. Coping strategies and having resilience to 'live with rejection' were noted. Some had a mindset that they must work harder than their white contemporaries to achieve the same outcomes.

**'Glass Ceilings' within the Profession** – Participants were resigned to both the perception and reality of 'glass' ceilings for ME teachers in Wales. This must be addressed; the 'playing field must be levelled' for ME staff in Welsh schools. The interview process must be re-vamped; interview panels and School Governors should have diversity and anti-bias training and more diverse interview panels need to be a feature.

**Learner Aspirations** - Aspiration is influenced by various factors which include: passion for teaching; sense of giving back to the community; and career satisfaction. Participants revealed that aspirations are hindered by financial constraints in accessing further or higher education courses. They believed a lack of funded pathways into teaching was also a factor.

**Professional Teaching Journey** - Further support is needed from parents and teachers in encouraging ME youth to enter the teaching profession. Targeted careers advice, signposting and mentoring should be available within schools. ME teachers need specific support, targeted training, and pipelines into senior leadership routes.

**Routes into Teaching** - Alternative routes into the profession and the need for progression opportunities were mooted as essential by research participants. Part-time routes and a system such as 'Teach First' are seen as good practice. Also, support is needed for ME teaching assistants to become teachers. There is a responsibility for ITE providers in Wales to engage more robustly in this process.

**Leadership /Unrecognised' Leadership** – Teacher participants reported greater job satisfaction when they held leadership positions in diverse schools. Evidence suggests a significant proportion of ME teachers undertake unrecognised and unpaid leadership roles within schools in Wales, often being the 'face' of any diversity initiatives or in pastoral care or discipline of ME students.

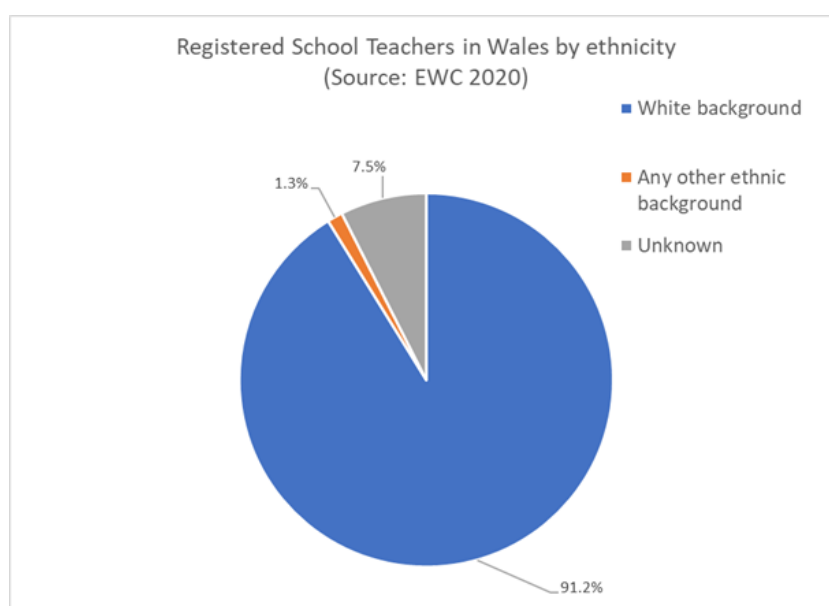
## 6. Context and Background

### 6.1. INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

With seismic events around the World at present and following on from the ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement, research leading to policy and practice reform in Wales is long overdue. Recent work published in 2020 by the Education Workforce Council (EWC) and Welsh Government (WG) on minority ethnic representation within the school workforce in Wales runs parallel with the work focused on curriculum by WG and Prof Charlotte Williams’ working group in 2021. We know that Local authorities in Wales with the highest numbers of learners from ME backgrounds do not appear to be those with the highest numbers of ME teachers. Across Wales, the teacher workforce is less ethnically diverse than the cohorts of learners they are teaching. There is greater ethnic diversity among school learning support workers than teachers. Among head teachers, deputy heads and assistant head teachers, only fifteen individuals from non-white ethnic backgrounds were identifiable on the register in Wales. We recognise the significance of the funding for this short-term piece of research and the recent work by the Education Workforce Council (2020) and Welsh Government (2021); the contribution and importance of the data generated and the impact on policy, implementation and change in the workforce going forward into a more equitable Wales for all. We believe, as a research team from a variety of diverse backgrounds ourselves – African, Asian, mixed heritage and white, that we are able to empathise and grasp the research participants’ ‘lived experiences’. The concept of lived experience was central to our research mission in gaining a picture of participant voice and their suggestions for change.

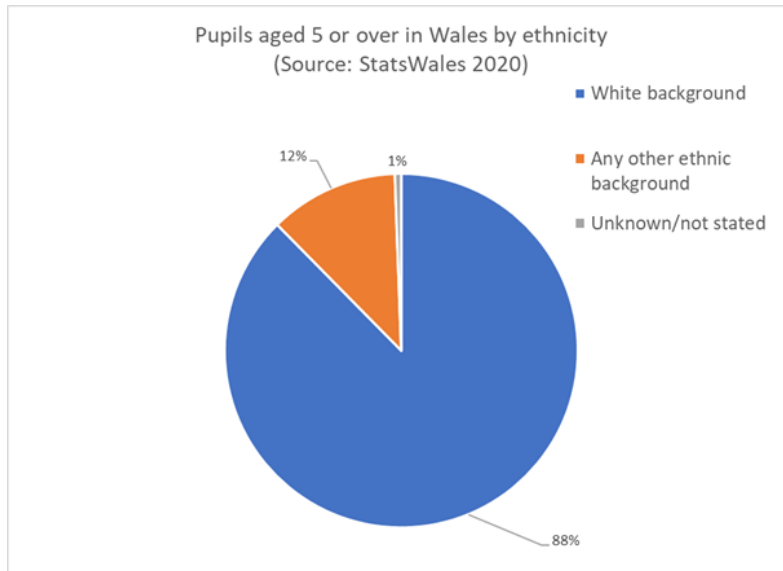
### 6.2. POLICY ENVIRONMENT / BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Within Wales, data from the Education Workforce Council (EWC), the independent regulator for the Welsh education workforce, shows that only 1.3% of schoolteachers declared themselves to be from a diverse background, as either Black, Asian or minority ethnic with 91.2% declaring themselves to be white. (6.2% unknown or declined to classify their ethnicity). That is 1066 ME teachers out of 35,545 teachers in Wales.



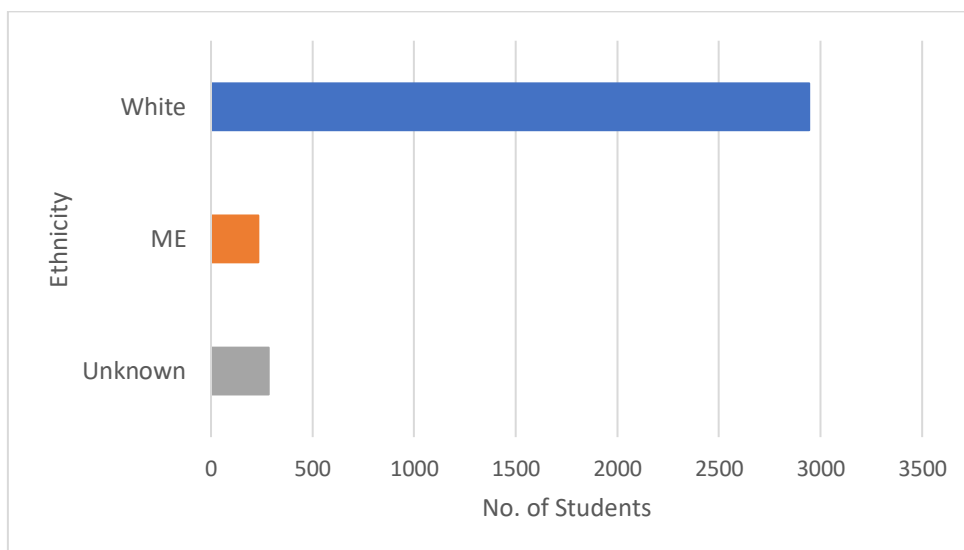
**Figure 1: Registered School Teachers in Wales by Ethnicity**

The picture for pupils from a diverse background is set out below in figure 2. According to Stats Wales (2020) twelve percent of pupils aged 5 or over in Wales are from backgrounds other than white British.



**Figure 2: Pupils aged 5 or over in Wales by ethnicity**

Drawing from data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 2021), the ethnic profile of students on Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes at all levels in Wales is at figure 3 below. The latest data from 2019/20 illustrated that 7% of students declared themselves to be from a diverse background, as either Black, Asian or minority ethnicity with 85% declaring themselves to be white (8% unknown or declined to classify their ethnicity).

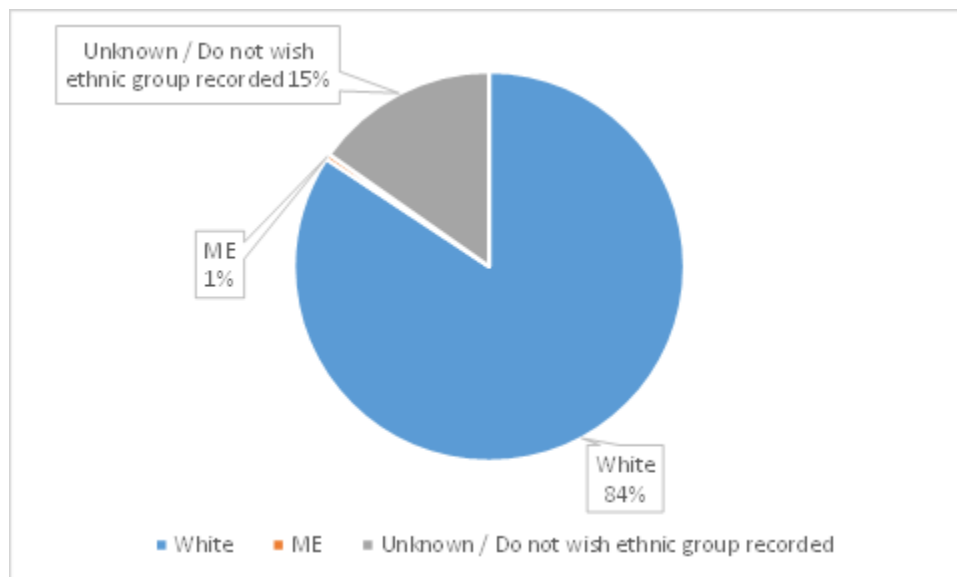


**Figure 3: Percentage of ITE Student Population in Wales by ethnicity**

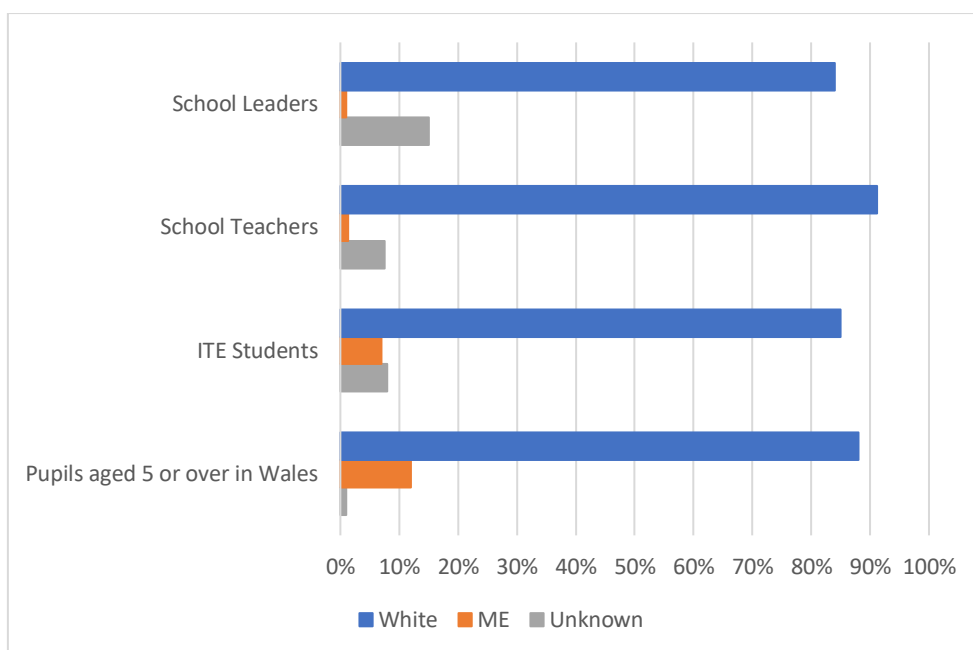
If we continue along an educational career trajectory and look at the picture in relation to senior leaders in the school workforce, the picture continues to look bleak (Figure 3, Table 1). 1% of school leaders declared themselves to be from a diverse background, as either Black, Asian or minority ethnicity with 84% declaring themselves to be white (15% unknown or declined to classify their ethnicity).

**Table 1: Ethnicity of School Leaders in Wales (EWC, 2020)**

Ethnicity	Total	Percentage
Asian or Asian British	5	<1%
Black or Black British	1	<1%
Mixed background	8	<1%
White: any other white background	42	1%
White British	2,859	83%
White: Irish	1	<1%
Any other ethnic group	1	<1%
I do not wish ethnic group recorded	44	2%
unknown	482	14%
	3443	100%



**Figure 4: Ethnicity of School Leaders in Wales**



**Figure 5: Ratio of Pupils to school teachers / leaders by ethnicity**

### 6.3. RATIONALE FOR UNDERTAKING THE RESEARCH

The EWC Phase 2 report (2020) recognises that the education system in Wales will experience significant change with the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales in 2022. The same definitive change is now essential, in relation to the development of an education workforce that mirrors and celebrates the diversity of its learners and teachers. A lack of ethnic diversity in teachers in Wales has long been identified as a problem to be addressed (GTCW, 2003; Evans, 2013; Betteley, 2017; Wiegand and Cifuentes, 2018; Egan 2020). However, whilst the number of teachers and teaching assistants from ME backgrounds employed in Welsh schools has grown since these issues were first highlighted, ethnic diversity within the teaching profession has failed to keep pace with demographic changes that have taken place in Welsh society.

This research report follows on from the recent ground-breaking work undertaken by Welsh Government, and led by Professor Charlotte Williams and The Working Group on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2021). Thus, the issue of the lack of minority ethnic representation in the school teaching workforce in Wales is now an increasingly visible one and one that needs to be addressed. Evidence gathered from the wider UK, on strategies to improve ME teacher recruitment and retention and from other professions that have sought to increase the ethnic diversity of their workforce, demonstrate that there are a range of approaches that can be implemented in order to effect and deliver change. This research begins to explore and begin to illuminate these complex matters.

Through conversations with teachers and learners, this research evaluates ME recruitment into Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and recruitment and retention in the Teaching profession in Wales. This preliminary research began in January 2021 and ran until the end of April 2021 with a short timescale for data collection within the project remit and allocated deadlines. As a multi-ethnic

research team, we were very aware of the issues involved within this dynamic and we were committed to carrying out the research, employing a listening stance and an empathetic lens. The transparent collection of data and data analysis was also a feature. Participant testimonies speak for themselves and we were rigorous in honouring the voice of the participants which were gained through the 'courageous conversations' that we shared with them. Findings should inform changes that ought to be put into place to recruit more ME teachers into the teaching profession in Wales and to support ME teachers in their careers / career progression. Qualitative research refers in the broadest sense to research that produces descriptive data – people's own written or spoken word. The rationale for the project was essentially to capture this spoken word and use the collected data from interview transcripts to identify perceptions among a range of diverse groups:

- ME students (14+) on whether they are aspiring to become teachers, and if not – reasons why. This encompassed school pupils, students in Further and Higher education.
- ME applicants who were unsuccessful when applying to an ITE programme - on what they believe were the factors which led to their rejections, either at initial application stage or following an ITE interview.
- ME Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and teachers at various stages of their careers and their beliefs in relation to career progression.
- ME school leaders on their career journey.

Lander (2014) reflects on how the practices already present within the school system and within teacher education serve to maintain the dominant discourse of whiteness, and thus reinforce the notion of the 'other.' If we look at a UK wide view, the under-representation of ME groups in teaching was initially highlighted in the Swann report (1985). There has been a long-standing concern about the under-representation of minority ethnic teachers (Carrington et. al., 2000; HMSO, 1985) but this has not resulted in any concrete change thus far. In 2003 the then *General Teaching Council for Wales* published a strategy for teacher recruitment and retention which included the need to improve ME recruitment to teaching. It suggested that this would require more research, guidance and greater collaboration within the education sector (GTCW, 2003). More recently, Haque (2017) and Joseph-Salisbury (2020) have highlighted a persistent shortage of ME teachers in England. This issue needs to '*go back to basics*' and one of the issues that needs to be explored in depth is the pro-active recruitment of a new generation of ME students onto ITE programmes (Egan, 2020). This research project explores and reflects on these issues and we have collated our research findings and recommendations. Within Wales, we propose that this research highlights a call to action for a range of Welsh organisations with an educational remit, Universities and the teaching profession in Wales to embrace this change agenda and begin to '*level the playing field*' for ME ITE students, teachers and leaders in schools.

# 7. Aims and Objectives of the Research

## 7.1. AIMS

The aim of the research study was to identify and analyse the views of targeted members of the ME community in Wales on recruitment and retention to teaching, using qualitative research methods.

## 7.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research study will be to identify the:

- Views of an agreed sample of ME secondary age pupils (14+) on teaching as a potential career.
- Views of an agreed sample of ME undergraduate students on teaching as a potential career.
- Experiences of an agreed sample of ME applicants to ITE who were unsuccessful in their applications.
- Experiences of an agreed sample of ME students on ITE courses and school placements.
- Experiences of an agreed sample of ME teachers regarding their ITE courses.
- Experiences of an agreed sample of early and mid-career BAME teachers.
- Experiences of an agreed sample of ME middle and senior leaders.
- Possible differences that exist in relation to the above between different ethnic groups.

## 8. Methodology

Following on from Egan's rapid review in 2020, the Welsh Government commissioned this short-term piece of qualitative research. The research conversations provided space to hear participants' lived experiences either as a student or as a teacher.

Open semi-structured questions allowed for a natural dialogue to develop between the researcher and participants. 1:1 interviews and focus groups were offered to participants, with most of whom choosing the former due to the sensitivity of their experiences. For most participants, this was the first time they had articulated their experiences in a 'professional context'. The significant amount of extra time to undertake individual interviews during the data generation process was valuable, due to the depth and quality of the interview data gained. The majority of conversations were at least one hour long, and all form the basis of this report, illuminating participant voice and reflections loud and clear. Participants openly shared emotional experiences on these 'complex social situations' (Van Maanen, 2011). The research team decided that the 14+ learners would be interviewed in focus groups, but we did give them the option that if they wanted to speak to us separately following the focus group, that space was available to them.

Key topics were identified and related to all three groups – 14+ students, UG/PG students and serving teachers and leaders:

Interview questions were based on these areas:

- Emotive aspects and experiences
- Teaching as a career / Are you thinking of teaching as a career; and if not, why not?
- Career progression / Reflections on career trajectory

Semi-structured questions, prompts and approaches were identified in research team discussions. Interviewers had autonomy on how to lead the interview depending on the participant and the sensitive dynamics involved.

### 8.1. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data was analysed using a thematic framework, Braun and Clarke (2006). Analysis of data was further explored through coding via NVIVO.

### 8.2. RESEARCH CONVERSATIONS

A distinctive finding in the participant recruitment process was the perception of the term 'interview' for ME participants. Based on their experiences, participants suggested the term has connotations of failure, judgement and pressure (gained through their past experiences in the educational system, whether as a student or teacher). Therefore, some participants explained they felt uncertain of the term 'interview' and were at first hesitant to engage with the research. Some initially said they would not contribute – as they didn't want to be 'interviewed' or asked 'challenging' questions; this occurred several times early in the recruitment process and so 'interviews' were renamed 'research-conversations'. It is unclear whether this finding is specific to the population of the research or whether this is a wider issue across age groups and ethnicities.



Therefore, it is suggested that future research is needed to decipher the extent of this hesitation and understanding on the nuances of the term. The many days of data collection, the topics of conversation and the emotive nature of participants' lived experiences of racism, bullying or harassment, also resulted in an emotional toll for the research team as they heard and quietly empathised through their own lived experiences. This was especially pertinent for our research assistant who attended every individual / focus group research conversation during the data collection process.

## 9. Sampling Response

### 9.1. SAMPLE

The research aimed to gather a sample that was representative of the current Welsh context. This included the identification of key participant groups and ensuring that the sample reflected 'pan-Wales' - the complex and rich culture and cultures represented across the whole of Wales (Welsh Government, 2012). Therefore, the Participant Involvement Grid below (Table 2) was created before recruitment of participants had begun as it was important to have a focus for recruitment beforehand. The grid was updated during the participant recruitment process. The sample evolved in response to the challenges faced, both anticipated and unexpected. Overall, a total of 68 participants as outlined here were recruited during the limited data collection period of nine school weeks, not including school holidays. However, some teachers explained they wanted to take part and asked to meet with us in evenings, weekends and during their school holidays. All of the codes provided in Table 2, such as A1 or M1, represent a range of ethnicities that were identified via a 'Self-Defined Ethnic Classification Key' (See Appendix 2; Based on - <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups>).

**Table 2: Participant Involvement Grid**

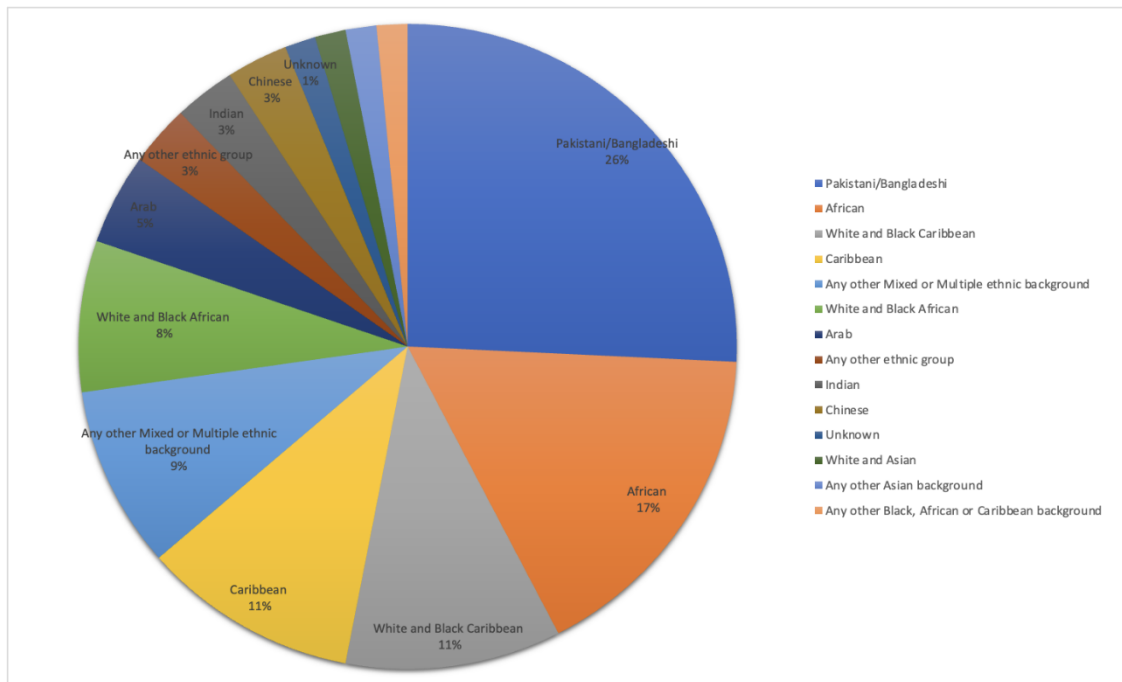
Target Group	Male	Female	By Ethnicity*
14-19 Age Group	2	4	M2, O1, O2
U/G Students	4	7	M1, M4, A2 (x2), A3
P/G Students	2	1	B1, B2, O2
ITE Students	1	9	M4 (x2), A2 (x2), A3, A4, A5, B2, O1
Unsuccessful ITE students	-	1	B1
Teachers	13	23	M1 (x2), M2 (x3), M3, M4, A2 (x4), A3, A4, B1 (x5), B2 (x5), B3, O1, O2
School Leaders	-	1	A1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>46</b>	

*\*Some participants did not disclose their self-defined ethnicity*

Table 2 shows the sample included 68 participants, with 22 males and 46 females, representing a 31.9% to 68.1% split. When considering the demographic of current teaching staff in Wales in 2019/20, it was identified that there were 20,215 female teachers and 6,595 male teachers (Welsh

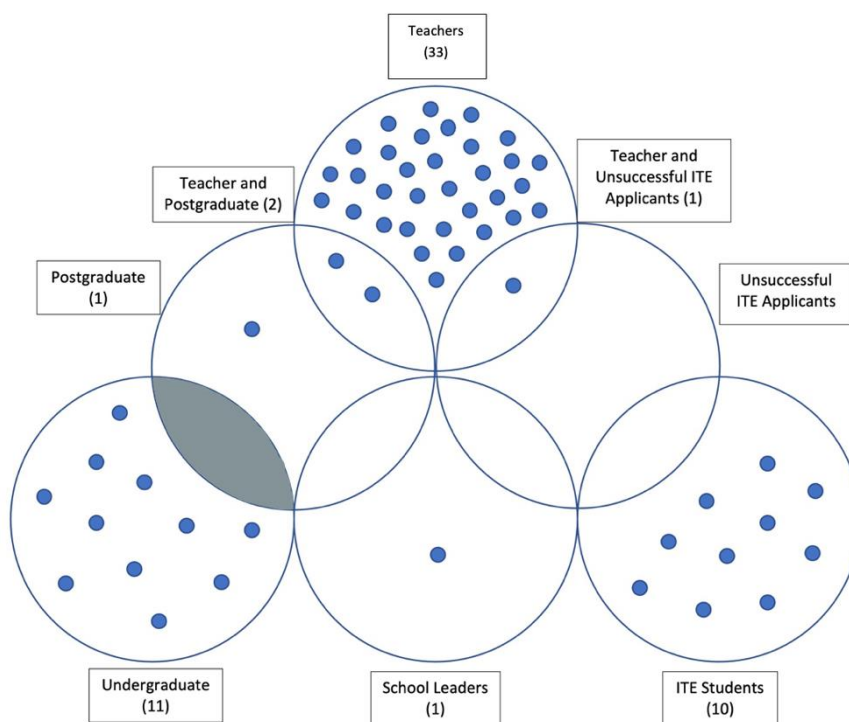
Government, 2020). Therefore, this demonstrates an imbalance of roughly 3 females to every 1 male in the teaching profession in Wales. Our sample is fairly representative of this.

An essential element was the ethnicity of participants and ensuring a representative sample of ethnic backgrounds found across Wales. Figure 6 provides a breakdown of the percentage of participants by self-defined ethnicity.



**Figure 6: Participants by Self-Defined Ethnicity**

The representativeness of the sample collected can be better portrayed when acknowledging the dynamic and intersectional nature of the participants and how they can be a member of more than one 'target group' simultaneously. For example, a member of teaching staff at one school can also be a postgraduate Masters' student at a Welsh university.



**Figure 7: Research Sample Venn Diagram**

The research sample Venn diagram portrays the dynamics and lived experiences of select participants within the research. The multi-categorisation of participants can be found in the ‘Teacher and Postgraduate’ (n=2) and ‘Teacher and Unsuccessful ITE Applicants’ (n=1) sections of the diagram, with impossible overlaps (postgraduate and undergraduate) being greyed out. Although insignificant in number, it was important that the overall journey of each participant was not lost. Figure 6 displays that ME teachers and learners can have complex lived experiences, which we have tried to portray through the development of the Venn Diagram.

Overall, the collected sample was an accessible representation of the categories and groups identified before the recruitment process began, as demonstrated in Table 2. Figure 6 also displays the dynamic nature of the sample and how their *lived experiences* were just as important as their current roles both as learners and educators. The research conversation data was transcribed, then co-analysed by the research team to identify the key themes and findings. The wider context of the sample and how this was collected is outlined in the next section.

# 10. Research Challenges

## 10.1 RESEARCH CHALLENGES

The most significant challenge throughout the research process was the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. This had a substantial impact on the way that the research team were able to recruit and engage with potential participants. This was especially the case, in relation to interviewing and engaging with the 14+ students as some young people of this age were not in full time attendance at school sites during the data collection period due to lockdown although they were attending school online and in school-hubs throughout. Within this unusual time, it was difficult for some schools to facilitate conversations with learners and their families. These were needed to break-down or translate the research project information and to explain the context and rationale of the research, a critical issue for multi-lingual families. In 'normal' pre-Covid times, the research team would have visited schools and arranged to talk with learners and their teachers. The research team were therefore reliant on email correspondence directly to schools and virtual meetings to recruit learners 14+. Social media adverts through professional and personal platforms were also used to recruit teacher and HE student participants. Most schools who were contacted across Wales did not reply within the short timescale.

## 10.2. GATEKEEPING BY ORGANISATIONS AND SCHOOLS

During the research process, the research team believed gatekeeping was evident and employed by some key organisations and schools. This slowed down or negated work. It appeared that gatekeepers withheld or delayed sharing research information that was meant essentially for ME teachers or students, often citing that they did not want to 'burden' staff or pupils. Whilst we understand organisations /Headteachers did not wish to overload staff, especially during a pandemic situation, we believe that ME staff should have been given the opportunity to decide for themselves on whether to be involved in the research process or not. By withholding research information from them, we felt this disempowered ME staff and students whom we were trying to target and was perceived as a 'colonial' approach by the research team. It was also viewed as a lack of empathy and understanding from gate keepers on the importance and relevance of the research for ME staff and learners. These barriers undoubtedly limited the scope and size of the overall sample. This 'paradigm of control' will have a continued impact on future research projects with similar focus and participants from ME backgrounds. Teacher participants were recruited (through our own networks and via social media) and when we did locate them - expressed how they were 'thankful' for the opportunity to discuss these issues.

## 10.3. THE USE OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS WAS AN EFFECTIVE METHOD FOR RECRUITMENT

Throughout the research process, reaching out personally to participants elicited the best engagement. Personal and professional networks were the most effective method for recruitment to the research project, with over 75% of the collected sample being sourced via this method. Exhaustive work by the research team, contacting potential participants via social media (twitter and LinkedIn) resulted in further participants. Whilst this illuminates a strength in the tenacity of the research team, it demonstrated that without this 'insider' knowledge and contacts within diverse

communities and of ME individuals in Wales, there would have been further barriers and challenges in accessing participants in the limited research time allocated. The research team aimed to recruit as many as possible of the 1066 currently registered teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds within the teaching profession in Wales. There was no system in place to assist us in this process. When approaching organisations that held data on ME students and teachers, we were unsuccessful in eliciting information. Whilst we understand and appreciate the issues surrounding participant and data protection, this is a barrier that must be addressed for future research projects to ensure all voices can be heard. The research team approached consortia across Wales. This was met with a positive response, with confirmation of the information being shared across their networks. However, this resulted in few participants (four) being recruited to the research. This was also the case in engaging with HEIs across Wales. The few students from outside Cardiff were recruited through our personal networks. The sample size, and representation of ME students and staff pan-Wales was disappointing. Exploration of research themes in North and West Wales remain untouched or the surface merely scratched.

#### *10.4. RESEARCH CHALLENGES: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

Initial challenges related to carrying out a research project in a pandemic. This inevitably led to delays in sourcing participants and organising focus groups or interviews. This was mitigated however, by making direct approaches to potential participants via our connections to communities or by twitter / social media. The overall response rate was sufficient, as 68 participants were sourced. We believe that there was reluctance from gatekeepers in disseminating research information to potential participants and this limited participation.

Obtaining ITE applicant data and data held on existing ME teachers / ITE students was generally unsuccessful from direct approaches to official sources. In future, we recommend accessible databases for the purpose of conducting similar research. A database will also aid in reaching research participants from North, Mid and West Wales and ME 14+ learners.

Overall, the team addressed the challenges encountered. Conducting the research was also a challenge for the research team due to the sensitive and triggering nature of some of the discussions. To ensure that a robust research process was in place. The emphasis was on recording the 'authentic voices' of the participants, which, as a team, we continuously strived to achieve.



### 11.1. ROLE MODELS AND REPRESENTATION

Findings indicate that most of the participants, especially teachers, perceived themselves as role models for learners and young people. There was recognition amongst ME teachers that it is their responsibility to help and lead the younger generation of ME learners. There was also a sense of obligation where some participants believed that being a role model is an opportunity to 'right the wrong' and provide what was not there when they were growing up. However, some ME teachers do not see themselves as role models. The majority of the participants were aware of under representation of ME teachers and role models, and there is a sense of expectation regarding the need for more teachers from minority backgrounds in Wales. These findings correspond to previous studies (Johnson, 2017; McNamara *et al.*, 2009) which explored critical life experiences such as professional and social identities; self-concepts; moral stewardship; role models and being community advocates, that influence the path to professional progression of ME teachers including the learners. Young ME learners revealed that for them, role models come in different forms. Conversations indicated that ME teachers are likely to identify members of their own families as role models. Perceived role models have an impact on the extent of the learner's aspiration.

### 11.2. BEING A ROLE MODEL

From conversations, it was revealed that teachers recognise a 'responsibility' upon them to act as role models or that learners /junior staff look up to them. Some of the teachers reflected on being a role model "Giving them a role model, being consistent, being aspirational to them that's it" (P30, Teacher). Participants also shared experiences of being a role model "we have quite a lot of ME male support staff now within the school, and many of them after working with me for a year or being within my classroom on supply, said they're going to apply to become a teacher, and I think that's probably the biggest compliment" (P1, Teacher).

"They see that when it comes to the staffing, they do come to me. They see me as a key stage 2 lead as well as a senior leader to help sort out problems...I know my job is to mentor [them]. I did everything I could possibly do and that seemed to make any difference" (P10, Teacher). There was a feeling of satisfaction and fulfilment for participants when they provided support to the learners and young people; "I try and do my best to help children realize about culture". "I got involved in a lot of stuff with younger age groups in schools, I'm a bit of role model for the younger ones. I was, a successful sportsman. I think it's quite well respected in that sense, and I found that had a good influence on them" With regard to English as an additional language "We have a lot of students that don't speak English. English is not their first language, so I have to teach them as well" (P17, Teacher/PG student)

Participants suggested that being a role model can be powerful for children who have similar background as them. Zirkel (2002) agrees and suggests race and gender matched role models gives children the best outcomes. "I guess children who have similar background to me they're like, oh, you know, that's a positive role model...so that's very powerful in the school because for most of the kids, the first black man they've met is me" (P23, Teacher) "the best feedback that I ever got from a parent was...every single child in your class leaves feeling like they're worth \$1,000,000. You make everyone feel good about themselves. Mental health is huge for me and I want them to feel accepted...be that person that makes them feel inspired so that they can be whoever they want to be,... I feel like I can make a difference" (P24, Teacher). For some participants, being a role model is



a career goal. “So right from a very young age. I've always wanted to teach people. That's been my aim from when I applied for my Masters. I see myself coaching and mentoring people”. (P17, **Teacher/PG student**). However, not all participants expressed an interest in being a role model “I never sought out anything to do with ethnic minority pupils (P21, **Teacher**). This was less common.

Mostly, participants revealed that they wanted to be role models to ‘right the wrong’ and contribute to the change needed in the teaching profession. Having the autonomy to change the status quo or narrative was mooted. “I've worked with children who are black or from diverse backgrounds and they said you're a teacher, and I said they can be a teacher too, so that's happened a lot of times when I think in terms of opportunities”(P26, **Teacher**) or “I think you would make a huge difference in their lives because on personal experience, if I had a black teacher, I think I would have probably had a completely different experience in school” (P1, **Teacher**). There was a realisation that schools need more black teachers, but in the case of black men, this equated to them being seen as disciplinarians (Brockenbrough, 2015; Sandles, 2018) “From the schools they welcome you in, but I find a lot of it is oh, you're black so you'll be a good teacher for kids. You will be good at discipline. We need more black men in teaching” (P29, **Teacher**).

### *11.3. TEACHERS AS ROLE MODELS*

Participants indicated that their own teachers were inspirational or role models when thinking of a career in teaching. “The one teacher was my Welsh teacher who really sort of understood me and took the time to get to know me and push me. To be the best I could be and I thought maybe one day I will be teaching myself” (P12, **Teacher**). In a similar, comment “My supervisor told me that a job was going in the school they wanted a newly qualified teacher and she was going to recommend me for that” (P17, **Teacher**). “hopefully if people see me as a headteacher, they might be inspired to be a teacher, so that's wonderful” (P1, **Teacher**). These comments suggest teachers see themselves as role model and are able to inspire learners. “It's nice having teachers from ethnic minorities. You feel like you know someone's there for you is so much easier to talk to them”. P30 (**Teacher**) agreed - “I think it's worth having, say, a black lecturer or somebody of colour who yes, maybe can decipher what you're saying. See you I mean”.

### *11.4. FAMILY MEMBERS AS ROLE MODELS*

Families were seen by participants as role models in influencing their aspirations of going into the teaching profession. Drawing from participants’ comments “my mom's a teacher. And so it was always there, but then I think my mom didn't become a teacher until later on...she went back and studied when we were at the end of a primary school” (P28, **Teacher**). “my mom isn't a teacher, but she was like look at the jobs that teachers do, they are amazing and maybe you can consider it, (P47, **Learner**) and “If I was to say role model, it would be my dad because he's a social worker and obviously there's not many black social workers either” (P1, **Teacher**).

This evidence suggested that parents are perceived as key role models for most participants in respect of education, training and career progression into teaching. This shows the vital role family plays for the aspirations of learners and young people. Previous studies on learner aspirations (Lloyd

*et al.*, 2018; Jodl *et al.*, 2001), support existing empirical research (Eccles and Harold, 1996) on the vital role of parental influence on learner aspirations.

### 11.5. 'LACK OF' RELATABLE ROLE MODELS

There are far fewer ME teachers and leaders in Wales than their white contemporaries. (Stats Wales, 2020) "I've never really worked with any ethnic minorities in terms of professionals, I have never had those kind of role models" (P18, ITE student). Also, "I didn't have a role model, there was no black teacher that I knew of. I was one of the first people on an ITE programme in Newport and to go onto higher education like that". (P2, Teacher). Another teacher said "There were no direct and positive role models...however, the only other Chinese person I knew in the school was my Chinese chemistry teacher. It turned out that I became a chemistry teacher. It has her positive influence on me" (P21, Teacher) The role models was often cited. "I don't really have any inspirational teachers in a sense of I look up to them" (P33, UG student) and in institutionalized education I would say I do not have any inspirational teachers" (P34, UG student).

Participants did not express surprise that there was a lack of relatable role models in Welsh schools. "I've never seen a teacher who looks like me" (P23, UG student) another said "There was only one teacher who was from an ethnic minority and that was me. I wasn't employed by their school I had a lot of issues there, where I was never introduced at e.g., training days .... I was the only leader of numeracy within my cluster within Wales, who was from a diverse background." (P39, Teacher). Other participants perceived this as racism: "Personally, I think it's racism, but I might be wrong. I wish there were more people from ethnic backgrounds in school" (P47, Learner). Participants were, however, hopeful that things will change in the future and that a diverse teaching workforce would become reality "there's nothing more wonderful than children seeing somebody who looks like them" (P46, Teacher).

### 11.6. THEME 1 - ROLE MODELS AND REPRESENTATION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Participant teachers confirmed they largely perceived themselves as role models in their schools. There was a clear indication that they have a sense of responsibility to support the younger generation of ME learners. Being a teacher was viewed as an opportunity to support ME learners in navigating the challenges of racial inequality. There are others who do not perceive themselves as role models, nor think they should be seen as such, as they are just 'teachers'.

Young ME learners and students shared similar views in identifying teachers as role models and being a source of inspiration. ME teachers in many cases identified members of their own families as a source of inspiration. Black male teachers told us they are often perceived as disciplinarians. Good discipline should be in the remit of all teachers and not the preserve of black males.

Overall, participants acknowledged the lack of and the need for relatable ME role models for learners in Wales. Increased recruitment of ME teachers will lead to availability of more role models and will serve to raise aspirations, supporting the roles families play in inspiring learners. Other initiatives such as augmenting the range of inclusive literature and utilising platforms such as parents' evenings for schools to work in further partnership with parents should be a feature going forward.



### *12.1. EMOTIONAL TOLL ON THE RESEARCH TEAM*

Mental health and wellbeing are areas that are well documented in relation to the school agenda. As a research team, we were mindful of our own mental health and wellbeing needs. Thus, a factor which we had prepared for in our risk assessment was the emotional toll during and following interviews. Most of us had direct experiences ourselves of racism encountered during our own school days or in a professional capacity. It became apparent however, that the continual experience of participants sharing examples of racism from their own lives both professionally and when in the school system, did have a cumulative emotional effect on us. As set out earlier, the participants mostly opted for a one to one 'conversation' and these proved intense. Early on, it was decided that each researcher would only carry out two interviews per day, to negate this emotional toll. We found participants not only detailed their own experiences, but shared examples of racism suffered by their own family members, further amplifying the 'emotional buffeting' we encountered.

As we were carrying out the research conversations through an empathetic lens, it was often difficult to do so without an emotional consequence. Ross (2017, p.326) discusses the 'emotional investment' needed in a 'researcher – participant dynamic'. This was acknowledged and maintaining a professional distance was wholly pertinent and continually observed to negate any bias in our reflections. We were also mindful of the roles of power and positionality in the given research context. (Song and Parker, 1995; Greene, 2014). It was a key goal of the research team to retain a 'respectful' discourse with participants. We adhered to the ideas of Tilley (1998, p.316) who proposed a need for 'someone familiar' to conduct these conversations and someone who had direct understanding and experience of the issues or familiarity with the issues. We fully understood the complexity and nuances of situations the participants had been through or relayed to us as diverse students or diverse educators.

### *12.2. EMOTIONAL TOLL ON PARTICIPANTS*

A common thread throughout the research and one which was identified from the participant voice, was reflection on how racial issues had impacted on their mental health / wellbeing, either during their own school days, in FE/ HE or as teachers. It became clear that incidents of racism affected confidence and self-esteem on into adulthood in some cases. *"The racism and bullying I suffered when I was in school, ended up in me leaving. I missed a year of school because I had mental health issues. I had an eating disorder, I ended up in hospital, after that I moved to another school"* (P4, ITE student). Participant 4 shared with us the trauma of continual racist bullying by a group of girls at her school. *"I was traumatized by it. You know, really traumatized by it and I told my teacher and, He didn't do anything He did absolutely nothing. I remember it all now as if it was yesterday, I would have been 11 so I remember it 28 years later. I always felt that he'd let me down because I thought you're my teacher."* (P4, ITE student). Feeling depressed or having depression as a young person was also a common theme: *"I would say I suffered with depression as a child, from a really young age. I think that had a lot to do with how I was treated in school by teachers because of my race, probably the main reason. Yeah, I felt invisible a lot of the time, horrible feeling, isn't it?"* (P15, ITE student) It was evident that participants were not asking for or expressing self-pity. As a research team our primary role during this research process, was to record and capture participant voice and this was a central tenet of the research, thus participant testimonies are their spoken and lived truths. Coping strategies, were frequently noted as a mechanism for everyday life; these often involved sparing the feelings of others: *"I had lots of issues at school, lots of problems that went*

down, with the other students, which made me doubt myself. I would never get my parents involved or talk to them about it. I didn't want to worry them." (P1, Teacher). There were also negating factors which came into play, and it is pertinent to set out that for ME learners having a supportive teacher cannot be overestimated. As this participant sets out – "My PE teacher at secondary school was fabulous, she was brilliant. Because I went through a lot when I was at secondary because I was dealing issues such as bullying because of my race and with my mental health but she was really supportive. She was the difference." (P34, ITE student).

### 12.3. MENTAL HEALTH / WELLBEING ISSUES IN SCHOOL OR AS A TEACHER OR ITE STUDENT

Williams (2018, p.467) stresses that there is 'considerable complexity in the association between race and mental health'. It is not in the remit of this research report to unpick that assertion, or to suggest that being from a diverse background means you will suffer from mental health or a wellbeing deficit. A finding of interest which did surface was an altruistic one, whereby participants wanted to become teachers to support the next generation of diverse learners to feel better about themselves than they did when in school. "I wanted to become a teacher mainly because, I just want to make children feel good, I want them to feel good about themselves. Positive mental health is huge for me and I want them to feel accepted and I want to be able to be that person that makes them feel inspired so that they can be whoever they want to be. I want them to feel better as a child than I did when I was a child." (P3, ITE student).

### 12.4. RACIST INCIDENTS, MICRO-AGGRESSIONS AND EFFECTS ON WELLBEING

Interview data indicates that participants encountered racism and micro-aggressions from white teachers or colleagues. This had a marked effect on their wellbeing. A survey by NASUWT (2016) found around half of the 676 EM teachers interviewed did not feel confident reporting racist incidents that they encountered in their everyday work in school. This was due to a perceived lack of support. The teachers that did, outlined that their experiences were typically labelled as being 'oversensitive', 'paranoid' or 'aggressive'. NASUWT also learned that teachers experienced micro-insults, 'gaslighting' and other forms of covert racism regularly. Unfortunately, we also found this to be the case – "I experience racism and micro-aggressions in my job role. I just need to know what I can do because I need to protect myself, because it's really affecting my mental health and wellbeing and actually starting to affect my family life as well" (P49, Teacher).

"lots and lots of things happened and to the point that I would be crying every single day, this lasted for about 3 years. I was crying in the cupboard, crying, going into work, crying in work, crying constantly. I was in a meeting in a room with this staff member, (senior staff) who pulled her chair up to me so as to intimidate me, our knees touched and I was so infuriated that I was shaking with anger, more than anything else. Just shaking!" (P14, Teacher).

Interestingly, participants would say - "I'm not sure if it was racism" or "I thought it was a micro-aggression, but I may have been being oversensitive" (P9 and P20, Teachers) when it clearly was. Williams *et.al.*, (2020) suggest that micro-aggressions are 'minimized' by the recipient as they are often perceived as 'cultural missteps or faux pas'. They argue that it is more complex than this and micro-aggressions are in fact a form of oppression that continues to reinforce notable power differences, whether this is a conscious act or not by the offender. One such example is illustrated

here – “I thought it was a micro aggression...it’s the internal racism that gets to you...because it was something she said to everyone, there was 15 of us, but they all looked at me! by the end of it I was in tears.” (P49, teacher) Or another example – “I remember not wanting to go into the staff room because it just felt that you were out of it, that the conversations didn't seem to include you that sort of thing, so I spent more time in my classroom” (P2, Teacher).

### 12.5. LONELINESS AND TRYING TO ‘FIT IN’

Teachers and ITE students reported that they often felt isolated if they were the only EM teacher in their school. “No staff member ever talked to me about it. How I was coping or, you know, had a discussion with me on any level about it. So even when the dinner lady reported that particular racist incident, yeah, that wasn't followed up by anybody” (P15, ITE student). Another participant spoke about feeling lonely on her ITE programme and the lack of support, from her ITE tutor - “I experienced a racist incident directed at me by a teacher on a school training day. I was so embarrassed, she humiliated me. I told my university tutor, but she said she didn’t know how to deal with it, as she had no experience in this area and didn’t want to upset anyone. Sometimes I’ve felt really lonely on this course because people don’t understand as they have never experienced racism. You cannot be the only brown person on an ITE programme, you can't be? but that’s how I felt to be honest, I almost left after that comment from the teacher and my tutor because I thought I don't want to be in a profession that doesn't encourage people like me.” (P4, ITE student). This loneliness was compounded by participants ‘bottling up feelings’ and not sharing them with others - “I have never shared these experiences with anyone outside of my family” (P45, Senior Leader).

Some conversations we had with participants led to them reflecting on the need to ‘fit in’ within a white staffed school, and ‘diluting’ or ‘toning down’ their personality or diversity. “Being a minority can be difficult. Yes, looking back on it trying to fit in and trying to make new friends” (P12, Teacher). Another example here – “You put undue pressure on yourself to fit in and that then can have a negative effect” (P17, Teacher).

Miller (2015) talks about ‘appeasement of adaptation’ as being the process where ME teachers ‘proved themselves’ and had become part of a clique within a school. He states that ME teachers may have greater chances of success or promotion if they are prepared to ‘adopt, adapt and adjust’ their behaviours to that of white teachers. It was poignant to note that participants spoke of the mental energy it took to navigate being the only ME teacher in a school “All of this takes energy, and people have to understand the brutal realities of that energy and hopefully over time less energy will be expended in that way. But for the here and now, it is. That is the mental draining part of it” (P16, Teacher). Another example of this – “I try to integrate as much as possible with other teachers and other teaching staff. I mean you may have certain objections to your various cultural or religious reason to doing some things, but as much as possible I try and integrate with other people, In the department so in the staff room, for example, at lunchtime, you know people sitting there have some banter and chat and all that kind of thing” (P12, Teacher). The notion that ME teachers must work hard to fit into a white school runs parallel with the trope that they have to work harder overall. This was a common theme – “I have to work extra. Forgetting about my own mental health, my family, anything else that I've got going on. Basically, I have to put in twice if not three times as much effort into my learning, then those I've seen within the classroom as me” (P41, ITE student).

## *12.6. THEME 2 - WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

Incidents of childhood racism adversely influenced the confidence and self-esteem of participants into their adulthood. Participants were altruistic to other ME colleagues or learners based on their own experiences. Participants felt a need to mentor younger ME colleagues or learners to enable better experiences for them than those they had when they were at school or within the workplace.

Teacher and learners encountered racist behaviours and micro-aggressions in the school / university setting. This took a toll on their wellbeing. Both teachers and learners reported feeling isolated when they were the only ME teacher/learner in a school. Participants talked about trying to 'fit in' to a majority white space in schools and this resulted in a process of 'toning down' or 'blending in' either personality, professionally or culturally. This affected mental wellbeing, confidence and sense of self.

The creation of safe spaces for ME teachers and learners to share their experiences, network, and support each other to alleviate pressures brought about by isolation is recommended. Clear support mechanisms should be put in place to mentor ME staff in their career progression. Awareness of the consequences of 'racial trauma' and support for ME staff and students with mental wellbeing needs is vital.







### 13.1. RACISM IN CHILDHOOD

It is clear from the various experiences set out in this report that perceptions of racism or racist behaviour must be tackled more robustly in Welsh schools. The cumulative effect of racism continues to impact and influence the experiences of those who have endured it when they were younger. There are several examples mentioned by participants whereby they received unequal treatment in school, compared to their white counterparts. For example, **(P29, Teacher)** was involved in fights at school growing up and whenever the police were called, it was only the black Caribbean boys that were searched and interrogated. (Gregory, et al., 2016; Jacoby-Senghor *et al.*, 2016) suggest implicit biases that contribute to perceptions about behaviour can be subtle and white staff must avoid stereotyping and labelling black boys as troublemakers. It is also vital that teachers do not assume any misconduct is part of a pattern of misbehaviour.

There are several incidences of microaggressions (e.g., mistaken identity by virtue of being black) that are noted by the participants. They raise questions about how racial bias has become so normalised in society that even those enduring it struggle to discern it right away. For instance, **P19 (Teacher)** when growing up was told “you are black, but you are alright.” At the time of growing up she felt that this was a normal thing to hear and only realised when older that this is not normal behaviour and should be called out. Even within her own family unit which had mixed race children, some older relatives used to refer to them as “eggnogs.” Growing up and still experiencing various forms of bias even led one participant to eventually change their name to a more anglicised one. Participants experienced other forms of overt racism as children, for example **P37 (Teacher)** once had a brick thrown through their window which narrowly missed a member of the family. **P4, (Teacher)** recalls being in Woolworths with her mother at around the age of six and a woman walked up to say, “it is disgusting to have mixed race children.” **P55 (Teacher)** recalled when, as a pupil, there was a class incident where a young African boy went on holiday, and when their name was read out for the register the class began chanting and banging the tables. The teacher laughed it off. The behaviour was not taken seriously even though it was clear that it had an impact on another black pupil in the same class.

**P1 (Teacher)** remembers an activity at school in which they had to bring some music into school. The participant brought in a Bob Marley record and the teacher said “No” as this was inappropriate music, and it was not to be played alongside the other pupils’ music choices with no real explanation apart from the teacher stating that “we don’t listen to this music here”. **P2 (Teacher)** indicated that going to school in the late 70s and 80s, all their teachers were white and there were no black teachers. The participant felt that they “could not be at their best and had to walk on eggshells because of clear differences in perspective,” they felt they could not really express themselves. They also mentioned that even when they saw elements of injustice, they felt they could not say anything because the rhetoric would often be that “I had a chip on my shoulder” (**P2, Teacher**).

**P27 (UG student)** indicated that when it came to matters of race in the classroom, they always felt more educated than their teachers but not necessarily empowered nor welcomed. An example experience was during Black History Month, their teacher took a relevant lesson in which they kept referring to “coloured people”. The participant made a concerted effort to correct the teacher, and this was received with harshness. **P10 (ITE Student)** mentioned that their brother was involved in a lot of fights at school after being bullied and being called racist names. He was then labelled a

troublemaker. **(P12, Teacher)** remembers an incident in which a window had been smashed and the Headteacher called the three black boys that were in the school to his office. The participants acknowledged that although these were childhood experiences, they could still recall them and they still affected them. Priest *et al.*, (2019, p.344) suggest experiences of racism have an ‘incremental negative effect’ on socio-emotional development. **P13 (Teacher)** mentioned that a lot of the racism they experienced did not come from other children but from teachers. Some of the racism was also confusing because some teachers used racial slurs in a seemingly endearing manner. Such behaviour came across as ignorance. **P15 (ITE Student)** on the other hand mentioned that most pupils used to make comments about their hair as opposed to the colour of their skin. “I have several incidences in which my hair was likened to comical characters on the TV and also many times kids would run up to touch my hair and run away” **(P15 ITE student)**. Although this participant does not remember direct racist incidents from teachers, they felt that they were largely just ignored in school. She also recalls someone copying her homework and then getting a higher grade than them. Racist teasing was commonly endured an example of this - “God made you at night and forgot to paint you white” **(P2, Teacher)**. A participant who was the only non-white person in their school felt like a “lonely voice in the wilderness” **(P26, Teacher)** and could not really do anything about the racism they encountered as the school did nothing, so they just had to get on with it.

Some of the positive experiences were due to engagement in extracurricular activities, for example **P12 (Teacher)** was sporty and talented in this area and was given kudos as a result. Other participants encountered unfavourable experiences, but due to the nature of the incidents, it was difficult to discern whether it had a racial bias or was bullying. “I questioned myself for seven to eight months whether it was racism or bullying? I concluded that it was racism because there were so many additional things I endured personally. For example, I had to make a folder of work for myself that I missed due to being away but everybody else had their folders made by the teacher.” **(P14, Teacher)**.

### 13.2. RACISM AS A LEARNER

Some of the negative experiences include instances where learners were allocated ITE placement opportunities in groups. **P54 (Teacher)** was in a class of seven which consisted of two groups each containing three white learners all of whom were allocated joint placements while leaving the ME participant to be assigned to a placement on their own. **P48 (Teacher)** alludes to the sentiment that “racism is still rife” and they intimated that when they were younger, they had negative experiences but unfortunately did not know any better even though the name calling and some of the covert forms “would sting” **(P48, Teacher)**.

**P27 (Learner)** observed that although they were of mixed race, conversations about race always seemed to pivot around the fact that they were part Nigerian and never about their Welshness. Participants reported different perspectives in the transitions from learner into the teaching profession, **P25 (UG student)** noted that when they struggled to find a job, they tried to look at it objectively but with their (exemplary) qualifications, could not see the barrier to be anything other than race, stopping them from obtaining teaching posts.

### 13.3. RACISM AS A TEACHER

There are several different experiences expressed by ME teachers within the teaching profession about their experiences and encounters with racism. **P2 (Teacher)** worked abroad in a country where most people looked like them. “It was just brilliant being a black woman and a black person, being a teacher, just being a human being, it was fantastic.” She however, intimated that on returning to the UK, this was met with trepidation, and she felt that she was “not ready to face the realities of being a black teacher in this country and not looking forward to being a second-class citizen. Seeing other black people here I could not help but notice the look of hopelessness that seemed to permeate. At that time, it was just a natural part of everyday life and one was resigned to the fact that you just had to accept it” (**P2, Teacher**).

Interestingly, a black female teacher reported having experienced racial prejudice from black female students and their mothers, when she started her career. “Black children in schools did not necessarily accept black teachers. In the late 70s/early 80s, there weren’t many black teachers, and therefore it wasn’t the norm, and so they didn’t equate you being as good as the white teachers” (**P2, Teacher**). The extent to which such perception is still in existence in 2021 is unclear, although studies such as Bent et al. (2012) found that if teachers were from similar ethnic backgrounds to their pupils, it did not necessarily mean that they could identify any better with these pupils.

**P46 (Teacher)** alluded to some of the difficulties that ME people face when searching for employment, in their experience when sharing difficulties with white counterparts they unfortunately received a very neutral message that ‘everyone finds difficulties’ with very little support or understanding. There are a range of reasons why individuals may struggle to find jobs, but it appears that race often plays a part. There are ‘invisible’ barriers in place for ME NQTs. In securing teaching roles, context is important; however, all schools are different. “my school is not racist but there are many people there that are racist.” (**P47, Learner**). There also seems to be an acceptance amongst participants that racism cannot be eradicated and they are powerless. “Again, obviously you always have racism coming from people on the streets as well. I think that’s just a part of growing up and being an Asian. It shouldn’t be, but you kind of accept that.” (**P65, UG student**). “We just had to resign to the status quo as it was treated as the norm” (**P26, Teacher**). Resilience and ‘blending in’ was often noted as a coping mechanism against racism - “My extrovert nature makes it easier for me to ‘blend in’ and interact with others and it helps to demonstrate that I am just a person like everyone else” (**P9, Teacher/PG student**).

It is worrying that racial prejudice from students directed at ME teachers is still taking place in schools in Wales today, mostly in the form of verbal racial abuse, e.g. **P3, (Teacher)** was asked by a student - “show me your big African bush”. In these incidents, whilst the ME teacher may feel supported by senior management’s response, nothing beyond an exclusion period for the student is enacted. In some cases, the ME teacher is further disadvantaged when the school, deflects the incident and puts the onus for discipline back onto them.

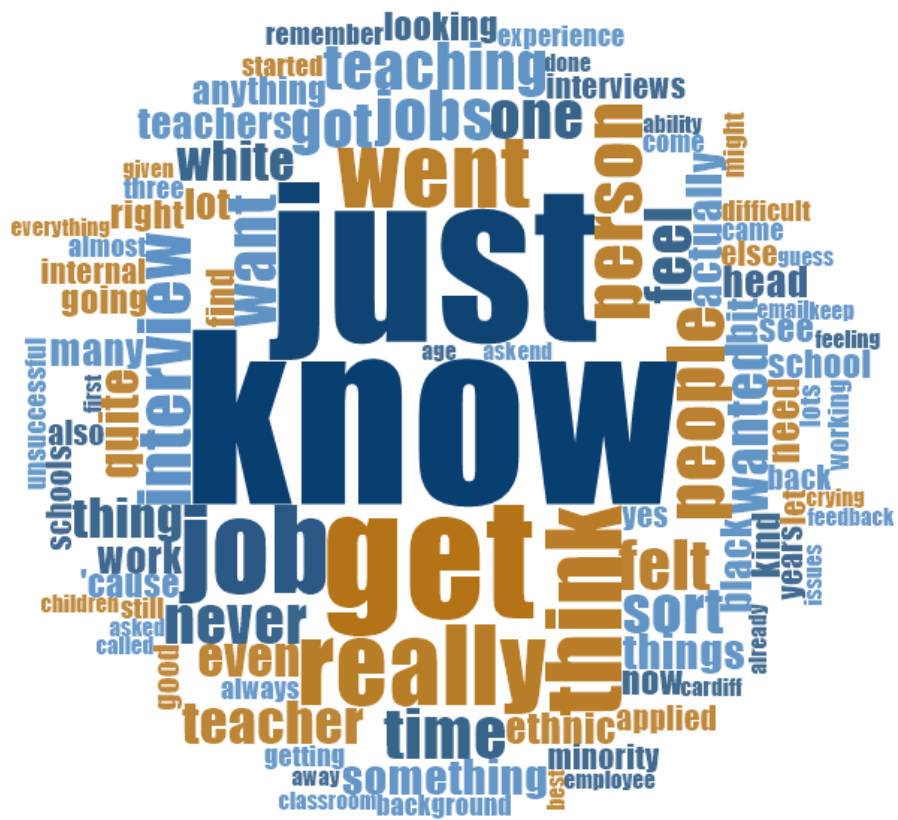
#### 13.4. THEME 3 – RACISM: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The existence of racism as an ongoing reality was widely shared by participants, for example, being exposed to racial slurs 'in jest' or that they "walk on eggshells" (P2, Teacher) to make sure they do and say the right thing. Participants expressed a sense of disempowerment or did not disclose racist incidents which they were subjected to, because they believed it was futile to do so, or that they did not want to 'rock the boat'. ME teachers who had been subjected to racist incidents perpetrated by students were made to feel that they should find solutions for these behaviours, rather than it being a whole school problem, and one for the school to address.

Teachers who had taught in diverse schools in the London area, felt part of the team/group and less sense of isolation occurred. On moving to Wales, this was not the case. There is a lack of understanding and recognition of the difficulties that ME people face within the teaching profession, which discourages others from entering the profession. Participants noted that each school operates within its own contextual framework but agreed that 'labelling' ME learners, (which is common) promotes stereotyping and impedes their personal growth.

The researchers recommend that schools adopt an anti-racist stance to address overt and covert racism being directed at ME learners and staff and that labelling ME learners with terms like 'the Caribbean boys', is not helpful and "does not allow ME pupils to become who they could be." (P2, Teacher). The existence of implicit biases, particularly around the stereotyping of black boys, viewing them as 'problematic' needs to be addressed. This study asserts the importance of disaggregating isolated incidents of misbehaviour with patterns of misbehaviour.

*“I feel like we have to prove ourselves even more than an average white person...” (Participant 37, Teacher)*



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## 14. Theme 4: Rejection

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## 14.1. REJECTION

Findings in relation to this section, highlight participant narratives and their lived experiences of rejection, career aspiration and career progression. The perception of rejection as a lived experience of ME participants has implications and involves feelings of self-blame, and 'settling' at a comfort zone. Participant voice sets out this. These findings agree and complement existing studies (Duff and Uchida, 1997; Zembylas, 2003 and Tsui, 2007) which discuss the complex inter-relationships between teachers' sociocultural identities and teaching practices. A feeling of rejection was relevant to many participants. **P10 (Teacher)** and **P11 (ITE Student)** narrated their stories of how difficult it was to go through visa applications and how they went to the Vice Chancellors of their Universities to seek support. "The most difficult thing for me was that I need a visa to be in this country...but in a way they turned me down, even though I had an offer. I had to fight my way. I had to email the Vice Chancellor to get something done to speed things up". (**P11, ITE Student**).

There was a perception that participants needed to constantly prove their work in terms of skills and professionalism; **P26 (Teacher)** noted - "Just proving yourself. Proving that your competency in doing what you do, And I think I would try little bit harder as well I suppose. I would have to work twice as hard to prove myself". **P9 (Teacher)** agreed - "As a black teacher, you're constantly fighting constantly, you know because of this. Because of that, they don't understand you. They forget what you are capable of". **P2 (Teacher)** shared their views - "I didn't want to be given anything just because of my skin colour, so I felt I needed to even prove myself even more". **P4 (ITE Student)** added: "That you always had to work harder than other people to be recognized. I just wanted to please. I wanted to please all the time". Some participants argued that because there is lack of diversity on an interview panel, they are unlikely to succeed. **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** noted - "It's [tough to get to] you know, because what you tend to find is the majority of interview panels, they're not as diverse as they potentially could be".

They also noted that being resilient was their coping strategy and a way to survive through their journey within the teaching profession. In words of **P1 (Teacher)** - "you just stick at it, you will change the lives of so many children, especially if you are fortunate enough to teach children of other ethnic minorities as well". **P16 (Teacher)** added - "but there needs to be something for leaders because what you experience and how you have to navigate yourself, whether you should or shouldn't, is a different question. But you have to take a certain level of resilience... And it takes energy, and people have to understand the brutal realities of that energy and hopefully over time, less energy will be expended in that way. But for the here and now, that is the mental draining part of it ... we have resilience. If you don't have resilience, it's a lonely old place". Some of the participants find a way to remain motivated. This is evident from comments from **P19 (ITE Student)** - "I don't think there's going to be anything stopping me in terms of getting that position, really, if I wanted to ...I just kind of want to take every day as it comes. Learn from what I can learn from what comes to me". **P8 (Teacher)** agreed and stated - "I you know, as a teacher, I've always felt that I go for whatever I want to go for. Whether people identify I'm stubborn, maybe I am, but any job that came up that I felt I could do, I applied for I didn't get a lot of them, but it didn't really deter me because I always felt that it was for the kids". Participants used various words to describe their feelings of rejection. Some of the common themes included 'undervalued', 'silenced' and 'helpless'. These words demonstrated the impact of rejection on aspiration and confidence.

### *14.2. FEELING 'UNDervalUED' OR CLASSed AS A 'SECOND CLASS CITIZEN'*

Participants expressed that they felt undervalued and there was the perception that they needed to constantly self-evaluate or assess themselves to be sure that they fitted in. "I felt I was out of my comfort zone. I didn't know if my work was valued as much. It was valued in the sense that we used to get really good examination results...I felt constantly that I needed to prove myself. I needed to do something to demonstrate that I was worthy of responsibility or that I needed something extra" - **P25 (Teacher)**. Another **P3 (Teacher)** agreed - "It just made me feel really undervalued, but also embarrassed...My development, my professional development is lacking in some way...my leadership journey... It's been up and very down and then slightly up again". There was evidence of being treated as a second-class citizen, and this was how **P2 (Teacher)** described it - "It didn't matter about any sort of qualifications that you had. You were seen first as black and then a woman". There were comments regarding feelings of 'not belonging'. **P39 (Teacher)** shared her experience - "I didn't get the permanent position and now I'm asked to train the person that you employed...that was better than me, you know. It was things like that really got to me I really thought I was going to quit because of it". **P2 (Teacher)** shared a similar experience - "I remember not wanting to go into the staff room because it just felt that you were out of it, that the conversations didn't seem to include you at that sort of thing, so I spent more time in my classroom". **P4 (ITE Student)** added - "I can't even remember how many interviews I've had. I just never got the job because they wanted somebody that was already in the school"

### *14.3. 'SILENCED', 'HELPLESS' AND 'STRESSED'*

Some participants noted that they felt silenced and helpless. In the words of **P3 (Teacher)** who stated - "not overstepping the mark as a person of colour in certain organizations, because it will be viewed as being outspoken. I think it's just there. Asking questions might be seen as being insubordinate or problematic...I think at the moment, that was something that I felt at my school I was completely ignored. It [feeling of rejection] and the George Floyd murder, you know that really did affect me quite a lot". **P3 (Teacher)** expressed how stressed she was feeling - "I ended up taking a little bit of time out, stress leave, you know which I think was a combination of all of those factors. I'm back at school now, but one of the things that I did was I had a conversation with the doctors at occupational health". There were indications from the participants that they lacked support and had no option but to 'live' with it. **P8 (Teacher)** remarked - "when I've gone for a job or emailed somebody about it, or say can I speak about the job, and they blanked me, so made me feel that there's no point in applying for it...no support, my (white) colleagues had support and were told 'yeah go for it'. When I approached the same person it's like they put a damper on it...when I was accepted to do higher qualifications at University .... I was basically told why are you going for it? I haven't got that qualification! You don't need it to do your job. They were basically saying no, no, no, and then I realized that somebody else was doing a similar thing to what I had asked to do two years ago. So, it is if your face fits. I just let things go, because otherwise I'd be without a job, This is the problem, isn't it? Should we let it go?". **P25 (Teacher)** agreed - "I remember applying for hundreds and hundreds of jobs in the past, I've gone through. Applied for loads and loads of jobs all over the place and no, no it hasn't been easy". Sometimes even where there was support, the feedback was not helpful. **P29 (Teacher)** says: "The feedback was very poor".



Some participants recognized our research conversation as an opportunity to speak or to be heard; they believed that any discussion around race had now been 'politicized' and likened to the Black Lives Matters movement. Phillips et. al., (2018, online) discuss the difficulty that ME staff have with 'opening up' on issues to do with race or racism for fear of alienating white peers or management. **P8 (Teacher)** noted - "I volunteered for this research study, because I just felt this is something positive that I can do that doesn't make me feel so helpless and allows me to be part of the conversation".

#### *14.4. REJECTION IMPACTS CONFIDENCE*

The feeling of rejection had impact on the confidence of the participants. **As P3 (Teacher)** put it: "The biggest impact it had on me I would say is that although I see jobs that come up sometimes and think, but I need to develop my [skills], but I've completely lost my confidence, and it makes me quite emotional, but I don't feel that I'm good enough for those roles anymore". Narrating the experience at an interview, **P8 (Teacher)** said - "I've been told at interview: ...why are you talking about your experiences, as senior manager/ senior leader in another school when that was like 2-3 years ago. How is that relevant to you? Going for a senior leader role now you know and sort of knocking me down.... I've always found it hard to take it really and it stopped me applying for other things".

It was evident that rejection made participants have feeling of 'self-shame' that they are not good enough. **P8 (Teacher)** stated - "I often feel like I set myself up to fail and it actually limits my potential to progress". **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** shared a similar view - "when they find out at interview you are an ME person, they're like no, we don't want that person. Some people have been rejected".

In some cases, as narrated by the participants, rejection has a 'knock on' effect on confidence. This is evidenced by **P11 (ITE Student)** - "I'm more than qualified for it. I didn't get it.... So I was very disappointed. Very upset, now I'm not looking anymore, and it's difficult to get jobs in Wales, I am moving to Essex for my first job". This feeling is also shared by **P4 (ITE Student)** - "I went for quite a lot of TA jobs to get some more experience but I couldn't get one. I couldn't afford to do it unpaid. You know, to volunteer and I was trying. I probably went for six or eight jobs. Got an interview and just didn't get any further".

#### *14.5. REJECTION IMPACTS ASPIRATION FOR PROGRESSION*

Most of the participants feel that there is a ceiling and barrier for their progression because of previous rejections and this could add to their frustration and feelings of hopelessness. **P12 (Teacher)** stated - "Yes, I've been here now for the last seven years and I don't really know what my next steps are, I've always, thought I'd go up the ladder - assistant head teacher and deputy head teacher. But last few years. I don't really see myself, certainly in my own school fitting into that role". **P25 (Teacher)** echoed this reality - "I started supply teaching in Wales and then it was a struggle to get a full time job."

There is a perception that as a minority ethnic teacher, you are unlikely to get the position, and this can have huge impact on aspiration; **P44 (Teacher)** shared - "we have lots of ethnic minority people applying to be teachers' assistants but not wanting to take the leap - to become a teacher, that



barrier is not getting the job...I've applied for countless numbers of jobs, but I just haven't got any. I haven't been shortlisted and I haven't managed to get a job, yeah, and I don't know if that's because my application isn't good enough, or if it's because I'm older. I'm just at a loss really”.

**P45 (Teacher)** shared a similar frustration - “I wouldn't want another interview again ....When I was supply teaching in Cardiff, I found it very difficult to get a full-time teaching job and then when I did get a teaching job or even in the schools that I went into do supply, there were no black teachers...I couldn't get a job and I can't help thinking for the most part that, maybe if I'd been white, I would have got a job, but I didn't because in all the schools I went to ...all the other teachers were white.. You know it might not be a colour thing, but it certainly felt like it to me”. **P49 (Teacher)** narrated her experience - “the roles which I've applied for, where actually not only do I meet the requirements, but some roles I even exceed the requirements, I have three Masters’ degrees. But the thing is, I've not been called for an interview, right? It's starting to feel, bleak - if I didn't meet the requirements, I'd understand.”

The implication of this these experiences of rejection is that the participants settle at their ‘comfort zone’ without the will or aspiration to progress onto a higher position. **P12 (Teacher)** stated - “I don't think I would want to go any higher”. **P14 (Teacher)** agreed - if you’re minority ethnic teacher and there's nobody up there that gives you that chance - then you’ve had it!”.

#### *14.6. THEME 4 – REJECTION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

Many participants intimated that for them to find a job or progress, they must ‘prove their worth’, over and above their white counterparts. In their experiences the job application/ interview process was not a level playing field and that lack of diversity on interview panels was a direct factor, along with a lack of / unhelpful feedback. This was especially pertinent when they were ‘overqualified’ for posts they did not get. Participants highlighted that the lack of diversity in schools has often led to a lack of appreciation of them as an ME person and the unique qualities they can bring to a school.

Resilience was noted amongst participants with a mindset of having to ‘keep on striving’ until they got there. Conversely, there is also a tendency for participants to ‘settle’ at a ‘comfort zone’ and cease working towards progression to higher positions which they see as unattainable. This means that ME teachers often do not reach their potential, resulting in a loss for the teaching profession in Wales.

Further research is needed on the career journey for ME teachers. There is a need for targeted career support. It is also important that educational institutions ensure the diversity of interview panels in the recruitment and promotion process.



### 15.1. CAREER PROGRESSION

The perception of an invisible 'glass' ceiling on promotion is a lived reality for many ME teachers. A survey by the National Education Union (NEU/ Runnymede, 2017) reported that there is a view within senior management in schools that ME teachers 'have a certain level and don't go beyond it'. Participants reported some difficulties and successes within career progression. It seems that the lack of ME staff in senior leadership teams has a massive impact in terms of raising aspirations. **P27 (14-18 Learner)** shared that the only careers advice they had was that Universities were a good consideration for career progression. **P47 (14-18 Learner)** mentioned that they do not know how to progress and feel that things will stay the same for a long time due to the lack of support.

On the other hand, **P48 (Teacher)** stated that - "I felt supported in my progression, but I never really had any desire to be anything but classroom teaching." They, however, acknowledge that the reality is that all staff need to take on responsibilities as they gain experience. It appears from the responses that mentoring could play a crucial role in supporting progression of ME staff and students.

### 15.2. GLASS CEILINGS

**P1 (Teacher)** mentioned that a clear progression pathway would be helpful when working towards headship, however, there are no clear steps set out in terms of how one works towards some of these roles. **P10 (Teacher)** mentioned that although they have been acting deputy, they feel that they have hit the ceiling within their own school.

**P12 (Teacher)** mentioned that it was difficult to break through. They have been teaching for the last seven years and do not really know how to progress to the next steps. They have a desire to progress up the ladder to become an assistant head teacher but don't see themselves ever reaching that role at their current school, where although capable, they cannot see themselves fitting into the current management team. It appears from the interviews that there is a lack of confidence from management and general lack of support around mentoring those ME staff with aspirations to progress.

Lack of staff movement within schools was seen as a factor. **P14 (Teacher)** intimated that - "the current senior leadership team is likely going to be in place for the long term, hence no immediate career progression opportunities." **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** mentioned that unconscious bias was a huge barrier and they felt that when being interviewed, there was a tendency for recruiters/interviewers to select those that look like them. This is not an unusual perception and is largely reflected through the all-white senior leadership teams. The lack of diversity in some of the senior teams appears to signal to teachers what kind of person is required in those roles intentionally or unintentionally. There was also a sentiment that some ME teachers did not envisage that they would reach management positions, so there may be an inclination to think that being a teacher is the final goal. **P31 (UG student)** mentioned - "I am grateful for where I am in my career as I didn't even think that I would get this far." There is, in some cases, a sense of achievement that is also juxtaposed with a lack of confidence in what one can achieve.

**P45 (Senior Leader)** said that they found their progression to be smooth until they arrived in Wales, where it had been a challenge to find a job as a Headteacher. The participant felt that with 25 years

of experience under her belt she had the skillset required for headship. Unfortunately, they cited negative experiences in the recruitment process and feel that their skin colour has been a major contributing factor, particularly because the feedback received did not indicate any major concerns. It appears that the glass ceiling is existent based on this reported experience and it is important that recruiting talented ME individuals would go a long way to raising aspirations of both staff and pupils.

**P65 (ITE Student)** despite being hugely aspirational, felt that they have not been afforded an opportunity to progress despite being invited to interview, they have not been successful so far in securing a teaching post and unfortunately, they have not received any support from their HEI or advice on how to progress following interview rejection.

### *15.3. FUTURE ASPIRATIONS*

Some ME staff interviewed in this research study are aspirational. For example, **P1 (Teacher)** aspires to become a head teacher and feels that the achievement will also send a strong message to colleagues and pupils. They felt that it was achievable within the next 2-3 years. **P12 (Teacher)** on the other hand reflected “I've been here now for the last seven years and I don't really know what my next steps are, I've always thought I'd go up the ladder to become a Deputy Head Teacher but over the last few years, I don't really see myself fitting in.”

Several participants intimated that taking on a leadership role would take them away from the jobs they loved which focus on directly and positively influencing their pupils. They also felt that progressing in their career would entail less direct contact with the pupils (e.g., **P15, ITE Student, P30, Teacher and P44, Teacher**). Others perceived progression as an opportunity to make a bigger contribution and have a greater impact on the future of pupils for example **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** intimated they would like to work for the Welsh Government **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** “I want to be a consultant and be able to deliver training and going to schools observing them to facilitate better practices and strategies.”

**P18 (ITE Student)** aspired to progress in their teaching career “I hope to eventually progress into senior management and Head Teacher roles for the future.” **P22 (ITE Student)** also indicated similar aspirations to teach in primary school then eventually progress to lecturing in Higher Education.

### *15.4. OVER-QUALIFIED*

There are several situations in which teachers believed they are overqualified for the roles that they are doing and should ideally take on additional responsibility commensurate with their qualifications e.g., **P28 (Teacher)** and **P37 (Teacher)**. **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** mentioned that they have completed additional qualifications as their stay in the UK is linked to acquiring a visa. Therefore, they have had to study until they successfully transition into teaching. It is not unusual to find ME teachers that are overqualified for their roles, there is a sense of lack of opportunity after acquiring these additional qualifications.

### *15.5. THEME 5 - CEILINGS WITHIN THE PROFESSION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

The existence of a 'glass' ceiling to promotion for ME teachers is in line with the findings from the National Education Union/Runnymede (2017). However, some reported career success stories. **P45 (Senior Leader)** experienced a smooth career progression within the English educational system, however, this situation changed when they relocated to Wales. Some participants are happier working on the front line inspiring and influencing learners rather than seeking management positions.

There is need for clear support and progression pathways for ME teachers as stated by **P1 (Teacher)** and **P12 (Teacher)**. Participants suggested that the lack of diversity in senior leadership teams meant that they were 'not the right fit'. Some participants indicated that unconscious bias appears to be a barrier to securing employment or promotion. These assertions are supported and/or evidenced by the abundance of all white senior leadership teams. Careful consideration is needed when offering effective feedback to ME teachers who are unsuccessful following interviews and follow up mentoring for candidates should be a feature.



### *16.1. FACTORS INFLUENCING LEARNER ASPIRATIONS*

Many studies (Cannanure et al. 2020; Khattab, 2015) have looked at an aspirations-based approach to explore learner's ambitions. Many participants in this study are passionate about teaching and are aspiring to progress within their teaching career. Some factors that influence these aspirations include being 'passionate about education and for teaching', 'feeling good about being around learners/young people', and 'giving back',

### *16.2. PASSIONATE ABOUT TEACHING*

**P18 (ITE Student)** stated - "I just feel like I've always been around children all of my life, I have quite a big family. And I feel like all my personal skills kind of go into teaching. I've always had teaching in the back of my mind". Similarly, **P17 (Teacher/PG student)** added - "So right from a very young age. I've always wanted to teach people; I teach my classmates. I share with them. Some participants believed that their personal qualities lean towards teaching younger children. This belief influences the decision they make about what to teach and whom to teach, either in primary or secondary levels. **P19 (ITE Student)** indicated - "most of my personal qualities kind of gear more towards teaching. That's why I chose primary education more than secondary education, I'd say, because I've been around younger children. I'm quite good at building relationships with younger children, I find even now in my placement, the relationship I have with my pupils, they are really good relationships". In addition, **P44 (Teacher)** noted - "I do actually really like being with children, and I do find it inspiring". **P4 (ITE Student)** remarked that it was fascinating to watch a lot of young children's stages of development; "just having a lot of young children in our family just watching the different stages of development, it just fascinated me and I was like now I want to work with younger children".

### *16.3. GIVING BACK TO THEIR COMMUNITIES*

Love of teaching and giving back to their communities are two common aspirational themes which were identified. Some see teaching as an opportunity to give back to their community by helping young people. This is revealed by **P19 (ITE Student)** - "I take pride in when I kind of teach a child something and they get it, that's what I love. I love being able to teach children and kind of excel in it". Although being 'passionate about teaching' influenced inspiration, giving back to the community as a 'role model' is perceived as an inspiration for participants. This is evident in this comment: "There was one particular student I think from a diverse background and when he saw me he said oh, so you're going to be teaching us and immediately I could tell that it was like he was happy to see like a minority figure" **P19 (ITE Student)**.

### *16.4. GROWING INTO TEACHING*

However, there are some indications that some participants 'grow into teaching' by engaging in various volunteering teaching activities in their communities. This position was highlighted by **P18 (ITE Student)**; "to be honest, teaching wasn't something that I wanted to do when I was younger, it was something that I've grown into after doing during my undergraduate studies". **P2 (Teacher)** indicated - "Never, ever, ever occurred to me to go into teaching. And if you'd have asked me five years ago, I would have laughed out loud". **P1 (Teacher)** agreed - "I never aspired to be a teacher. It wasn't something that I ever thought I could be". **P26 (Teacher)** added - "I was in Cardiff I was involved with the youth group at Church Youth Group and...this involves various teaching elements,

that sort of gave me a taste for teaching". **P65 (ITE Student)** agreed - "for me it has been a sort of a long-term ambition, but when I finished University, I was really unsure. I wasn't sure whether it was the right path for me is something that I've always considered it, and I said I've always said to myself it's something that I wanted to do". However, for some, it is aspirational just getting into university. Discussion about getting into teaching is something that was never been discussed with them in school. "I'm not sure if that's changed now and what the University is like, but in terms of my own childhood, I would say no one inspired me to become a teacher" (**P1, Teacher**). These comments suggest that learners will begin aspiring to teaching as a career if they have the exposure to it within their environment. These findings summed up recommendations by Brentnall (2017), that schools should nurture young ME learners to be aspirational, through provision such as summer schools and partnerships with HEI.

### *16.5. Determination*

Other factors that influence aspiration include 'self-determination' to become a teacher. **P44 (Teacher)** - "when I was working as a teaching assistant, I really sensed that I just needed to do more, not just have somebody tell me what to do, yeah, and be able to put my own slant on it". And **P65 (ITE Student)** agreed with **P44 (Teacher)** and stated - "I don't even have any friends who teach, so for me it's quite a unique path, in the sense that none of my close friends or family do it". These comments suggest that self-determination plays an important role in influencing teaching as a career aspiration as shown by previous studies. Whereas Spittle, Jackson & Casey (2009) and Villarreal & García (2016) have applied self-determination theory to explore the reasons people choose their chosen career. Mau (2003) indicated that self-determination is one of the key factors that influences students' persistence regarding career aspirations.

### *16.6. SPORT AS AN INSPIRATION*

Participants noted that sport could be a huge inspiration for them while they were in school. **P12 (Teacher)** - "I was in the basketball team there and know I'll see a lot of the older students....It was a positive role model to me. It pushed me into coaching kids in the community....to connect with people. So, we started our basketball business. We work with people in the community. We work with all ages and ages. **P1 (Teacher)** agreed - "I played a lot of sports I think, and I think that's what got me through. I enjoy sport, I was quite popular, and I think everyone knew me. I was the mixed-race kid". (**P33, UG student**) added - "Yeah I felt welcomed, and I was. I guess maybe because of football, and we used to play so just naturally...I think football is a big thing where I spend time with a lot of white friends, compared to other, maybe ethnic boys". **P66 (Teacher)** added - I was passionate about sport and I felt that I could have something to offer in sport".

### *16.7. MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT TEACHING*

There are various perceptions about teaching being a middle-class profession. Lampert (2016, p.35) agrees and relates her experience of being working class and 'more like the kids than the other teachers'. This perception could discourage ME learners thinking of taking up teaching, as stated by **P1 (Teacher)** - "I thought people like me won't go to uni. That's just purely for rich, possibly, you know, white shirt white kids who have got rich parents".



Or **P14 (Teacher)** who said - "Teaching doesn't seem to be a job that appeals to black people...Maybe it's not glamorous enough, maybe it's...I mean, I think it's a very, very difficult job anyway. Maybe you know the difficulties of it are already out there".

Some participants believed that the system in place is not appropriate for them. **P2 (Teacher)** - "they were talking about targeted children and vulnerable children, I mean those words irked me because I saw youngsters who were capable. But the system did not allow them to be who they were and who they could be". However, our findings suggest that aspiration of learners differ. Teachers at the lower levels of their career aspire to 'live their dreams' or 'grow into' teaching. This kind of aspiration is different for those at head teacher level, who desire to become a community role model for young people from diverse backgrounds. **P1 (Teacher)** illustrates this further: "I think you would make a huge difference in their lives because on personal experience, if I had a black or mixed-race teacher, it would have meant so much. I would probably have had a completely different experience in school. So definitely, you can change the lives of so many children, especially if you're in an area with a high percentage of minority children".

Other participants argued that it depends who you asked about their thoughts of the teaching profession, and that there is always this mixed perception about teaching as a high-status profession but on 'low pay'. **P26 (Teacher)** put it this way; "depends on whom you asked, I guess within certain communities, teaching is regarded as a high-status profession...but not in others. Chinese and Indian pupils perform particularly well in exams? I'm guessing in degrees as well, in getting good degrees? and those pupils are more likely to go into professions such as medicine, accountancy, law? and being a teacher would be low on the list". **P26 (Teacher)** added - "the profile of teaching, ... as a desirable profession to be in some communities – yes. However, it is very difficult to change entrenched attitudes. I mean in my own community, particularly my mom...wanted me to be a doctor, rather than a teacher". Looking at it from the angle of the family and community perceptions, **P46 (Teacher)** stated - "Because parents have a huge influence on young people and if they are encouraging them to go into other careers which are perceived to be more well paid and higher status... then we're losing, talented young people". This was echoed by a young ME learner - "In the community it is very, very unusual, that they [young Asian men] go into teaching because of low pay rate and some of the Asian young men I've spoken to have said this (**P47 (14-18 Learner)**).

## 16.8. CURRICULUM

It became clear that participants believed improving 'racial literacy' will be central to realise the progressive vision of the new curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2022) to ensure all learners and educators have a presence, voice and identity in all aspects of curriculum from Early Years to Higher Education.

Participants suggested that white teachers had a lack of racial awareness and confidence, when teaching about race or Black history. "It comes down to the professional learning, doesn't it? Teachers are not confident in teaching Black and diverse histories across any subjects". (**P1, Teacher**) "I keep hearing, I don't know enough. I wasn't taught about this. Where can I find resources?" (**P12, Teacher**). Professor Charlotte Williams in her report for Welsh Government (2021, p.7) makes it clear every teacher needs to feel enabled and supported to build curricula that reflects the

contributions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups and individuals in Wales. Teachers also need to be aware of these contributions in the context of the history and development of Wales as a multicultural country and, fully understand the origins and manifestations of racism. “As a black teacher, I've always been in a good position to make changes and ensure that the children are getting a wide range of experiences, topics and themes” (P1, Teacher). One teacher looked back on her own experience in school with her friends and said - “Africa wasn't always poor, yeah, but none of my friends or classmates knew that, we weren't taught that. I feel that impacted their perception on me and my family” (P27, Teacher). Participants suggested that racism faced by learners and educators needs addressing explicitly within the curriculum and that all leaders and teachers need to take this on board rather than looking to teachers from diverse backgrounds to champion this work. The teachers all felt that anti-racism education within the curriculum needs to be explicit and separate to diverse histories and black history. (P3, Teacher) explained - ‘Sometimes, I feel really undervalued, but also embarrassed, because when I was pushing for sustained use of different literature, there was resistance from other staff I felt I was being called out in front of my peers instead of being visibly supported in ally-ship. It made me feel like just my professionalism and expectation is lacking in some way but on reflection it's a team wide professional learning need’.

Another teacher described how he champions inclusive practice through developing emotional literacy and how he's working on “open emotional transparency because we know that that leads to successful learning relationships” (P10, Teacher). Another teacher said - “I want all the teachers in my school to seriously start thinking about how to embed more culture across the curriculum, not just me as the ‘expert’ and only black teacher in the school, if children from diverse backgrounds have memorable sustained different experiences in their school days in which they feel their presence and hear the voice of their heritages then maybe more will aspire to teach” (P13, Teacher). Changing or enhancing aspiration is a key role of any curriculum “To change aspirations and the current lack of diversity in teachers in Wales, I think we all need to be talking about this with children and young people often as part of the curriculum, to promote to children that anybody can do anything”. (P26, Teacher).

Student participants clearly stated that due to their lived experience, they felt a lack of confidence in their teacher's abilities to deliver a curriculum that was anti-racist. Most had not considered teaching as a potential career and this was often due to their own experiences as a young ME person in the school system, which were often negative. They also felt that within their school curriculums they were never given examples of career opportunities in teaching, apart from an example of a friend who had been encouraged to become a ‘sports teacher’ – he is currently studying civil engineering. One undergraduate student said - ‘if this doesn't change, how will the diversity reflected in the future education workforce change?’ (P32, UG student). The idea was mooted that Teaching assistants from diverse backgrounds, should have more support to be become teachers. (P13, Teacher) said – we should be thinking about how we get children and young people to become teachers of the future, in Wales we already have a force of teaching assistants from diverse backgrounds who are brilliant in helping us bring diversity to the curriculum, often multi-lingual and I think we need to enable them to be able to afford and aspire to studying and training on the job, they don't have the funds or time around family and work’

Participants suggested that the curriculum needs to be culturally appropriate, and teachers must be explicitly proactive and not evasive in inspiring learners from ME backgrounds. “Within a school environment, I think first and foremost a staff need to be comfortable in talking about diversity. The staff need to be comfortable enough and they need to understand that we’re teaching this for a good reason” (P1, Teacher). Also, ‘We were talking about the burden of being solo or one of the minority in our teaching teams, where you are from an ethnic minority background and being the person who has to raise things - the one who has to take that responsibility or being described as being the ‘best person to do this’. But, not being given any extra time, resources and so on. It is everybody's responsibility, isn't it to do that so needs to change even within teams where we have teachers from EM backgrounds’, (P22 Teacher).

### *16.9. COST OF TEACHING, TRAINING AND EDUCATION*

The cost of teacher training was identified as a further barrier for participants. P27 (14-18 Learner) stated - “Obviously it's expensive. There should options for teaching - internships where you can go to University” Participants were worried that even when you had paid for an ITE course there is no guarantee that you will get a job. P27 (14-18 Learner) “You know the way that jobs are at the moment. It's not great at the moment”.

### *16.10. LIMITED PATHWAYS INTO TEACHING*

There is an indication that there are limited pathways or options for ME learners to get into teaching. This could pose a barrier even when they possess all other skill sets needed to progress. Drawing from the comments of participants, P45 (Senior Leader) noted: “there's not enough pipelines [pathways] for teachers into teacher training because you know we're hopeful now that....with new curriculum experiences, maybe more children [learners] will be going into teaching with a different sort of outlook, but that's going to be a long time coming so how can we change the landscape in the meantime?”

### *16.11. THEME 6 - LEARNER ASPIRATIONS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

Participants had a broad range of aspirations which were influenced by professional and family role models. Teacher participants indicated a desire to offer students better educational experiences than they had experienced when they were younger. ME Teachers were passionate about teaching and wished to ‘give back’ to the profession, as being among the drivers for their aspirations.

Some participants did not necessarily aspire to be teachers, but getting into the profession occurred due to a variety of related experiences, or as a result of being mentored or through their volunteering in e.g. church or youth work.

There are barriers to participant aspirations such as the absence of relatable role models and lack of guidance and mentoring support. It is essential that these barriers are understood and addressed. Learners’ aspirations were influenced by familial perceptions and cultural influences, for example some participants from the Asian community stating that managing the family business may be an expectation, or teaching being seen as lower paid or lower status than other professional careers.

Recommendations to address the issues raised by participants include carving out clear career pathways and career guidance to support ME students to get into teaching. Reflection on the development of a more inclusive curriculum e.g., following guidance from Professor Charlotte Williams' Report (March 2021). Subsidised 'training' routes into the profession for ME students from low-income households need to be developed to support future careers.



### 17.1. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

International students from ME backgrounds often wish to seek teaching opportunities in the UK after graduating. However, acquiring a visa to study for a post-graduate qualification in the UK is challenging. **(P17, Teacher/PG student)** - “Despite best efforts by the school, the council, EWC, WG, they were unable to grant me this”.

Some ITE student teachers reported that teaching is not valued within their culture, compared to other professional careers. This means prospective ME teachers often have their aspirations to be a teacher curtailed in its infancy. Consequently, it takes a lot of determination for ME people to enter the teaching profession. “I don't know a lot of Asians even family friends or relatives that are teachers. I don't know if that's just because in the Asian community it's just a profession that's not really sought after” **(P19, ITE Student)** and “I don't know a lot of teachers in my family. I think if they are teachers coming from an Islamic background, they go into Islamic teaching rather than [mainstream] teaching” **(P18, ITE Student)** Such comments are consistent with findings by Guarino *et al.*, (2006) who reported that some ME people view teaching as low status and low paid.

Many participants recognised that despite there being many ME teaching assistants in schools in Wales, this is not reflected in the proportion of actual ME teachers in the system. **P42, (UG student)** agreed - “ME People are applying to be TA's but not wanting to take the leap into teaching?” and Whilst reasons such as family commitments and greater flexibility have been cited as barriers into teaching, some participants believed that those TA's may “feel that they are not valued enough to be more than just assistant teachers” **(P43, UG student)**. This imbalance is also echoed by Joseph-Salisbury (2020, p.5) in that ‘black staff were often only present in schools as teaching assistants, personal assistants or dinner-time staff, and in behavioural management and support roles’.

For reasons unknown, mature female ME teachers cited difficulties in securing teaching roles in primary schools in Wales. This seems to apply to both NQTs as well as experienced teachers **(P46, Teacher)** shared - “I've applied for number countless jobs, but I just haven't got any. I haven't been shortlisted and I haven't managed to...get a job, yeah, and I don't know if that's because my application isn't good enough, or if it's because I'm older. I just I'm just at a loss really”. **(P44, Teacher)** said - “I found it very difficult to get a teaching job and then when I did get a teaching job or even in the schools that I went into do supply, there were no black teachers.” This suggests there are difficulties for ME teachers in Wales, either securing jobs or being shortlisted for them, this is also identified by Egan (2020).

For those ME teachers who are teaching in our schools, racist incidents have been reported by some teachers. There is no particular pattern to such experiences as this has been articulated by minority ethnic teachers at all levels and at different stages of their careers and can unfortunately, be categorised, as being part of their ‘teaching journey’. These incidents range from direct remarks to innuendos, all served to undermine the teachers. This is consistent with findings by the Runnymede Trust (2017) where many ME teachers reported having experienced intentional or unconscious discriminatory practice within their workplace, which in turn restricted their career progression, “I sit in the staff room and they would tell me don't sit here. You have to sit over there because this is for main staff only.” **(P39, Teacher)**. Also, “And then I was called a racist...You're a racist because you favour the women in the scarves” **(P40, Teacher)**.

Additionally, a lack of a forum for ME teachers to exchange issues/thoughts which are linked to their ethnicity and associated experiences is cited as a barrier by teachers. “I think it's difficult being a black teacher in Wales - where there are so few of us. And there's no network. There's no, there's no forum to exchange anything, so it's all kind of you know, kept to yourself” (P14, Teacher).

## 17.2. PROFESSIONAL TEACHING JOURNEY

ME teachers who taught in multicultural schools reported having positive teaching experiences. “I've only had positive experiences to be honest, and from learners as well, yeah, because I've taught in diverse spaces. I haven't taught in all white spaces” (P16, Teacher). Also, “From my experience, it's been a good experience” (P7, Teacher) “Yeah I really had a good experience...I think it's because I was in an inclusive school” (P6, Teacher).

ME PGCE students felt that ITE programmes need to have targeted support for students from ME backgrounds. P4 (ITE Student) had a negative experience on a school led training day (see page 29) which almost led to her leaving the programme. Tereschchenko, Mills and Bradbury (2020) suggest that the arranging of placements for ME student teachers needs further consideration and monitoring, and according to them are an ‘afterthought’ along with unsupportive mentoring of ME students. They also found that mature female ME student teachers reported difficulties in making friends on ITE courses which consist of predominantly younger white female students.

Whilst on placement, (P18, ITE student) felt that they were being treated as equal to the other student teachers by their school mentors “They treated me as an equal, and were friendly and approachable” (P18, ITE Student). This was not a consistent experiences as exemplified by P6, (Teacher) “when I was doing my teacher training, I don't know if it's because of my background, but I did have poor experiences in different placements. My mentor wasn't really very supportive”.

Some minority ethnic teachers reported that they have positive teaching experiences until they take up formal leadership roles. They felt that there was prejudice from the team members once they were in leadership positions. This commentary from P2 (Teacher) is the kind of experience these teachers encountered: “I didn't feel that I was being singled out, then a few years after that I applied for a head of department's job....I was successful in getting that job. It was then that things started to change. I think now because I was the one having to lead meetings....I remember not wanting to go into the staff room because it just felt that you were out of it, that the conversations didn't seem to include you, that sort of thing, so I spent more time in my classroom”. This highlights a worrying issue at senior leadership level and supports findings by Runnymede/NASUWT (2017, p.9) which states: ‘the evidence points to racial inequality as being an almost endemic problem at the leadership levels of teaching’. These findings were mirrored by other ME teachers who reported how they hold influential and significant leadership roles within their establishment but they are unrecognised (through promotion) for this additional work.

Some ME teachers recognised how their teaching career has enabled them to earn a living globally “for me, teaching was what enabled me to travel. I was able to go and work in another country for years and it took me to different parts of the world as well” (P2, Teacher). An ME teacher who engaged in supply teaching did not have such positive experiences, being mistaken for a teaching

assistant “I did a lot of supply teaching and that wasn’t a very nice experience to be honest. So again, I was mistaken for the TA. I would have to say ...oh no, I’m the class teacher you know?” (P37, Teacher).

### 17.3. ROLES

ME teachers in the sample have experienced multiple roles within their working life. These roles are sometimes held simultaneously (head of vocational education, PE teacher and Computer Science teacher, (P12, Teacher) or sequentially (teacher of Business Studies and English; manager for the African Caribbean Initiative Project, working for the Inspectorate, (P2, Teacher). In several cases, careers other than teaching have had to be taken up when ME teachers have not been able to secure teaching roles due to a change in their personal circumstances, e.g. career break; moving from England to Wales. At times, these other careers are linked to the racial background of the teachers, e.g. teacher of EAL; deputy service leader for the multiethnic support service (P2, Teacher).

Several minority ethnic teachers within the sample mentioned that they have spent time abroad on personal or family matters. This time is nearly always extensive (years) and often happened after having established a teaching career. This interruption can have a beneficial or detrimental impact, as illustrated here: “I thought I didn’t have a chance of getting the job because I’ve been out of the country for 10 years....I was appointed...I was now bringing an international perspective” (P2, Teacher), whereas for P8 (Teacher) “I was heading for headship...and then I went abroad for a few years and then came back and then had to sort of take a step down”.

### 17.4. THEME 7 - PROFESSIONAL TEACHING JOURNEY: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

International students of ME background often have a desire to seek teaching opportunities in the UK but face several challenges such as acquiring visas for study. Guarino *et al.*, (2006) indicate that many ME people see teaching as a low status and low paid career. Participants recognised that despite there being many ME teaching assistants in schools in Wales, this is not reflected in the proportion of ME teachers in the system.

A lack of fora for ME teachers to exchange issues/thoughts linked to their ethnicity is cited as a barrier by participants. ME teachers who taught in multicultural schools reported having more positive teaching experiences.

Some ME ITE students felt programmes need ‘targeted’ support for ME students, although others felt they were treated equally to their white counterparts while on placement. Some ME teachers reported positive teaching experiences until they took up formal leadership roles, this finding is in line with the Runnymede/NASUWT (2017) survey.

There should be a mechanism whereby when ME teachers need to spend time abroad, this should not count against them, especially if they are attending to family issues etc.





## 18.1. ROUTES INTO TEACHING

Following on from the recent EWC Phase 2 Report (2020) and the report from The Working Group on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Communities, Contributions and Cynefin in the New Curriculum for Wales (Welsh Government, 2021) we know there are a number of critical issues and recommendations which need to be addressed to impact recruitment for teachers from ME backgrounds in Wales.

Whilst there are two main traditional routes into achieving qualified teacher status in Wales: a three-year BA (Hons) degree or a one-year PGCE at university. More recently, the Open University offer a two-year salaried route with schools sponsoring candidates or a part-time route for non-school based candidates. Egan (2020) outlines that in 2018, only 50% of students from ME backgrounds were successful applying to ITE course in Wales compared to 67% of white students who gained a place on the training.

ME participants told us they had often had a 'meandering route' into their own training, having pursued other careers or coming into teaching as a mature student. As **(P12, Teacher)** explains - "I fell into teaching accidentally, much later on in my working life. I had a difficult experience in school and childhood, due to racism. I had a successful career in software engineering, I took a redundancy opportunity and could afford to take time out to train as teacher, and otherwise, I may never have done it". **(P15, Teacher)** commented - "It took me a long time to get there is when I was very young I wanted to be a teacher, but because of my parents religious beliefs... they didn't agree with me going to university when I was younger, so that had to be a decision that I made for myself as an adult." **(P11, ITE Student)** told us about her route into teaching - "I have completed an MA with Cardiff Uni in music composition and before that I was teaching in Hong Kong for a few years before coming back to Wales to train". **(P30, Teacher)** said - "I came into teaching quite late and even at my age when I came in, I was just coming into my 40s. I was a bit concerned because I know I sat with my PGCE class in Swansea and I was surrounded by youngsters mostly white, it was socially awkward for me, I ask lots of questions, I was coming at it with a different experience." The importance of paid routes was stressed - "I wouldn't have come into teaching unless it was for Teach First." **(P57, Teacher)**

Other sections of this report outline the marginalisation and negative experiences that ME participants encountered when children school system or when being rejected on applying for ITE teaching posts. Several of the undergraduate participants reported how they would not even consider teaching as a career because of their negative experiences in the school system. "No, I would never consider being a school teacher. I saw nobody like me or my family in my teachers at school. I am involved in mentoring young black teenagers. In high school, I was mostly encouraged into sport... my love for maths went unnoticed. I gained a GCSE A\* despite being advised to take the lower band option I refused... When I turned up for my first Maths A Level class in college, the teacher asked if I was in the wrong room and tried to redirect me. Why would I see myself as a Maths teacher? That was my experience of approaches and perceptions amongst teachers. I took some time out before coming to university." **(P32, UG student)**. This is echoed by another UG student - "Same for me, I was only ever encouraged in sport at school, now I'm doing civil engineering at uni alongside my job. Looking back to my school's expectations of me.. they were low. Teaching wasn't inspiring, why would I aspire to be in it?" **(P33, UG student)**. A Teacher

participant detailed his experiences of careers education - “Expectation was racially motivated because when I asked about teaching he said, oh, I don't know if that's the right idea for you. Maybe you need to think of something where it's easier to get the grades. I carried on and I got excellent grades” (P28, Teacher). Egan, (2020) and Carrington *et al.*, (2008) advise that a more diverse workforce will assist in breaking down these gender and ethnic stereotypes within schools. A range of participants across the categories reported that because minority ethnic teachers are under-represented it makes it difficult for them to imagine that they could even be recruited as a teacher. A lack of role models and racism in their school experiences in childhood are significant contributory factors here. In contrast (P3, Teacher) went on to explain, “I remember my English teacher Mrs B. She was white and she was really quite old. I remember, you know, it was when we saw her... us all thinking, oh, she's going to be a pushover, you know...and she really wasn't. She really gave me a sense of my own value. She made me feel really able and talented, worthwhile and beautiful which had a profound effect on because those were things that I've not really thought about in terms of myself, at all, um, she was an incredible, incredible woman. I think she definitely influenced me a lot. You know she brought in Benjamin Zephaniah. He must have been quite a young man then.... she would bring different people into school. To expose, give us exposure to lots of different material. She had a great impact on me.... I'm teaching because of her.”

## 18.2. HURDLES TO OVERCOME ON THE ROUTES INTO TEACHING

Despite many attempts to gain data on the number of rejected applications into ITE programmes, current statistical data on applicant ethnicity and rejections were not made accessible to us within the research period. This appears to be an issue in the way data is or isn't collected, stored and made available. This issue needs to be addressed in HEIs and within national application systems in Wales. This will enable patterns of rejection related to ethnicity to be explored for future intervention and improvement. Further related investigation into these systems is beyond the remit of this research but is clearly needed. Calls were put out widely amongst professional and personal networks, social media and professional blogs but no participants came forward to tell us of their rejections onto ITE programmes. Two of the participants who took part did tell us they were unsuccessful in their first attempt to obtain an ITE place but were successful second time around. This teacher shared views with the other participants and reflected on her own journey and was troubled over the lack of change - “I think with the lack of diversity in the education workforce in Wales, we need data published annually to know if and why rejections into ITE in Wales are happening, the same with job applications.... If a trained ambitious teacher is being rejected time and time again from job applications, their journey needs to be tracked and their development needs to be supported, otherwise like me they will probably go to England or abroad to find a job...It took me a long time to feel experienced and confident enough to come back to apply for jobs in Wales. I got the first job I applied for in London. In Wales, we need to find ways to impact the monoculture at every hurdle or how will it change? Teachers from black and ME backgrounds need to be involved in these strategic conversations to change practice as there are still so few ME teachers in education leadership in Wales, our voices aren't yet being heard” (P30, Teacher). Repeated unsuccessful applications have resulted in excellent teachers leaving Wales to find work. In cities with more diverse cultures job opportunities were perceived to be better for the ME teachers than in Wales. Similarly, (P12, Teacher) explained his challenges and offered his thoughts on ways forward - “For me, it was difficult to get jobs, especially in Wales. I applied time and time again. I

ended up moving out to England for my first job. Then I got the first position I applied for and I enjoyed being within a diverse teaching team and I progressed into leadership roles... Considering the lack of diversity amongst teachers in Wales, is ethnicity even asked about or considered on application forms as a desirable criteria for all schools maybe especially for those with diverse pupil communities?" The lack of diverse representation on some school websites and in many job descriptions may not encourage applications and that bias may still be a barrier in recruitment to posts (Runnymede/NASUWT, 2017; Egan, 2020). Some participants reflected on the exhaustion of not fitting into a 'white dynamic' when going for jobs and even when on supply teaching, thus making them feel they would not want to work in that school. **(P39, Teacher and P40, Teacher)**.

### *18.3. TEACHERS SUGGEST 'PROGRESSION ROADMAP'S FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS*

Several of the participants reflected positively on the new curriculum and what needs to be done to recognise the contributions and presence of ME learners and the recommendations of Professor Charlotte Williams (2021). They also commented that this opportunity in learning and teaching could change perceptions of teaching as a career for future generations. They reflected on the and questioned the opportunities in place for multi-lingual, multi-cultural Teaching Assistants, explaining many are already in the education workforce in Wales yet without explicit funded pipelines into teaching. Egan (2020) points out that recognition of multilingualism and diversity in education is being recognised. In Denmark for example, educators who can help children, families and others in the schools share the language and gain insight into family culture are boosted with higher salaries as part of a national campaign (Nusche et al, 2010). The participants went on to make further recommendations, here are some of them:

**(P41, Teacher)** said - "The two schools I've worked with, both of the teaching assistants were from an ethnic backgrounds and they've been a TA for about 10 to 12 years. They said they actually never even thought about that progression to a teacher. Some TAs have degrees and even MAs, a fully sponsored programme is needed at all levels in Wales to enable this progression into teaching within their working roles and working weeks if they'd like to become teachers **(P45, Teacher)**. Also, the professional learning that we've gained from our teaching assistants is huge and the makeup of our teaching assistants in the school at the moment are probably 60% minority ethnic. Here, the teaching assistants are mostly of the Bengali Bangladeshi heritage. Because 90% of our children are from that from that culture. If they had, had different opportunities and funded support on the job maybe they would have gone into teaching or still could." **(P1, Teacher)**. Another participant added - "it was funny for me because I started in the school is an LSA. So, when I first started, I was making cups of teas and I wasn't allowed in the staff room, this practice results in missed opportunities. Pedagogical conversations between all can happen in all work spaces." **(P14, Teacher)**. The additional 'skill set' of ME teaching assistants was raised - "In my school in England....there was a quite a strong team of ethnically diverse staff, be they teaching assistants or teachers. That felt positive for me and the pupils. The multi-lingual TAs are so knowledgeable, we rely on them to communicate so much with the children and families. TAs with such skills and knowledge in Wales need to be paid more and given opportunities into teaching if that's what they want. They need to have supported conversations about it." **(P41, Teacher and P42, Teacher)** "we have lots of people from ME backgrounds applying to be teachers assistants but not wanting to take the leap into teaching often because they can't afford to take the time off work to study or because

they don't think they are good enough but they have knowledge and lived experience different to white teachers that we need to strengthen the teaching workforce" (P45, Teacher) cautioned; "We need to enable some of the TA workforce into teaching.... we can't wait 15 years for another 100 teachers who are coming from different backgrounds."

#### 18.4. FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS

A common theme amongst the teacher participants was that they needed to be 'overly qualified' to gain and maintain a teaching post in Wales. They had to prove their worth from the outset to gain entry into the profession before being given any opportunity. (P15, Teacher) said - "I knew I needed to do more to get in, so straight after my PGCE, I did my Masters' to help me get a job". (P16, Teacher) agreed - "I did my Masters' because I've always wanted to be a teacher and I knew I needed to prove myself."

#### 18.5. CAREERS TALKS FROM ME TEACHERS

Several of the teachers reported on the need for explicit ME careers talks across Wales delivered to pupils from ME backgrounds. This was also echoed by learners who participated in the research conversations (P32, 14-18 Learner) "Encouragement is needed about going into the profession, to target young Black and Asian learners with things like careers, talks, etc such as assemblies or careers meetings. We haven't really had many, I think this needs to be led by Black and Asian teachers to make impact".

#### 18.6. THEME 8 - ROUTES INTO TEACHING: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The section identifies the different routes into the teaching profession and the disparities that exist. Egan (2020) outlines that a significantly greater proportion of white students were accepted onto ITE courses in Wales than ME students. The disparity in success rates has an impact on the routes chosen to enter the profession. As such, ME teachers who participated in this research largely entered the profession through non-traditional routes and at later stages in life.

As mentioned in the research challenges section, it was not possible to obtain the data for applicants to ITE programmes. It was noted by participants that they found difficulty in securing jobs and in some cases considered leaving Wales. ME applicant data to teaching roles in Wales, needs to be gathered and made available in a suitable central database in order for it to be monitored.

Bilingual and multi-lingual TA's should be celebrated and given greater respect within schools. If they wish to become teachers, pipelines or support mechanisms, including funding need to be put in place.

A common theme amongst the ME teacher participants was that they needed to be 'over qualified' to gain and maintain a teaching post in Wales and to progress within their career. Also, they believed they had to particularly 'prove' their worth from the outset. Participants suggested that the application process ignores ethnicity and that it should be considered on job application documentation as a 'desirable criteria' for all schools and especially those with diverse pupil communities.



### 19.1. LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Despite having strong career aspirations at the start of their teaching career, many ME teachers do not see themselves fitting into the assistant headteacher or deputy headteacher roles, which are perceived to be completely out of their reach - “I just feel so far removed from the people that are in sort of assistant leadership or the leadership team” (P12, Teacher). Even fewer minority ethnic teachers had aspirations to become headteachers - “I thought of being like in maybe an SLT like a senior leader team but never a headteacher or anything like that. I don’t think that’s in my mind at all” (P41, Teacher). Participants reported that ME teachers are underrepresented in formal leadership positions in educational establishments, which makes it difficult for them to believe that they could be recruited as a leader. A lack of role models is a significant contributory factor here - “I never thought of myself as a leader” (P48, Teacher). Or, ‘we need to have leadership teams that are representative of the people across the organisation” (P8, Teacher). The need for role models amongst the senior leadership teams is highlighted by NUT/Runnymede (2017).

ME teachers have witnessed promotion being given to others who are often ineffective in classroom management. “I definitely see it a lot where people are promoted for their lack of ability, rather than their ability, because they keep the good ones where they are, because they’re effective in the classroom. But then it stunts their growth, their ability to progress as a senior leader because those roles are given to those that are less effective in the classroom, and they are usually men and they are usually white” (P21, Teacher). “it just made me feel really undervalued” (P3, Teacher).

ME teachers felt that they not always supported when they expressed a desire to apply for leadership roles - “they blanked me, so made me feel that there’s no point applying for it....whereas my [white] colleagues had support and they said yeah go for it. When I’ve approached the same person, it’s like they put a dampener on it” (P8, Teacher). This is consistent with the findings by the Runnymede Trust where many teachers reported on discriminatory practice which was a barrier to career progression (NUT/Runnymede, 2017) and is also echoed by the Scottish Government (2018).

Repeated negative responses have resulted in ME teachers not wishing to pursue leadership roles in their careers. These teachers feel that there is a ceiling to their career, which is gatekept by the senior management team at their school - “there’s only a certain level they want me to get to, although if there’s a job to be done without pay and without any recognition, then yeah, sure I will do it, and I’ve always got asked to do it....You know he’ll do it.” (P8, Teacher). These ME teachers often take on ‘un-recognised’ leadership roles. Inevitably, feeling a strong sense of injustice but many continue to engage in these roles for the greater good of the school despite the lack of pay, status or recognition for their work.

ME teachers applying for leadership roles are often told by white colleagues that they have the advantage because they have are subject to ‘positive discrimination’. These teachers reported that they feel insulted by such comments as they want to be offered the job because they are the best candidate for the job rather than the token ME applicant. “I have to say I was quite insulted by that because I felt that I didn’t want to get a job because I was a token minority ethnic representative but because I was the best person for the job” (P5, Teacher). Even more frustrating is when they see colleagues being appointed who do not have the ability to undertake their role effectively whilst their expertise (in the same area) is overlooked. Repeated unsuccessful applications to leadership roles over a number of years have result in the erosion of all career aspirations - “I have a



background where I've had experience of leadership and quite a significant amount of leadership. However, I worked with a colleague who had taken on that role...given that role. It was a senior role. He didn't have any of that experience and struggled to deliver the course needed" (P25, Teacher).

In cities with more diverse cultures such as London, opportunities for leadership are more prevalent for ME teachers than can be found in Wales. Teachers reported that those opportunities are given on ability. This is not reflected in Wales, where minority ethnic teachers reported that they have experienced more "glass ceilings" (P25, Teacher). Also, "when I got to Wales, I felt as if you really had to fight hard to get a job here" (P45, Teacher). Or "I started teaching in Wales and then it was a struggle to get a job" (P25, Teacher).

## 19.2. 'RECOGNISED' LEADERSHIP

Overall, within the sample of teacher participants, there are significantly fewer minority ethnic teachers holding recognised leadership positions than those in unrecognized leadership positions. Teachers in STEM subjects in secondary schools seem more likely to be in recognised leadership roles compared with primary teachers. This is probably due to a shortage of teachers in these shortage subjects. "in secondary, people do have more opportunities to go up through the ranks" (P6, Teacher and P7, Teacher). Where minority ethnic teachers are in formal leadership roles, they feel that they are supported by the leadership team. The fact that their work is being appreciated is highly valued by these teachers. "what I was doing was being recognised. That makes all the difference I think, when you've got people who see that you are good" (P46, Teacher).

## 19.3. EXPERIENCES AS A LEADER

ME teachers who have been/are in successful leadership roles realise the further they progress in their career, the fewer leaders who look like them – "I probably do stand out like a sore thumb" (P45, Teacher). Or - "often I felt as if I was just like a fish out of water" (P2, Teacher). This put doubts in their mind as to whether they deserve that leadership position or not. They also believed that white colleagues could not really understand that feeling of insecurity - "that's always the difficulty with going into senior leadership from a diverse background. You're always going to have that [feeling of insecurity]" (P26, Teacher). In addition, there is a general assumption in schools that it is the white person leading a team and not the ME person - "There was this assumption that I was not the person who was leading this team. It has to be this white person? It happened too many times for it to have been a coincidence" (P2, Teacher). There is a need for training, to 'educate the educators' according to (P16, Teacher) and that this would lead to more cohesive and diverse senior management teams. (P16, Teacher) also believed that white females are listened to and protected within this dynamic, whereas ME females are considered resistant with black females especially being stereotyped as being 'angry', 'intimidating' or 'aggressive' - "I've been told, oh, you're intimidating, really" (P16, Teacher).

## 19.4. 'UN-RECOGNISED' LEADERSHIP

Overall, within the sample of teacher participants, it was apparent that ME teachers hold 'un-recognised' leadership positions within schools. These roles have no remuneration for the additional work, for example - "even though that position is a senior leadership position, somebody else gets paid for it and I do all the work." (P14, Teacher). Another example - "I'm doing a job and somebody else is being paid for what I'm doing" (P8, Teacher). However, some ME teachers in



leadership roles reported that they receive less pay for undertaking the same responsibility compared with other leaders. "I am being paid less than everybody else, so I complained about it, but they said that's basically what it should be.. based on a matrix!" (P8, Teacher). This anomaly is supported by findings by Runnymede/NASUWT (2017, p.9) who say that 'Disproportionality exists at almost every level of teaching and the evidence of inequality between ME teachers and non-BME teachers in pay, progression and leadership roles is striking'.

### *19.5. THEME 9 – LEADERSHIP: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS*

ME teachers are under-represented in senior leadership teams in Wales and participants did not envisage that they could fit into the all-white leadership teams. Many ME teachers felt that feedback and support was not forthcoming from senior management, when they were aspiring to progress within their careers. One participant intimated that no encouragement or support for promotion was offered to them however white counterparts appeared to have been encouraged to apply for higher posts - "they blanked me, so made me feel that there's no point applying for it....whereas my [white] colleagues had support and they were told ...yeah go for it. When I approached the same person, they put a dampener on it" (P8, Teacher).

Many ME teachers believe promotion to leadership is unattainable, and in turn there is little aspiration to such positions, however, they are often the ones who end up taking on 'un-recognised' leadership roles. Some ME teachers undertaking recognised leadership roles reported that they are not remunerated equally in comparison to other [white] colleagues.

Systematic change in schools can only be achieved through sustained deliberate effort. Targeted opportunities and mentoring for ME staff are needed to build diverse teams. Finally, it is recommended that leadership- training needs to be ring fenced for potential ME leaders.



## 20.1. ALLIES – LEADERSHIP ALLIES / PEER ALLIES

To introduce this section, it is important to unpick what is meant by the terms 'ally' or 'allyship'. If we look at a dictionary definition - to be an ally is to combine or unite with another for mutual benefit. The term allyship equates to a process of forging relationships based on understanding and accountability with any marginalized individual and/or groups of people. The hashtag #WhiteAlly has been apparent on social media. What this term means in an educational context is more complex, sensitive and has far reaching consequences. It is important to set out that ME educators and students are not victims in need of provision under a 'white saviour' banner. This equates to a highly delicate balance of relationships and co-construction understanding and partnership within an organisation. Gay (2016, online) states 'Black people don't need allies. *'We need people to use common sense to figure out how to participate in social justice'* this demonstrates a depth of feeling and reality. Ostrove and Brown (2018) suggest that there are particular qualities associated with being an ally. They suggest these are 'low prejudice, high internal motivation to respond without prejudice, allophilia (the opposite of prejudice, having an active like or regard for a group you do not belong to) and awareness of their own privilege and informed action (activism)' these were seen as distinctive characteristics. Thus, allies must take positive proactive action rather than passivity with regard to anti-racist practice.

Any spotlight on a racial paradigm brings issues to the surface. Lyiscott (2019, p. 5) discusses the concept of 'white silence' she says emerges when white people within organisations are 'imobilized' by the fear of attempting to address racism and any attempts to do so, being viewed as racist. This is in addition to the view that it is the role of people of colour to engage in the 'emotional labour' that tackling racism involves. If white educators work in solidarity with their ME colleagues to conduct what Spanierman and Smith (2017, p.606) term 'culturally responsive professional practice', this should result in institutional transformation and fairer outcomes for all.

## 20.2. LEADERSHIP ALLIES

Evidence identified that there are some key white allies working in a leadership role in Wales. "I'm so lucky with the head teacher here. I want to mention her because she has been absolutely fantastic in terms of wanting to change things, she knows are a problem. She's from a family that has black nephews, black nieces, so she, kind of understands." (P1, Teacher). It was also heartening to hear that P1 felt supported and empowered by his headteacher - "she's pushing me to do what I can and allowing me to do things like this and allows me to speak up. Have a voice in lots of different meetings I've attended." Having a supportive and 'racially literate' head has undoubtedly supported P1 however, he then goes on to say – "I don't think that it has altered my career progression. Because of my race and my identity I could see how this wouldn't happen in other schools, I've been very lucky in my school and I have to give Mrs X credit for her wonderful leadership. I just don't think it is replicated in many other schools." We have found examples which set out good practice and schools which are empathetic and champion their ME staff, this is not a common pattern unfortunately. Examples such as "I just feel so far removed from the people that are in assistant leadership or the leadership team. It's also got to be buy-in from the governors. Which I don't think it is" (P12, Teacher). The theme of non-existent ME leadership was common – "There's no one in leadership from an ME background, no one. I do find that difficult" (P14, Teacher).

Judging the mood in relation to a current backdrop of world-wide repercussions following the death of George Floyd in the USA and a wider BLM agenda across the World, has been sidestepped by many school leaders and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The social responsibility of schools or HEI's to deliver on the Welsh Government citizenship agenda as part of the new curriculum for Wales and to shape the future 'ethical informed citizens of Wales and The World' (WG, 2022) often does not wholly translate to action or anti-racist practice. An example here from **P15 (ITE Student)** – "Where I live, there isn't the demographic to have a high number of ME people, But I would love to see the heads and HEI leaders taking more advice from ME groups. I did ask the head of the placement school I was working in to make a statement in support of the Black Lives Matter campaign, he refused and sent me really long email with all kinds of reasons why not."

The question of 'luck' in career progression was a factor that was often acknowledged by participants, they deemed it 'lucky' if they had head teacher or a school leadership team that provided support for them as an ME member of staff, they acknowledged that this was 'not the norm' - "I was really lucky because my head teacher was very supportive and we worked very much as a team as a partnership" (**P5, Teacher**) and "I really had a good experience. I was really lucky, I think it's because I worked in an inclusive school" (**P6, Teacher**).

### 20.3. PEER ALLIES

Anzaldúa (1990) positions that racism is an 'everyday aspect' of the lives of people of colour. When people from ME backgrounds raise the spectre of racism to white colleagues it 'disrupts' the status quo. Talking about race makes even close white friends feel uncomfortable. "The minorities are pushing this agenda. It should be everybody pushing this agenda. We need to get to a point where everyone is pushing the agenda. I just feel so far removed from people sometimes." (**P12, Teacher**). Asika (2020, p.55) says we must teach about race and difference. She acknowledges that this is a 'frightening conversation to have'. Much work must be done in educational settings to bring these conversations to the table. It should also be acknowledged that ME staff should not feel obliged to start such conversations or convene them. Diangelo (2018) highlights the importance of understanding how 'colour blindness' and statements such as 'everyone is equal' (or more commonly now 'all lives matter') dilute and repress. She also argues that many white people are stuck in 'fragile' mode where any mention of race or racial issues makes them ultra-defensive or feel under attack.

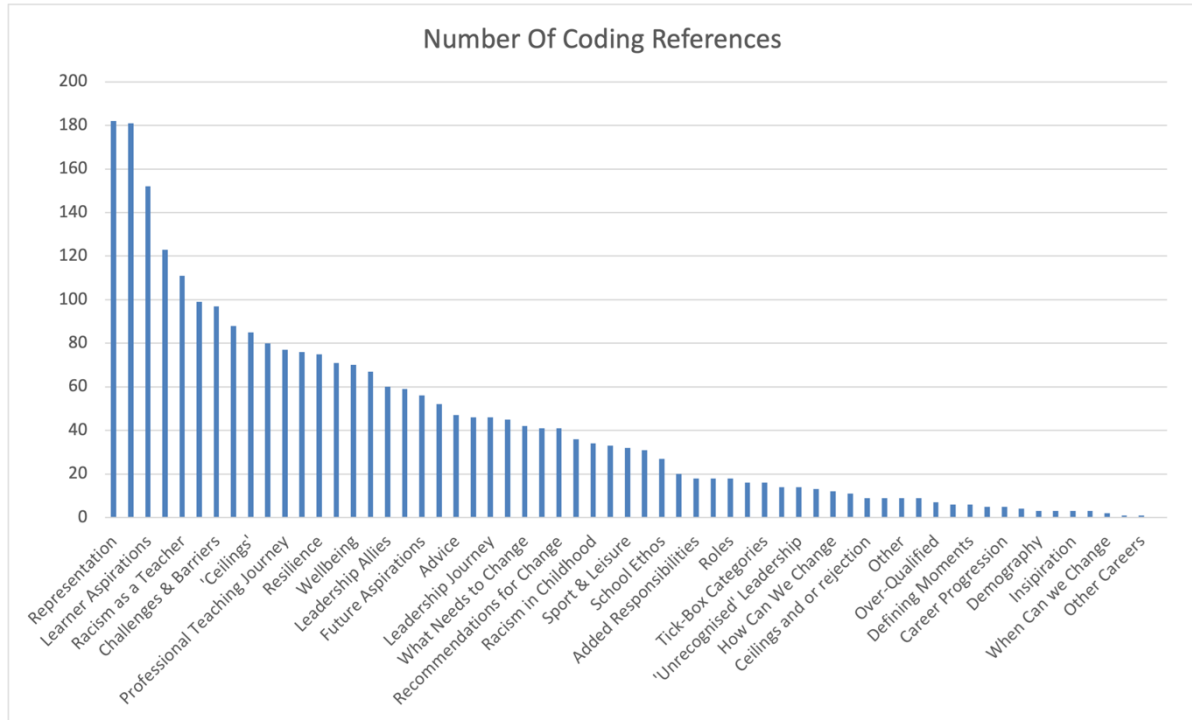
### 20.4. THEME 6 - LEARNER ASPIRATIONS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Allies are not from the underrepresented group but someone who takes affirmative action to support that group. Within a work perspective they would hold positions of power and take responsibility for implementing changes that will support others to be successful. Allyship is not about 'saving' ME staff. Ostrove and Brown (2018) suggest that allies exhibit low prejudice and high internal motivation to respond without prejudice. Institutional transformation is needed across schools in Wales in this respect. We found evidence that there are some key white allies working in leadership roles in Wales and are actively empowering ME teachers. Although there were some identified examples of good practice, they were not widespread across Wales. The question of 'luck' in career progression was a factor that was often acknowledged by participants, they deemed it 'lucky' if they had a leadership team that provided support for them as an ME member of staff.

There are several recommendations around the issue of allyship, firstly; conversations about race must be facilitated and needs to be a top-down approach with robust engagement taking place amongst senior leaders. It is crucial that everyone within the educational sector in Wales acknowledges the existence of racism and its effects on ME staff and pupils. Secondly, it is a responsibility of all educators to understand and oppose racism where they see it and to educate their students accordingly. It is an incorrect assumption that only schools in diverse areas or with a larger numbers of ME pupils should address this issue. Finally, ME members of staff require robust support within their workplace and their work and achievements must be acknowledged, especially when these have a basis in race equity work, to avoid scenarios such as this - “When I came back from a Black educators conference. Where I had delivered a session, talking about my work in school, not one member of SLT asked me how it went or what I did. Nobody showed any interest at all and that was across the board” (P66, Teacher).

## 21. Overall Themes

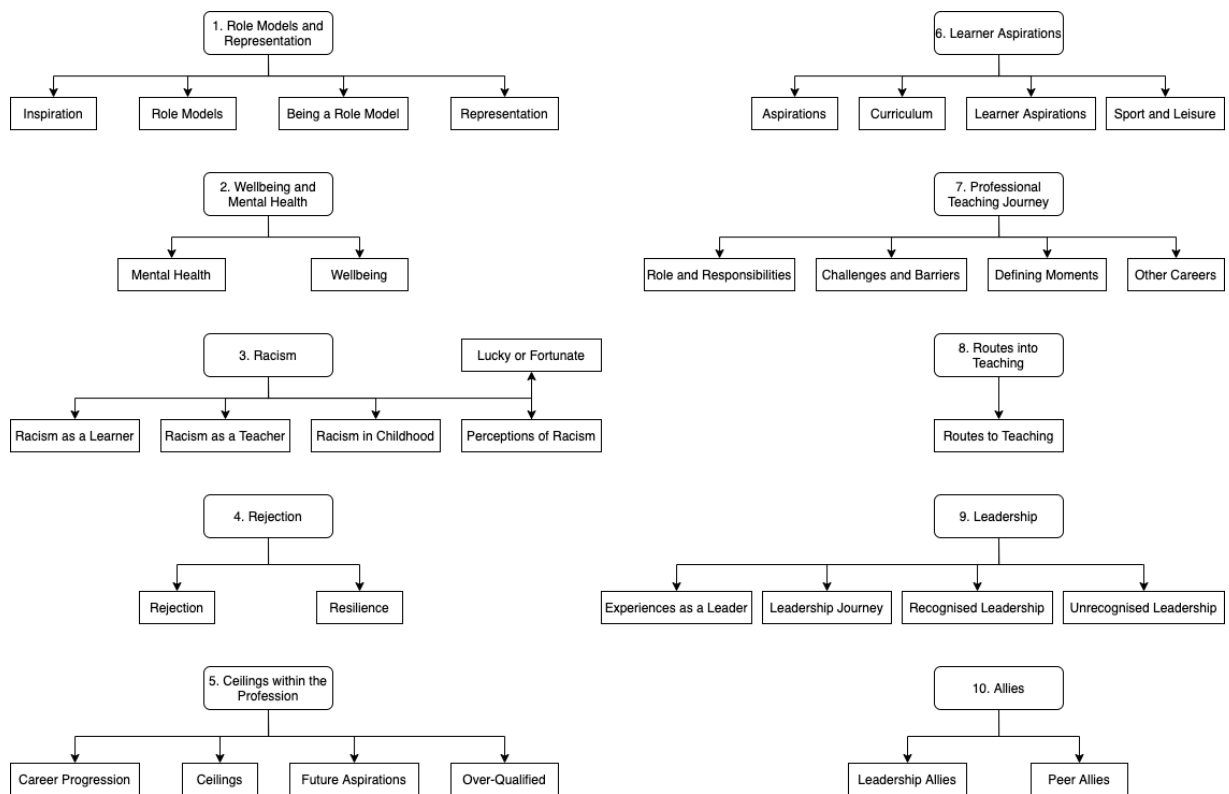
Overall, a range of themes were identified during the thematic analysis.



**Figure 8: Number of Coding References**

A wide selection of themes and sub-themes were drawn out of the collected data, which are illustrated in Figure 8. For example, 'Role Models' and 'Representation' were among the most referenced themes with 181 and 182 references respectively. There were some lesser referenced nodes within the data, such as 'Recognised Leadership' (3 references) or 'Over-Qualified' (7 references). However, these themes are still important elements of the data set and represent the more nuanced and specific experiences that different research participants shared during their courageous conversations.

It is this complex mapping of key themes and sub-themes that must be represented within the data set and the analysis process. It is important to note the relationship between each theme and sub-theme within the data set, which is outlined in the diagram below.



**Figure 9: Themes and Subthemes**

As Figure 9 demonstrates, whilst 10 key themes were identified within the data, a range of lesser themes and sub-themes were identified and represented within the data analysis. An important element of the research was ensuring that no voices were lost or unheard and the structuring of themes and sub-themes has ensured that each experience shared by the participants has been acknowledged.

## 22. Recommendations for Policy and Practice

These recommendations for the recruitment and retention of ME teachers are generated directly from the reflections of the participants. Recent recommendations in reports from EWC (2020), Welsh Government (2021), Prof Charlotte Williams (2021) and Race Alliance Wales (2021) were also reflected upon.

### 22.1. RECRUITMENT

1. Conversations about Race to be a more dominant discourse in Consortia, schools, HEIs and in ITE - this needs to be a top-down approach with robust engagement taking place amongst senior leaders. Job descriptions / criteria should reflect the need for diverse teaching staff within schools. HEI's should be robust in ensuring that application and interview processes support students from ME backgrounds.
2. Track ME ITE applications and ensure this data is robustly recorded, reported on and accessible. Mentoring or further support is also needed for unsuccessful applicants.
3. Targeted careers guidance should be available in schools for ME students and where possible, led by ME teachers.
4. It is key that ongoing career support and guidance is provided for ME teachers to enable them to reach senior positions in schools.
5. A Teaching Assistant to teacher funded school- based study route, career progression and mentoring process is needed.
6. All Interview panels for teaching roles, should as far as possible, have minority ethnic members.
7. Targeted recruitment of School Governors from diverse backgrounds should be in place. This will also support recruitment of ME staff to teaching roles, as point 6.
8. Curriculum changes should be in place, in terms of content and structure of teaching that embraces and celebrates diversity
9. HEI's should encouraging more ME students into teaching by using targeted marketing and outreach work within ME communities.
10. Serving ME teachers to be paid for roles where they 'informally' mentor / recruit young ME students to go into teaching.

### 22.2. RETENTION

1. A Wales wide forum is needed for ME teachers to discuss their experiences, have peer support and to share personal and professional stories. This would also work as a mechanism for mentoring / career development.
2. Consortia to work together across Wales to look at strategies to support, train and develop ME staff.
3. Mentorship and support is needed from senior management / Consortia to enable progress within the school system for ME teachers.
4. Senior leaders in schools to attend training on how to support the specific mental health and wellbeing needs of ME staff and students.



5. Training needs to be ring fenced for ME leaders. Routes for further training for ME staff on MA education programmes or doctoral programmes e.g., Professional Doctorate / EdD.
6. Track the career progression of NQT ME applicants to the teaching profession and for serving ME teachers.
7. Training is needed either as ongoing CPD for school staff or within ITE programmes for students on 'racial literacy' and the importance of an anti-racist approach to professional practice.
8. A team approach should be in place within schools / HEI / Consortia with regard to delivering race equity work. This should not just be the preserve of ME staff.
9. There should be transparency in relation to pay and conditions of service for ME teachers in comparison with white colleagues.
10. Support needs to be given to ME teachers who take a career break away from the UK (often in their country of origin).

### *22.3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOLS / HEIs / CONSORTIA*

A variety of approaches must be implemented to support recruitment of diverse students into teaching and to retain these students. Approaches would range from traditional marketing and recruitment practices to sophisticated strategies designed to transform the experiences and perceptions that ME communities have of HEI and ITE being inclusive and welcoming places of learning for them. Superficial approaches, such as simply including a more diverse range of individuals in marketing materials will not be sufficient to achieve the step-change that is required. Radical action and meaningful engagement with diverse communities throughout Wales is therefore required.

We must reach within our professional community of learners and educators to appreciate and improve experiences for ME staff and learners. It is critical that educational leaders understand lived experiences and create culturally inclusive opportunities and expectations which celebrate diversity and champion fair representation. Universities UK (2020, p. 2) 'call on university leaders to acknowledge where there are issues in their institutions, and that UK higher education perpetuates institutional racism'. It cites racial harassment, a lack of diversity among senior leaders, the ME student attainment gap and pay gaps among ME staff as evidence. It also recommends training for senior leaders and governing bodies to improve their awareness of concepts including 'white privilege' and 'allyship' and makes clear that efforts to address racism will only succeed if the entire university community – including students, staff, alumni, and local partners – are engaged and encouraged to take shared responsibility for change. This also applies to schools and consortia in relation to training and staff development. A current practical example of good practice within one HEI in Wales has been to run whole school staff training with 'Show Racism the Red Card Cymru'. This training led to further progressive thinking amongst staff involved in ITE and on other programmes. This one example will impact change within a university school - a whole Wales approach led by policy and mandatory training would ensure adequate change within a country to move towards progressive practice and provision.

### *22.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH*

Due to various challenges and barriers which occurred during the research process, fewer participants than initially outlined in the project bid were interviewed. This was especially the case with the 14+ learners. We feel the sample gained is not representative of pan-Wales and suggest future research is needed to include, listen to and represent further ME voices not yet reached or heard.

Targeted specific recommendations that directly echo the voices of the research participants are a feature of this research. To achieve the recommendations, the research team suggest that future research must be given sufficient time, support, and increased scalability to conduct the size of project required to fully investigate and address ME recruitment and retention to teaching in Wales. This must include established lines of communication to ensure a decolonised systematic approach to accessing all possible participants. Ensuring all ME staff and students are aware of the Wales wide research. As previously mentioned, teaching support staff have been identified as an under-represented group for recruitment to teaching. Therefore, it is recommended that future research investigates whatever challenges prevent them joining the teaching profession. Research on how to make the teaching profession more relevant to young 14+ ME students (especially boys) is sorely needed. Research into professional journeys, career progression and statistics about ME teachers' applications into education leadership roles are needed.

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## 24. Appendices

### 24.1. APPENDIX 1: SEMI -STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These were used as a guide and actual conversations around these questions was more naturalistic.

<p><b>School staff</b></p>	<p><b>Emotive aspects</b></p> <p>What is your ethnic background? How would you describe your ethnicity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What have been your experiences of being an EM teacher / leader. Tell us about your professional journey and your own childhood school experience.</li> <li>· Who / What has inspired you to choose teaching as a profession, e.g., did you have an inspirational role model that inspired you to enter the teaching profession?</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching as a career</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What is it like for you as an EM teacher? What have your experiences been like? Both positive and negative?</li> <li>· What have been your experiences in relation to career progression? What are your aspirations for your future experiences career?</li> <li>· In relation to leadership – how would you describe your leadership journey? Any defining moments?</li> </ul> <p><b>Way forward and Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What would be your advice to new EM entrants to the teaching profession?</li> <li>· Do you think things needs to change? If so what and why?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unsuccessful ITE applicants</b></p>	<p><b>Emotive aspects</b></p> <p>What is your ethnic background? How would you describe your ethnicity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What have been your experiences of being taught in school? What has your learning journey been like?</li> <li>· Have you had an inspirational teacher – tell us about them?</li> <li>· What do you think good teaching is? – what does it mean to you?</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching as a career</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Why did you want to go into teaching as a career?</li> <li>· Tell us why you think you were unsuccessful in your ITE application and / or interview?</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· How did find out? How did that make you feel – did the feedback from your interview align with your performance at interview? Was the feedback formative / constructive? Did the feedback help you go forward?</li> <li>· How did this experience affect you – how did you deal with this experience?</li> </ul> <p><b>Way forward – Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Do you think this process needs to change? If so – how? What needs to change?</li> <li>· What do you think would have helped you to obtain a place on an ITE programme?</li> <li>· What are you doing now in relation to your career? would you try again for an ITE place? For example.</li> </ul>
<p><b>14+ learners and undergraduate and postgraduate students in HEI</b></p> <p><b>Students in FE</b></p>	<p><b>Emotive aspects</b></p> <p>What is your ethnic background? How would you describe your ethnicity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What have been your experiences of being taught in school? What has your learning journey been like?</li> <li>· Have you had an inspirational teacher – tell us about them?</li> <li>· What do you think good teaching is?</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching as a career</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Have you thought about teaching as a future career?</li> <li>· If yes, why? If no, why?</li> <li>· Are you thinking of teaching primary or secondary – why?</li> <li>· If secondary – what subject would you like to teach?</li> <li>· Have you received career guidance on a teaching career? / been given advice from another adult / peer. Did you do your own research on teaching.</li> <li>· Do you have any relatives / friends who are teachers?</li> </ul> <p><b>Way forward – Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· What do you think career progression would look like in teaching?</li> <li>· Do you think there is a good career progression for EM teachers?</li> <li>· How likely is it for EM teachers to become e.g., head teacher?</li> <li>· How far do you think you could go in teaching? e.g., head teacher?</li> <li>· What needs to change in school and why?</li> </ul>

## 24.2. APPENDIX 2: SELF-DEFINED ETHNICITY CLASSIFICATION KEY

All of the codes, such as A1 or M1, represent a range of ethnicities that were identified via a 'Self-Defined Ethnic Classification Key' (Based on - <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups>).

<b>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</b>	<b>Code</b>
White and Black Caribbean	M1
White and Black African	M2
White and Asian	M3
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	M4
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	
Indian	A1
Pakistani	A2
Bangladeshi	A3
Chinese	A4
Any other Asian background	A5
<b>Black, African, Caribbean or Black British</b>	
African	B1
Caribbean	B2
Any other Black, African or Caribbean background	B3
<b>Other ethnic group</b>	
Arab	O1
Any other ethnic group	O2
<b>Traveller / Gypsy heritage</b>	
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	T1