An exploration of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and their stories of schooling

Their own worst enemies?

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education

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STATEMENT OF NEEDS

The following is a 'statement of needs' for the justification and completion of the study which identifies:

a) the magnitude and significance of the problem

African-Caribbean boys continue to fail in secondary education. This is reflected in much lower than average GCSE results compared to other students and lower rates of participation in school sixth forms and in further and higher education.

The problem of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement is of major concern because these boys are not getting qualifications, cannot access higher education and jobs and therefore will become marginalised and disconnected from society. Government policy has been inadequate in meeting the needs of these boys. Even if standards in education have continued to improve African-Caribbean boys have not benefited from this in comparison to other students.

b) how a thorough understanding of the problem/needs have been demonstrated

I have conducted a thorough review of the literature concerning the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. This has included an analysis of the data about the extent of the problem, the effects of globalisation, national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity in relation to African-Caribbean boys. This has also included a review of the trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys. In doing so, the review has acknowledged the work of a range of contributors.

c) the logical transition from the needs identified, to the empirical study and the proposed solutions

As a result of reviewing the literature I was able to establish the gaps in the research. Through an Institutional Focus Study (IFS) of a multicultural Inner London School (ILS) it also became evident that African-Caribbean boys were 'hidden' and marginalised. Having identified the problems and the gaps in the literature review, the next step was to design a set of research questions to be answered. The empirical study was designed as a case study as

this approach was the most appropriate to capture African-Caribbean boys in their natural settings. The methods chosen to collect the data were interviews, questionnaires and a sociogram. It was also important to ensure that the data collected was valid and steps were taken to ensure this. The data was analysed and the findings reported on. As are result a set of recommendations for practitioners, Local Education Authority and policy makers has been proposed.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates why African-Caribbean boys continue to underachieve in schools. It is based on an extensive study of one Inner London school and has also involved a thorough review of the existing literature about why this particular group of students do not fulfil their potential.

The inspiration for this study has been the work of Bernard Coard (1971) who wrote influentially about how the first generation of West Indian children was branded as 'Educationally Subnormal' by the British school system. Over thirty years later, the failure of African-Caribbean boys continues to be an alarming phenomenon, despite years of multi-culturalism and education for 'diversity'. One of the arguments of my study is that African-Caribbean boys can even become 'hidden' amongst much larger groups of students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) and who as a result, often receive extensive additional support.

British schools have changed since the time that Coard (1971) was writing, but as my study demonstrates African-Caribbean boys are still likely to be over represented in the various Behaviour or Learning Support Units. I have also discovered that, far fewer African-Caribbean boys in the school investigated are likely to go on to the sixth form in comparison to students from other backgrounds.

Even though there have been many studies about race and education, far fewer researchers have tried to 'hear it from the boys'. I have carried out extensive research at school level amongst the boys and their teachers. As well as conducting an Institutional Focus Study of the school in question. I have argued that, whilst other groups such as white working class boys have been hostile to school, on the contrary, most of the boys in my study wanted to learn or saw the importance of obtaining qualifications in order to improve their chances in life.

African-Caribbean boys are not 'their own worst enemies', but the reasons for their underachievement are complex, being the result of a range of factors. As I am a practitioner, I have concluded my study with some practical proposals for change which I hope will make a difference to the lives of these boys.

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I have concluded my study with some practical proposals for change which I hope will make a difference to the lives of these boys.

GLOSSARY OF CHARTS AND TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as an introduction to a study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers in an Inner London School (ILS). It sets out the aims of the study as well as the motivation for conducting it. The study also links my biography to the wider questions of the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys in the British school system (a system that is now dominated by a National Curriculum and league tables and which is discussed further as part of the literature review in subheading 2.9 and in this chapter in 1.5). The Oxford Dictionary defines underachievement as "doing less well than expected, especially in schoolwork." A more comprehensive definition of the term is provided in Chapter Two, 2.3.

Before setting out the research question and outlining the research approach this chapter also introduces some of the themes that are integral to the thesis; for example the significance of African-Caribbean boys' subculture and a definition of this culture.

1.1 The Focus of the Study

This study is about the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys in the British school system. It centres on a case study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers in an Inner London School. This is supported by an Institutional Focus Study (IFS) which provides a context of the school and its student population as well as the area it serves. Before conducting these however, it was necessary to review the literature on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement.   This involved a period of extensive reading, the results of which are reported critically in Chapter Two. The literature review has been conceptualised into three sections, (see 2.1). Section i) the effects of globalisation, national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity and African-Caribbean boys, section ii) data on African-Caribbean boys underachievement in comparison to other boys and section iii) trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. A summary of the

conceptual framework adopted for this study is also included at the end of this chapter in 1.10.

As well as looking at the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys from different perspectives, I have been particularly influenced by the work of Bernard Coard, who wrote about the plight of the West Indian child in British schools in the 1960s and early 1970s (Coard, 1971). I have discussed Coard (1971) in Chapter Two under section i), 2.4. I interviewed Mr. Coard in Grenada in, 2004, 2006, 2008 and again in 2009 and these interviews are discussed in Chapter Four and Six. I have also been influenced by other more recent studies about the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys, for example the work of Gus John (John, 2006) and discussed in section i) of the literature review. I have also examined the work of Tony Sewell (Sewell, 1997, 2002, 2005, 2007 and 2009). This is discussed in section iii) 2.20.

In accordance with Brunel University Education Doctoral requirements, the literature review is followed by an Institutional Focused Study (IFS) of an Inner London Secondary School (which will be referred to as ILS throughout the thesis). This is a school where I am also a teacher. The school has a diverse population and is located in one of London's most racially mixed boroughs (see Chapter Three, 3.3 and 3.7). The IFS has involved an examination of the school's statistical data, policy handbook, discussions with staff from various departments and an outline of the history of the borough in which the school is located and also a comparison with the performance of other schools in the borough.

Following the IFS, a case study was carried out using questionnaires and interviews to inform and develop the study of African-Caribbean boys (Chapters Four and Five). The aim was to find out how a group of African-Caribbean boys perceived school, teaching, learning and their experiences of peer group pressures. Data has been collected from the teachers of these boys using questionnaires, because it was imperative to hear from them as well, so as to understand their perceptions of the boys in school, gained through day-to-day contact with them. An interview with the headteacher of the school was also conducted in order to capture her perceptions of African-Caribbean boys and the constraints she faced as the leader of the school.

1.2 The significance of this study

This research is an essential contribution to work already undertaken by others. The literature review (Chapter Two) examines the existing research as to why African-Caribbean boys underachieve. It is almost 40 years since the time of Coard's (1971) work discussed in Chapter Two under section i). There have been many policy changes and society (particularly in areas such as London) has become much more socially diverse. However, according to Phillips (2005) African-Caribbean boys are still underachieving at such an alarming rate that they are predicted to become a new underclass in a new global society (also discussed in Chapter Two, sections i), 2.6 and in Chapter Six, 6.3). This is because they will not have the qualifications required for the type of employment that will take them into a reliable income bracket.

It is also the case that schools have changed considerably since the time of Coard (1971). Some, like ILS, where the main research is conducted have become multi-cultural. Much work has been done by organisations such as 'From Boys to Men' (2005) 'Generating Genius' (Sewell, 2005) and the 'Black Boys Can Association' (2007). In my view, this is valuable work as it supports the achievement of black boys in helping them to realise that they can achieve and do well academically. However, these are isolated and relatively small projects which do not cater for the needs of all African-Caribbean boys who as a group continue to underachieve.

In conducting the study it was necessary to give a sample of boys the opportunity to have a voice about how they saw their world in school. I believe that it is essential to hear the boys' view point so that, having listened to them and found out what they want for themselves and from their school we can gain an understanding of their subculture and begin to create new policies to address their underachievement at school level.

I strongly believe that African-Caribbean boys should be given special consideration within mainstream schooling. This does not mean giving them preferential treatment but should be viewed as an attempt to address the issue of their current underachievement that has such profound implications for the future of these boys. Listening to the boys' voices is essential in order to develop strategies which can help

to generate a future for them which promises success, good jobs, allows them to become balanced individuals, with enriched lives - so they do not see the streets as a place to go where they may become involved in crime, be seriously hurt or even killed.

During the course of this study I have become passionate about this area, wanting to develop knowledge and expertise about the issues that have arisen. I feel very strongly that new strategies are needed to develop the education of African-Caribbean boys and to help them to learn, to remain in school beyond compulsory school age, to take A-level qualifications and go on to university. I am committed to trying to make a difference in this area.

1.3 How this work adds to existing research

The research findings summarised in Chapter Five and Six, make an important contribution to existing work. As a result of the case study and IFS, even though it is clear that African-Caribbean boys are still underachieving, the nature of this underachievement has changed. When Coard (1971) wrote his book West Indian children were a visible minority in predominantly white schools. The African-Caribbean boys in this study are, I argue, a 'hidden' minority in a diverse/multi-cultural school with very few white children and where African-Caribbean boys are grouped with children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and African Black children This becomes clear to the reader in the IFS, (Chapter Three) particularly the section about the Learning Support Unit (LSU), where the boys are over represented in comparison to other groups, but it is also apparent in the responses of teachers to the question of African-Caribbean underachievement, described in Chapter Five,5.5 and also in the discussion in Chapter Three, 3..21 to 3.25.

1.4 Biography of the author (and key issues being addressed)

My journey into boys' underachievement in schools really commenced when, after over twenty years of working in the business world, I became a teacher of Business Studies, something that I had always wanted to do. I joined a Graduate Teacher

Programme and began teaching in an inner London school. This teaching role gave me an immediate insight into the issue of underachievement of boys and students from ethnic minority backgrounds, particularly in relation to examination results. In particular, my interest was in the GCSE results of African-Caribbean boys and also the attainment differences by gender, race and social class background. It is important to make these comparisons to establish general trends and reasons for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. My studies to date have helped to develop a keen interest in knowing why these groups of children underachieve in education and also in their motivation to learn. As a new teacher, it was essential for me to gain a better understanding of these issues and, therefore, I pursued an MA in Education. The subject of my dissertation was student underachievement and how to develop strategies to motivate boys to improve their educational achievement. The MA contributed to developing my interest in the relationship between gender and achievement and in aspects of black and white working class boys' performance in school. As a result of this current study, I now have greater understanding of the issues of student underachievement and the many complex factors that contribute to this.

The work is important because it addresses an issue close to my heart as an African-Caribbean woman from Grenada, who arrived in Britain when my parents came here as part of the early migration from the West Indies in the mid 1960s. Most of my education has been in Britain. My son, nephews and other male members of my family have also been educated in Britain. I do not consider that they have reached their full educational potential because they have not gained the qualifications necessary to embark on good careers. For example they do not have university degrees. As a teacher, I have seen the impact of underachievement on African-Caribbean boys. This group of boys often leaves school without academic qualifications because they have underperformed at GCSE and cannot continue with Advanced level studies, or go to university. Therefore they have to take up further education, low paid jobs in the service industry, unemployment or inhabit street culture, with some becoming involved with crime.

As a teacher of vocational education, my work brings me into contact with students who have underachieved in their GCSE examinations and who enrol on intermediate/level two business courses for one year before they can advance to A-level or equivalent courses. From my work with students who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) or have Special Educational Needs (SEN), I can appreciate some of the difficulties they face in accessing the curriculum. It is important to mention this because in Chapter Three, 3.20 there is a discussion about how African-Caribbean boys are 'hidden' among these groups.

1.5 The politics of education, the National Curriculum and league tables

The National Curriculum was introduced as a new 'entitlement' to school children as a result of the Education Reform Act of 1988. However I share the position adopted by my fellow countryman, Professor Gus John (2006) that despite decades of reform, even though it provides an 'entitlement' - the National Curriculum does not cater for diversity. John (2006) argues, for example, that the *White Paper, Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (DfES, 2005) is 'white' in every sense of the word and that it is silent on the issue of schools' and governing bodies' legal obligations in compliance with anti-discrimination and human rights legislations. He is also of the view that nothing is said about the role of schooling and education in combating racism and preparing all children for living peaceably in, and managing, a multi-racial society (see Chapter Two, section i) where this issue is discussed further).

John (2006) says that despite the fact that the government has established various working groups overseeing the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999) and the fact that schools and local education authorities are now required to have in place a race equality policy/scheme and an action plan spelling out how their policy is to be implemented, nothing has seriously changed. He also asserts that this policy has not catered for the diversity of the school population in Britain. John (2006) challenges the second section in the White Paper on black and minority ethnic (BME) children, by saying that "whilst many black and minority ethnic young people achieve well, a significant number fail to realise their potential" (John, 2006 p.2). He argues that young African-Caribbean children and those from Pakistani and

Bangladeshi backgrounds are among the lowest achieving pupils in our schools (see Chapter Two, section ii), 2.12).

In line with the arguments of Coard (1971), John (2006) argues that "the brain matter, the genetic material of people like us underwent some sort of inexplicable metamorphosis when we crossed the Atlantic, such that the predominant experience we have had in the British schooling system is of underachievement and failure" (p, 198). He argues that this is "so much so that we are expected to believe that it is beyond the capacity of the schooling system to give us quality education" (p, 198). He contends that we now have the disturbing situation in which the academically successful, high achieving, working class, inner-city British born black male of African-Caribbean background is an increasingly rare species. John (2006) concludes that black males are much more to be found among the worrying statistics that gave rise to this particular study and are confirmed by it. (This is discussed further in Chapter Two, section i), 2.5).

John recalls how Coard (1971) alerted the education establishment to the scandalous phenomenon of 'How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System'. (West Indian children were wrongly labelled as 'Educationally Subnormal' and taken out of mainstream schools and placed in special schools). John (2006) is also of the view that 'Outcast England now, no less than that book then (Coard, 1971) is a major indictment of the British schooling system' and he asserts that then, as now, black parents have felt the need to take drastic measures to safeguard their children's education and ensure that they do not develop such an irrecoverable resistance to schooling and education so as to risk damaging their life chances for good (see Chapter Two, section i).

Stoll and Fink (2002) argue that performance and accountability were watchwords of the 1990's onwards. A common thread to the reform plans of virtually every nation, state or province is that improvement will happen if schools just test pupils and these schools and teachers are made accountable for the products of schooling. Stoll and Fink (2002) assert that a cruel irony is that there is very little evidence that external

assessments actually improve the quality of education and they contend that in fact there is substantially more evidence of their negative effects on teaching.

Byfield (2008) argues that the league tables have been controversial and seen as indicators of the highest achieving schools, as they give the raw scores of examination results. The stance taken by this theorist is that it is this rawness of the scores that so distorts the picture. Byfield (2008) argues that the best schools are those in which pupils, whatever their attainment at entry, make the greatest progress. Byfield (2008) asserts that the basic premise of league tables is flawed. Clark (2007) cites Anthony Seldon, Headmaster of Wellington College as saying that school league tables are turning children into "exam junkies" who shun all activities unless they involve taking tests. Seldon is further cited by Clark (2007) as saying that the credence given to tables of raw results is utter madness and calls for the tables to be reformed because they are having a 'pernicious and corrupting' effect on education. The view held by Seldon is that the only kind of meaningful league table is one that is based on value added. These tables measure how much students actually improve. They measure inputs not just outcomes. However, it could be seen as discriminatory to accept value added league tables from schools in more deprived areas.

Byfield (2008) goes on to say that the second major problem with league tables is their incompatibility with stated government concerns on both sides of the Atlantic to deal with the persistent gaps in achievement between the successful and the unsuccessful students – which she argues includes most black boys. Byfield (2008) asserts that the recent US commitment to the principle of 'No Child Left Behind' (2002) and the UK's 'Every Child Matters' (2003) are inimical to the present system of league tables, making a rethink essential. Quicke (1999) asserts that in England and Wales, it is evident that there is growing support for a review of the National Curriculum. The Coalition Government is currently carrying out a major review of the content and the role of particular subjects in the curriculum. In the Schools White Paper (DfE 2010) there is no indication however, that diversity will be catered for in this review.

1.6 The use and definition of culture in this thesis

The culture of African-Caribbean boys is referred to throughout this thesis. When 'culture' is mentioned, it is in terms of African- Caribbean boys, referring to the music to which they listen, the ways they dress, the masculinity they develop, their body language and the way they behave in and out of school (Chapter Two, section iii), 2.20). I have approached the issue of African-Caribbean boys' subculture based on what I have found in the review of the literature.

At this juncture it is important to define culture in its broadest sense before arriving at the definition of African-Caribbean boys' subculture. According to Bodley (1994) culture is an integrated pattern of human behaviour that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships and expected behaviours of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group; and the ability to transmit these to succeeding generations. Bodley (1994) argues that culture is a specific set of social, educational, religious and professional behaviours, practices and values that individuals learn and adhere to while participating as members of groups.

Tylor (1861 and 1871), one of anthropology's founders, gives a definition of culture as 'that complex whole'. This, he argued, includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

Bodley (1994) sees the anthropological perspective of culture as: a) topical – that culture consist of everything on a list of topics, or categories, such as social organisation, religion or economy; b) historical – that culture is a social heritage, or tradition, that is passed on to future generations; c) behavioural – culture is seen as shared, learned human behaviour, or a way of life; d) normative – culture is ideals, values, or rules for living; e) functional – culture is the way humans solve problems of adapting to the environment or living together; f) mental – that culture is a complex of ideas, or learned habits that inhibit impulses and distinguish people from animals; g) structural – culture is seen as consisting of patterned and interrelated ideas, symbols, or behaviours; h) that culture is based on arbitrarily assigned meanings that is shared

by a society.   Chapter Two and Chapter Five provide a more detailed account of the subculture of African-Caribbean boys in an educational context. For example the way they behave in school, the masculinity they act out, their dress sense, the music the boys listen to and their interactions between the main school culture and their own subculture within the school. I am in broad agreement with Bodley's (1993) model of culture as it provides a comprehensive breakdown of the different aspects of culture.

1.7 The research question

The overall research question guiding this study is: How do African-Caribbean boys perceive school and learning and how do the boys' teachers perceive them in the school?

To answer these questions I intend to focus on the following issues:

1. What are African-Caribbean boys' attitudes to school and qualifications?

   a) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of education?

   b) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of learning?

   c) How do African-Caribbean boys view their teachers?

2. What are African-Caribbean boys' views of their contact with peers in relation to learning?

   a) How is African-Caribbean boys' learning affected by the subcultures they bring to school?

   b) Why do these subcultures develop, what function/role do they perform for these boys?

   c) What strategies can be developed to create positive and supportive learning cultures for the boys?

3. How do teachers perceive the attitudes of African-Caribbean boys towards learning?

a) How do teachers perceive these boys' subcultures and socialisation in school?

b) What do teachers think are the necessary policy implications for changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving?

By asking these questions, a greater understanding will be gained of African-Caribbean boys in school and of some of the views of their teachers.

1.8 The research approach adopted for the study

The research uses a case study methodology, located within a qualitative paradigm (see Chapter Four). Data has been gathered through the use of methods such as survey questionnaires and interviews with students, interviews with Bernard Coard, survey questionnaire with teachers and an interview with the headteacher. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003), case studies capture the unique features that might be lost in larger scale data and may hold the key to how we understand particular situations. Case studies recognise the complexity and surrounding mass of social truths and their particular strength lies in the fact that they provide the potential for understanding the situation being researched.

1.9 What is contained within this thesis

Chapter one has provided an introduction. It has summarised the content of the thesis and explained how and why the study began, the approach taken and the methodology used.

Chapter Two explores the current literature on underachievement, focussing particularly on why African-Caribbean boys underachieve.

Chapter Three is an 'Institutional Focused Study' (IFS). This provides the context and examines the background of the students, community and geographical area served by 'Inner London School' (ILS).

Chapter Four provides an explanation of the research methodology adopted for the study and the methods used to collect the data, including the ethical considerations involved in conducting this type of research.

Chapter Five provides an analysis, discussion and summary of the findings from the case study research in ILS.

Chapter Six discusses the implications of the findings, and then makes recommendations on the sorts of strategies that should be implemented to address the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys as well as identifying areas where further research is required.

1.10 Graphic display of the conceptual framework adopted in the thesis and in the empirical study of African-Caribbean boys

The following diagrams illustrate the various stages of the research. Phase I shows how the literature review is developed. Phase II and Phase III then illustrate the structure of the Institutional Focus Study and the empirical study of African-Caribbean boys.
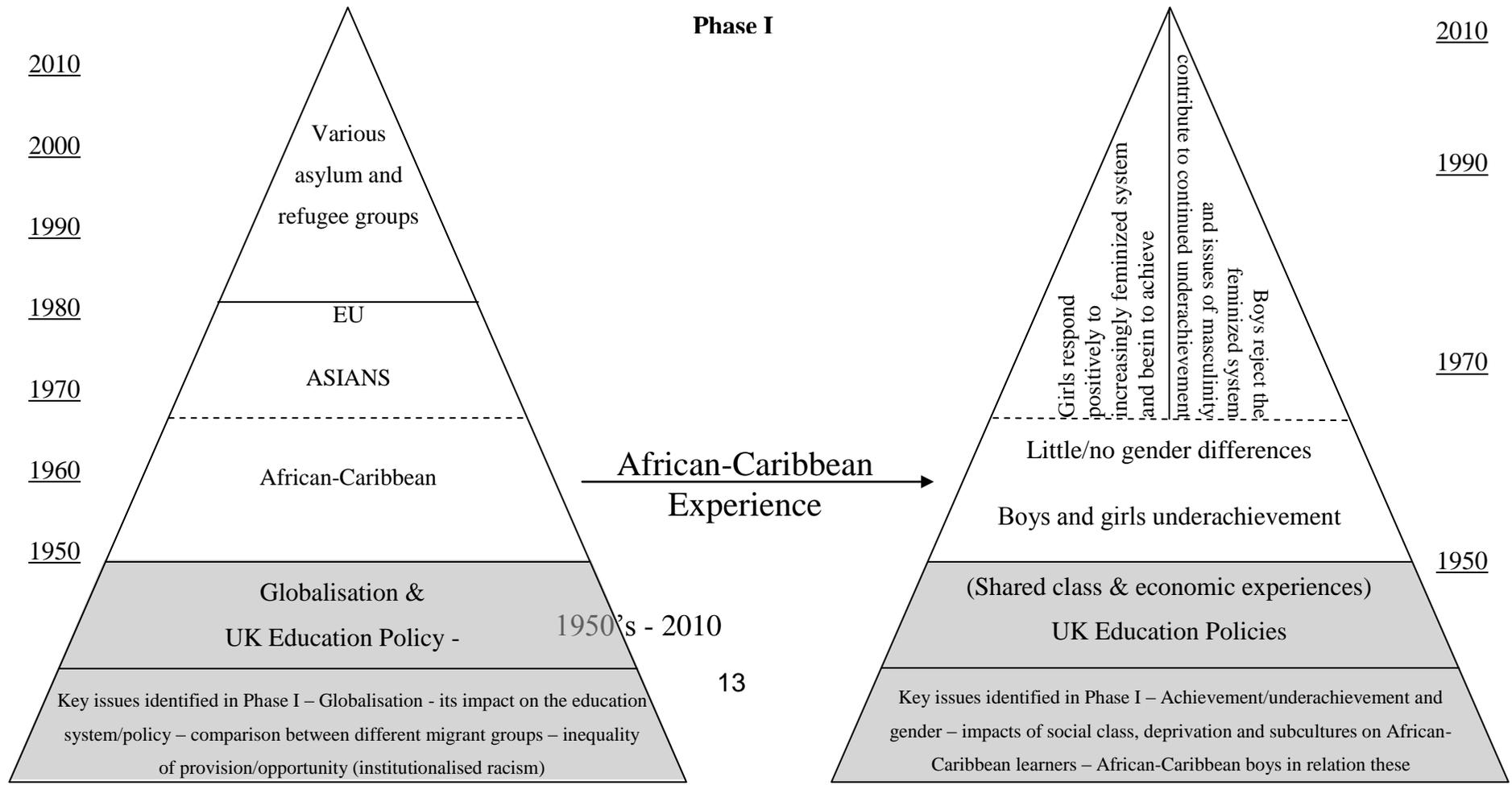
Phase I

Chronology of migration by ethnicity to UK since 1950s.

Response and impact of specific education policies post-Coard (1971) on African-Caribbean academic achievement by gender.

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Phase II and III - an Institutional Focus Study (IFS) and empirical study of African-Caribbean boys also in an ILS – 2005 - 2011

Phase II

Investigation
of an inner London
school (ILS)

Investigation into the context of
the borough ILS is located and
the geographical context

Research into the ethnic
make-up of the ILS school

Identification of African-Caribbean boys in LSU

Investigation of African-Caribbean boys in relation to EAL and SEN
students

Identification of African-Caribbean boys as a 'hidden' population

Phase III

Empirical study
of African-
Caribbean boys
in an ILS

Case study investigation of boys attitude
to school, learning, qualifications,
subculture, peer group pressures and
teachers' perception of boys

Analysis of the empirical study of African-
Caribbean boys

Reporting the findings of the study

Recommendations and reporting on contributions made to research

Further research required

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1**.11 This section provides an outline of the structure adopted for the literature review**.

The literature review is made up of three areas: i) the effects of national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity; and the impact of globalisation on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. ii) current data on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement with comparison made to other boys and iii) trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement.

1) The effects of globalisation, national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity and African-Caribbean boys.

This part of the literature review looks at current and past government policy and intervention strategies to examine whether these strategies have addressed the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys in secondary education where it has been highlighted that these boys begin to underachieve. An historical perspective on education policy in relation to African-Caribbean children is adopted which begins with the work of Coard (1971).   Coard concluded that West Indian children underachieved because of systemic and institutional racism and that these students were singled out, branded ESN and taken out of mainstream schools and placed in special schools. A comparison of the relationship between the students of the 1970's and African-Caribbean boys today is also provided.

Globalisation has also had a major impact on policies for British schools and has required major changes in policy. In Chapter Two there is an investigation of the relationship between the early African-Caribbean children and African-Caribbean boys in school in the twenty first century.   Also investigated is the impact globalisation has had on schools needing to cater for new groups of immigrants. This has placed greater demands on the school system to meet their different educational needs. This is different to the days of Coard (1971) when African-Caribbean children were one of the few groups of new migrant children. The literature has also shown that globalisation is a contributing factor in African-Caribbean boys' underachievement today.   This part of the literature review investigates the impact of globalisation on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and also investigates any

provision made in education policy to cater for the boys' needs and those of the children and new migrants. This has led to an investigation into the national curriculum, race and education policy.

Coard (1971) is integral to the development of the conceptual framework as his work helped to bring about policy changes for the early African-Caribbean children in relation to policies and, institutionalised and systemic racism. At the time of Coard however, 'globalisation' was relatively underdeveloped. The African-Caribbean arrivals were black children in white schools. Since then there has been major migration across continents. The study shows that rather than being a progressive development, something that breaks down divisions, the effects of globalisation can also be a contributing factor in African-Caribbean boys' underachievement today. This is because African-Caribbean boys are one of a large number of ethnic minority groups which schools have to cater for and which results in these boys becoming 'hidden' (as identified in the IFS in Chapter Three, 3.20).

Globalisation has brought many problems in schools which government policies have failed to address adequately. The school system caters for a 'one size fits all' and race is almost off the agenda. The policy of the government focuses on raising standards for all rather than addressing the cultural needs of particular groups. The failure of polices to cater fully for diversity has a major impact on the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. The last Labour government had clear policies for improving performance. However, it did not have policies for particular groups. This led to an inadequate curriculum for Black and Ethnic Minority children. The current government wants to focus on more traditional learning which will not benefit African-Caribbean boys directly.

In the latter part of the twentieth century governments put in place a range of policies to raise standards but these have not catered for the needs of African-Caribbean boys. The content of such policy discussed diversity in a very general context and groups all ethnicities together. In 2010 the Coalition Government proposed budget cuts and more policy changes in education. However, no provision has been made to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys as a particular group of underachievers.

2) African-Caribbean boys' underachievement in comparison to other boys

As stated earlier, the political agenda and policy has not catered for the needs of groups such as African-Caribbean boys and these boys continue to underachieve in British secondary schools. This section of the literature review examines the extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and provides evidence in the form of current and past data which shows the performance of these boys and also provides data to compare the underachievement of other boys. The data provided in this section shows past and current statistics on African-Caribbean boys underachievement.

3) Trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement

This section looks at trends, patterns and explanations of African-Caribbean boy's underachievement to establish if the boys' culture and subcultures affect their learning. The section of the literature review looks at exclusions from school and how this impacts on boys learning. It then examines literature on masculinity and peer group pressure on African-Caribbean boys' learning. This section also investigates how students' socio-economic background affects their achievement. The section also discusses the ability of schools to cater for students from lower-socio economic background, ethnic minorities and different gender groups.

1.12 Summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the thesis. It has outlined the main research questions and summarised the various activities to be undertaken, for example the literature review, the IFS, the case study and the way in which data was collected. It has also outlined some important concepts such as culture and subculture, particularly in relation to the target group. It has explained the reasons for my personal interest in the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys and has provided a graphic explanation of the conceptual framework adopted for the study. The chapter that follows (Chapter Two) comprises a literature review.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction:

As discussed in Chapter One, this chapter provides a critical review of the literature and adopts a conceptual framework which examines the nature and extent of African-Caribbean underachievement:

i) The effects of globalisation, national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity and African-Caribbean boys

ii) Data on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement in comparison to other boys

iii) Trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement

The purpose of the literature review

According to Wellington, Bathmaker, Hunt, McCulloch and Sikes (2005) the process of reviewing the literature encourages the researcher to work out from where their ideas come. The review has been used as an 'inquiry trail' - to explore how different types of literature, such as policy documents, historical documents and academic research literature address African-Caribbean children's underachievement, looking for common themes, similarities and concepts. I have included in this chapter recent comments from Bernard Coard the author of 'How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Sub-Normal in the British School System' (1971) from interviews which I have undertaken with him. I also refer to Coard (1971) in this chapter, in Chapter Five as part of the pilot study and in the summary in Chapter Six.

2.2 Terminology for defining African-Caribbean boys

Throughout this study the term West Indian, Black and African-Caribbean will be used interchangeably to discuss children who are descendant of the migrants from the Caribbean islands and Guyana.

2.3 Defining underachievement

When a child 'underachieves' in school it means that he/she is not achieving at the level that is expected of children at a particular age. This means that the child has not met test standards in Cognitive Abilities Tests (CATs), Standard Assessment Techniques (SATs), GCSEs or A-level assessments as measured by these test scores (QCA 2010 and DfE 2010). Children are classified as failing because they have not achieved the desired scores, and in this respect African-Caribbean boys are being categorised as underachieving in secondary education. Travis (2010) quotes DCSF statistics that show black Caribbean boys performing well below average in terms of 5 A*-C grades at GCSE.

Qualifications are all inter-related. For example, without good GCSEs students cannot go on to do A-levels and without A-levels they cannot easily go to university and without a degree they are less likely to have a good career. Also, if students are repeatedly suspended or excluded from school they are less likely to achieve these qualifications. This issue of exclusion from school is discussed further in section iii) of this chapter.

In this study of African-Caribbean boys' 'underachievement', it is essential to provide a definition of the term. The Oxford Dictionary (1999) defines underachievement in terms of: someone whose actual performance consistently fails to reach the level predicted by intelligence tests or other measures of ability. Plewis and Coram (1991) are of the view that underachievement is a word frequently encountered in educational writing but that it is not a well-defined concept. The authors cite Crane (1959) as saying that the concept goes back at least to 1920, and has been known variously as the achievement quotient, the accomplishment quotient, and the achievement ratio.

Plewis and Coram (1991) are of the view that underachievement lacks a universally agreed and applied definition. They assert that many psychologists define educational underachievement for individuals in terms of a discrepancy between their Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and their score on an educational test, initially measuring the concept as a ratio but that more recently as a difference between actual attainment and that predicted by IQ. Plewis and Coram (1991) argue that an implication of this definition is that IQ is seen as the major causative factor in educational achievement. They also assert that there has been a trend in recent years for low achievement to be used synonymously as characteristic of groups rather than of individuals. They further assert that social and demographic groups with mean achievement of attainment test scores below the mean for a selected reference group are said to underachieve, regardless of their mean IQ. Thus, they argue that this usage has tended to be favoured more by educational sociologists rather than by educational psychologists which generates some operational confusion, especially as there is no necessary connection between the two definitions.

The conclusion that Plewis and Coram (1991) arrive at is that it is clearly unsatisfactory that a concept which is used so widely in educational discourse does not have an unambiguous definition. The confusion engendered by having two definitions; which, for convenience, can be referred to as psychologists' and sociologists' definitions—can be seen when we compare the attainment of black British pupils of African-Caribbean origin with their white British peers. It is generally agreed that African-Caribbean pupils, as a group, have lower academic attainments than white British pupils and, in that sense, they underachieve. However, results presented in the Swann Report (1985), obtained using the regression method already described, show that there is no consistent evidence of African-Caribbean underachievement, when their academic attainments and examination results were compared with those predicted from their IQ scores.

According to Tayyari (2004) there remains a lack of scientific precision for the definition of intelligence, although many scientists use the psychometric definition (where intelligence is measured in terms of general cognitive ability). Whether nature or nurture influences intelligence remains a matter of debate between geneticists and environmentalists, who are divided equally over the issue. The view held by Tomlinson (2005) is that there is a determined right-wing who has not given up on efforts to persuade the world that black people have lower average IQs than whites. She asserts that the magazine 'Right Now', which has several lords and professors as patrons, recorded an interview with 77 year old Arthur Jensen in 1999, where he asserted that black people had an IQ on average of 15 points lower than whites, and that some 'high level' politicians in both USA and Britain agreed with him that compensatory education programmes did not work. Tomlinson (2008) goes on to argue that black boys are still the group most likely to be demonised as potential problems for schools and society. The argument here is that politicians are using IQ to explain why black boys underachieve and to not make provision for their education. This was the problem encountered by the early West Indian children in British schools. Coard (1971) argued that the IQ tests which were given to the black child, with all their cultural bias, gave them a low score only too often. He goes on to say that teachers have, in the form of the IQ test results, what they considered to be 'objective' confirmation of what everybody in society was thinking and sometimes said: that the black children on average had lower IQs than the white children and consequently are expected to do less well in class.

2.4 Effects of globalisation, national policy initiatives and government intervention on race and diversity and African-Caribbean boys

This section of the literature review adopts two stances firstly it looks at the historical journey of the African-Caribbean child in British schools and government policies and intervention strategies in response to the emergence of the African-Caribbean community. Secondly, it also examines the effects of globalisation, population movements and their impact on African-Caribbean boys, the relationship between race, education and politics and how the National Curriculum has affected students' achievement.

The reason for adopting the above approach is to set the context in which African-Caribbean boys are being educated in British schools in the twenty first century. For example it is necessary to look at how 'globalisation' has diversified the population of many schools, particularly those in inner-cities and how national policy has responded to these changes and whether policies have been specifically developed for African-Caribbean boys.

Eason (2007 p.1) cites Gus John, a professor at Strathclyde University, as saying "60 years after (the ship), Empire Windrush brought people from the Caribbean to British shores, the fact that young black boys, African-Caribbean boys, are still underachieving at the rate at which they are is nothing short of a national scandal". It is difficult to study the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys without looking at the arrival of the African-Caribbean people and the history of their children's education in this country. According to Hunte (2004) the early 1950's saw the first large waves of African-Caribbean communities arriving in England, with high hopes and high aspirations. They had offers of employment in the National Health Service, London Transport and elsewhere. They came to Britain in the hope of escaping the grinding poverty of many of the economically underdeveloped islands of the Caribbean. The author argues that those bright hopes rapidly faded when teachers in England, ill prepared for the large influx of children from Caribbean communities assigned many of the most able students to the lower streams, sometimes even refusing to teach classes with large numbers of them. Hunte (2004) concluded that parents were shocked and bewildered by their experiences. (The issue of parental involvement is discussed later in this chapter, 2.12 and in Chapter Five, 5.5).

In those days of early immigration, it was reported that both African-Caribbean boys and girls were underachieving in British schools and that they were often erroneously categorised as being educationally subnormal (ESN) (Coard, 1971 and Swann, 1985). Schools in the 1960's were said to be in 'crisis'. In reality they were not equipped to deal with the cultural needs and issues that African-Caribbean students brought with them to school. These schools were 'white' and tailored to meet the needs of 'white' students. The curriculum was Eurocentric. As Coard (1971) elaborates, teachers did not understand African-Caribbean children's accents, culture or the fact that they had

been uprooted from another country to come to Britain. This issue of African-Caribbean boys' subculture is discussed later in Chapter Two, 2.20 and Chapter Five, 5.2.

Coard (2004) argues that his small book written over three decades ago, was an attempt to highlight to black parents and the black community generally, some of the reasons for the abysmal failure of their children within the British school system, which included racist policies and practices of education authorities, racism within the curriculum itself and the reading materials children were obliged to use.

2.5 African-Caribbean children in British schools - the historical journey of the African-Caribbean child

African-Caribbean boys are descendants of immigrants who came to Britain directly as a result of colonialism. The first Caribbean people came to Britain as citizens of its colonies with the right to live, work and bring up their children. It is this school system in British society into which African-Caribbean people have become integrated, that has been failing their children in education and in particular failing the boys by not meeting their educational needs. It was Coard (1971) who first highlighted the plight of the West Indian child in the British education system.

West Indian children, both boys and girls, faced being labelled as ESN. According to Coard (1971), four out of five immigrant children sent to ESN schools were West Indian. As I argue later on in the chapter, African-Caribbean boys today face problems such as schools not meeting their cultural needs (John, 2006), living in lower socio-economic areas (Lupton, 2005), exclusion because of poor behaviour (Majors, 2003), negative teacher perception of them (Blair 2001, Martino and Mayen, 2001), street culture, peer group pressures and masculinity issues (Sewell 1997, Richardson 2005). All of these affect their learning and contribute to poor academic achievement.

Coard's (1971) work is a significant sign post to the problems experienced by the first Caribbean migrants. In explaining how West Indian children were wrongly labelled and placed in ESN schools, Coard (1971) makes five main points. 1) there were a

very large number of West Indian children in schools designated for ESN; (three quarters of all immigrant children placed in ESN schools were West Indian); 2) these children had been wrongly placed; 3) once placed in these schools, the vast majority never got out to return to normal schools (only seven percent of all immigrant children returned to main stream school); 4) they suffered academically and in their job prospects for life because of being in these schools; 5) that the authorities did very little to stop the scandal. Point 2) above is pertinent to African-Caribbean boys in the Inner London School in the IFS who are grouped with SEN and EAL students and have become 'hidden'. In reviewing the work of Coard (1971) the view held by Richardson (2005) is that three decades on, schools are still failing black children. Richardson (2005) cites Coard's (1971) assertions that there are cultural biases which take the form of linguistic differences between West Indian English and 'standard classroom' English. Coard classifies this as a clear middle class bias because teachers and educational psychologists are middle class. He views schools as middle class institutions that see the child through middle class tinted glasses. As a teacher, I am not fully in agreement with this view of the middle class teachers mentioned above. Some teachers in British schools are from working class backgrounds and interact in their job with children from the same social class; therefore in my view they have a good understanding of their social class background. I would, however agree that some teachers do not understand the culture or expectations of African-Caribbean boys, even though they might be from the same social class background as these students. When culture is mentioned it is in terms of the subcultures developed by African-Caribbean boys in and out of school as discussed in Chapter One and further in Chapter Five and Six.

Coard (1971) claimed there was an 'emotional disturbance bias' which he classified as a temporary emotional disturbance due to severe culture and family shock, resulting from their sudden removal from the West Indies to join parents who had left them with other family members to come to Britain for a better way of life. He contends that what these children came to when they arrived in Britain was a half forgotten family and an unknown and generally hostile environment. In highlighting the problem of underachievement of the West Indian child, Richardson (2005)

reviews Coard's work from 34 years ago entitled 'How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System' 1971 and argues that Coard's contribution to this area caused much controversy, both socially and politically because it exposed the plight of black children in the education system. It is claimed to have kick-started the supplementary schools systems and many of the multi-cultural policies of the 1970's and 1980's which brought about many positive changes and encompassed education catering for diversity to some degree. Some of these polices will be examined later in this chapter in 2.7, 2.8 and 2.9.

In continuing to take an historical perspective, the view held by Madood, Berthoud, Lakey, Nazroo, Smith, Virdee and Beishon (1998) is that the first generation of Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people who came to Britain were poorly qualified. The authors argue that these migrants mainly took up manual jobs which did not require academic qualifications. I agree with this view as many of the first migrants from the Caribbean came here as labourers to rebuild a war torn Britain. However, some of the second generation born in Britain or who came as children, have made significant progress both academically and professionally and have good careers and high status in society. This is despite the inequalities of the school system. The authors argue that some boys who came to Britain as early migrants from the Caribbean made great progress at both the middle and higher levels (CSE and O-Levels) but few obtained degree level qualifications. It seems that the education system did work effectively for some African-Caribbean students. However, the majority of African-Caribbean boys as discussed below are not achieving and the concerns raised by Coard (1971) are still pertinent. I have discussed the problem of African-Caribbean boys being 'hidden' in the ILS in Chapter Three. Data on the extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement is provided later in this chapter.

However, in continuing to look at underachievement from an historical perspective Madood et al (1998) say that far fewer 16-24 year olds in the new (third) generation (British born parents) from all ethnic groups are without a qualifications, but the poor performance of Caribbean men within this new generation is still significant and there are twice as many men as women without qualifications. This raises many questions as to what is happening to African-Caribbean boys born in Britain today.

2.6 Problems experienced by the new African-Caribbean community in Britain

The view held by Madood et al (1998) is that for some migrants and their descendants, new communities have emerged which are capable of sustaining themselves. However, for West Indian people it was not easy to settle in Britain and they faced many racial attacks even though they were invited to work in this country. Jones (2003) suggests that in 1968 when Enoch Powell launched what was in effect a movement against black immigration and in defence of English identity, he did not see immigration as a benefit to British people and argued that working-class English people faced threats to their homes, their jobs and their identity from an inexorable process of non-white immigration. Powell's view was that immigration was a threat to the very nature of British society. His argument was clearly racist and anti-black. In contrast, Hall (1978) argued that there is a tendency to omit race from the internal dynamics of British society and to repress its history. This he contends is not only confined to the political 'Right' of the spectrum but is to be found on the 'Liberal 'Left'. He goes on to say that "immigration and race has become a problem of the control of an external flow". I agree with the views of Hall (1978) that race is repressed in many accounts of British society until it comes to discussing immigration control.

2.7 Globalisation, population movements and their impact on African-Caribbean boys

Tomlinson (2008) argues that by the early twenty first century it was globalisation that was having a major influence on the relation between race and education as transient populations saw the importance of gaining educational qualifications to improve their labour market chances. The subtle difference between the early West Indian immigrants and the current influx from other parts of the world is that West Indian people spoke English as their first language whereas the new migrants possess a range of languages. This is discussed further in Chapter Three.

Hamilton and Webster (2009) define globalisation as a process that involves the creation of linkages or interconnections between nations. It is usually understood as a process in which barriers (physical, political, economic, cultural) separating different

regions of the world are reduced or removed, thereby stimulating exchanges in goods, services, money and people. Removal of these barriers is called 'liberalisation'. However, globalisation in the context of this study refers to population movements from various countries into Britain especially into inner-city areas. Since the arrival of the West Indian community in Britain many other groups have settled in Britain from various part of the globe. This has had a major effect on school policy. This is particularly so in relation to English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Special Education Needs (SEN) where in Chapter Three (3.16, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19 and 3.20) it is identified that African-Caribbean boys are 'hidden' among students with these classifications.

Global incidents such as civil wars, economic problems, genocide and the demise of the iron curtain have had a major impact on immigration to Britain. According to Barrow (2010) in 1948 the ship Windrush brought four hundred and ninety two Jamaicans to the United Kingdom and thousands more followed from other Caribbean islands. This wave of migrants continued well into the late 1960's. West Indian people were encouraged to come to Britain to help rebuild post-war Britain and to make a better life for themselves economically. The 1950's and 1960's also saw settlers from other Commonwealth countries such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh settle in Britain. In 1970s migrants were mainly from East Africa, Asia and Vietnam and in 1972 Asians expelled from Uganda was also admitted to Britain. In 1980's the African community expanded and refugees arrived from Eastern Europe; for example Romania and the former Yugoslavia.

Migration to Britain continued and in 1992 the breakup of the government of Somalia led to over seven thousand applications being made to the United Kingdom; many of which were accepted. In 1992 to 1997 Bosnians entered the UK as refugees following the breakup of former Yugoslavia. In 1999 renewed heavy fighting in Sri Lanka led to over five thousand applications for political asylum being made to the United Kingdom.

According to Barrow (2010) people moving to Britain have brought their own cultures and try to keep two cultures alive. An excellent example of this is the Notting Hill Carnival which celebrates the Caribbean Culture and is now a very big part of the British life today. According to Barrow (2010) there are two hundred and fifty different languages spoken in London every day.

Denmar (2009) asserts that since the year 2000 a great many migrants to Britain have tended to be from the European Union. From 1945 onwards the principal migrants to the UK were Irish, Italians, Asians and West Indians. The 1990s saw refugees moving en masse to the UK. The view of Denmar (2009) is that Britain has been a magnet for migrants.

It is seen as being important for children coming to Britain to obtain the skills needed to access employment and become active citizens. According to Suarez-Orozco (2001) education is critical in order to impart skills that are needed in the rapidly growing knowledge intensive sector of the global economy. He argues that globalisation profoundly shapes the current and future well being of children as well as their chances and opportunities. The author goes on to say that those children who thrive in schools, immigrants or otherwise, will be better prepared to penetrate the well-remunerated opportunities structure. He asserts that those who do not acquire these skills will be locked out of the more appealing sectors of this structure. This is in line with the argument of Phillips (2005) mentioned below who says that African-Caribbean boys are becoming a 'new underclass' in society because of their underachievement. Because African-Caribbean boys are underachieving in school, they are not gaining the valuable skills and qualifications needed to get good jobs and therefore they may end up with jobs in the lower income bracket.

Tomlinson (2005) argues that although the Labour Party demonstrated awareness of the need to incorporate some measures of social justice and equity, their response to cultural diversity was a modern response to globalisation and a way of preparing for a future workforce rather than focusing on catering for diversity. Tomlinson (2005) is arguing that education policies do not cater for underachievement of ethnic minorities but focus on the economy and that Labour policies designed to raise standards

generally were not adequate to meet the needs of groups such as African-Caribbean boys. As stated earlier, according to John (2006) the Labour government's White Paper 'Higher Standards, Better Schools for All', (DfES, 2005) was 'white' in every sense of the word. He argues that in this White Paper, Black and Minority Ethnic children are disposed of in three paragraphs that take up half a page in a 116 page document. He suggested that the ethnic minorities' population were not given sufficient consideration in policy making for education. What John (2006) is saying is that the White Paper does not cater for diversity and the focus is on a generic policy to fit all students.

Twenty-first century globalisation has had a major impact on education. The problems affecting African-Caribbean boys in schools now are different and more complex to those of the early West Indian child who settled in Britain (these are explored both in this Chapter and in Chapter Three). In particular, the new inflow of people from the European Union, refugees and asylum seekers from war torn countries who have been allowed to enter Britain, have brought with them different languages which schools need to cater for, which is an additional drain on resources. Tomlinson (2008) noted that before globalisation, there were two main groups of immigrants which schools needed to cater for. Firstly, people from the West Indies and secondly those from India/Pakistan. Tomlinson (2008) argued that a major chunk of funding from central government (for example Section 11 funds provided by the government to cater for ethnic minorities) was spent on teaching English to non English speakers. West Indian children were seen as being language deficient rather than language learners - as were the Asians. This division between the two groups resulted in what Coard (1971) discussed as being labelled 'Educationally Subnormal'. These problems have been compounded by globalisation and the arrival of many other non English speaking migrant groups.

As discussed in Chapter Three, in the ILS, as a result of these changes in population movements, black boys as a minority in the school, have become a 'hidden' population. The school is not fully identifying and catering for this group of boys. This is because the school's focus on providing English as an Additional Language support classes for these new migrants. However, African-Caribbean boys have

English as a First Language and therefore do not have EAL needs. Grouping these boys with EAL students shows that their needs are not identified adequately and therefore are not being met. I have discussed the different needs of African Caribbean boys in Chapter Six. In the Institutional Focus Study discussed in Chapter Three, the African-Caribbean population made up fifteen percent of the school's population of students. There were 63 African-Caribbean boys at the school. It is also noted that the needs of African-Caribbean boys were not being met by this school. Students from Asian backgrounds formed the majority of the school's population and a large number of them did not have English as a first language and therefore required additional EAL support. African-Caribbean boys were not seen as requiring EAL support although they were not separated from this group of students and hence becoming a 'hidden' population (see Chapter Three). African-Caribbean boys must be recognised as having different needs to EAL students and therefore separated from them. Also it should be identified and recognised that these boys are a minority within the school population and that they need support to help them achieve in terms of their underachievement.

It might be argued that these boys are getting support by default because they are placed with EAL students and therefore get additional support in English. However, their needs are different as they are fluent in English. The view held by Majors (2003) is that the schooling of black children within the British education system continues to be the focus of discontent and general dissatisfaction among black parents, professionals and communities. Majors (2003) cites Brooks and Grant as saying that black people have been regarded as a 'problem' right from the early days of immigration. The view held by these education psychologists is that this kind of prevailing attitude in the host community is still reflected in government legislation which oscillated between immigration control and race relation guidelines. The authors say that educational policy development in Britain presents a patchwork approach to race issues and that in effect there have only been attempts to ignore, remove or at least arrive at an accommodation of the problem. They argue that the underlying fears of the host community have precipitated approaches in attempting to

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accommodate black pupils within the education system and to somehow dilute their perceived detrimental effect on schools – but without resolving the inherent conflicts.

According to Suarez-Orozco (2001) for immigrant children, schooling serves as the main point of close contact with a crucial institution of the society their parents chose to join and for many it is the only point of systematic and meaningful contact with it. Education is an important route to work and to becoming effective members of society and for some it is their only means of contact to a new world and culture to which they must adapt. (This is because some children go from home to school and have little other social interaction outside of their community). However, the impact of globalisation has profound pressures on the educational institution to cater for the needs of the newly diversified schools.

Hall, Held and McGrew (2003) argue that the historical development of capitalist economies has always had profound implications for cultures, identities and ways of life. The West Indian community is not left untouched by this. They argue that globalisation of economic activity is now associated with a further wave of cultural transformation, with a process of cultural globalisation. Even though some of those people who came from the Caribbean or were born in Britain have done well economically, many others face problems in society today such as unemployment, poor housing, crimes, violence and killings on the street. Many have to live in inner-cities which suffer from deprivation and socio-economic decline. Although African-Caribbean boys are victims of these circumstances, the focus of this study is on their underachievement.

O'Meara, Mehlinger and, Krain (2000) argue that globalisation brings with it complex and multi-faceted problems, which can create class distinction, exclusion for minorities and poverty for the underprivileged in society. These issues must be addressed to ensure a fair education for all despite social class, race and gender. In their view, the current system is creating winners and losers in societies across the globe. If this is correct then the barriers to African-Caribbean boys achieving will widen and they will indeed become a 'new underclass' with little hope of a good career. Majors (2003), argues that black people have been regarded as a problem to

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British society from the early days of immigration to the present even though they only make up 1% of the population.

This section has shown how globalisation raises new challenges for schools in dealing with African-Caribbean boys. It describes a context where these boys who at the time of Coard (1971) were a very visible minority may now have become 'hidden' in that they are just one of many groups of students within very diverse schools. This issue will be further explored in Chapter Five.

2.8 Race, education and politics

This section will investigate whether specific policies which deal with race and diversity have focused on addressing the educational needs of African-Caribbean boys. Particular focus will be placed on the education polices of New Labour who according to Tomlinson (2008) wanted to make race an education issue again after the absence it had under the Conservative government.

According to Tomlinson (2005), the New Labour government was eager to affirm a commitment to social justice and racial equality, and initially there were moves to address some long-standing educational grievances; but a continuation of Conservative market policies of 'choice and diversity' in schooling and the targeting of 'failing' schools exacerbated school segregation and racial inequalities. McCulloch (1998) asserts that secondary education in England and Wales has systematically failed the ordinary child over the past hundred years and this is particularly true of African-Caribbean boys. McCulloch (1998) contends that children have continued to emerge into adult life branded as failures as a result of processes of classification and grading. Arnot, David and Weiner (2001 p.146) argue that "it is hardly surprising that African-Caribbean boys fail to achieve educational qualifications in GCSE since schools often mark them down as having learning and behaviour difficulties and as being in need of specialist help". This is because they are perceived in a certain way; have low expectations thrust upon them by those running the education system and perhaps along the way they are neglected as they become even more marginalised ('hidden'). Whereas, in the days of Coard (1971), many West Indian students were taken out of mainstream school and placed in separate ESN (Educationally Sub-

Normal) schools; today African-Caribbean boys who have SEN needs remain in mainstream schools although they are 'hidden' (grouped with EAL students). Coard (1971) classified this as systemic and institutional racism. The Macpherson Report (1999) states that institutional racism is that which, covertly or overtly, resides in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private institutions - reinforcing individual prejudices and being reinforced by them in turn. This differs from racism which is direct and overtly visible. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2011) defines racism as the unfair treatment of people who belong to a different race. According to the report if racist consequences accrue to institutional laws, customs or practices, that institution is racist whether or not the individuals maintaining those practices have racial intentions. This is also a contributing factor for other ethnic minority children. The view held by Ainley and Allen (2010) is that New Labour concentrated on raising standards generally and that this was considered to be the answer to all educational problems.

According to Hunte (2004) "there is a real sense that the time has come to address unflinchingly issues identified some thirty years ago" (Hunte, 2004 p.6). These, she argues, are to do with a number of factors including quality of schooling, discriminatory school practices, a fundamentally Eurocentric curriculum, parents' capacity to support children's education, the under-representation of black staff at senior levels in many schools and the wider perceptions of African-Caribbean communities, identity and peer influence which all impact on the attainment of African-Caribbean pupils to varying degrees to each young person. The view of Hunte (2004) is that a sophisticated package of measures is required to address these issues and that no area can be neglected.

The view held by John (2006) is that "those who campaigned against government sanctioned practices such as bussing, banding and the placing of Caribbean heritage children in lower streams than whites because of their assumed language deficiency in the face of clear evidence of the impact of these discriminatory practices upon our children, have seen patterns of low expectations, underachievement and the problematising of black school students persist" (p, 12). He goes on to say that there

is an educational culture that generates a moral panic about black youth (black males in particular), where generations of black and specifically African-Caribbean young people have been discussed in the language of underachievement, failure, disruptive and challenging behaviour. He asserts that they lack motivation and are especially prone to exclusion and see precious little evidence of themselves being associated with success and celebration of success. John (2006) asserts that it is small wonder that a worrying number of black young people adopt attitudes to learning and to the very process of schooling which contribute to their alienation and disaffection. According to Jones (2003), the school system is less tolerant of cultural differences. Jones (2003) contends that "New Labour might be expecting too much from schooling as it is today" (p, 171). This indicates that policies under New Labour have not addressed the problems experienced by ethnic minority students and in particular those of African-Caribbean boys.

John (2006 p.22) takes a stand and says that "enough is enough". He asserts that the future of this country (Britain) is in the hands of those young people who succeed in the system no less than in the hands of those who are failed and rejected by the system. The author asserts that if black and white people are to co-exist and share that future, without societal disintegration and inter/intra group conflict on an unprecedented scale, the government's investment in their future is essential. The government must also take their collective past much more fully into account and deal directly with the need to tackle the structural evidence of racial inequality in schooling and education.

Today, when there is so much social unrest among African-Caribbean youth on the streets, the underachievement of this group of boys cannot be ignored. Programmes such as Operation Trident (1998) implemented as an anti-gun crime initiative to bring an end to the spate of shootings and murders among young black Londoners have not ended the gun culture on the streets to which these boys are exposed. The Swann Report (1985) clearly stated that:

"a multi-racial society such as Britain's would function most effectively and harmoniously on the basis of a pluralist society which enables, expects and

encourages members of all ethnic groups, minority and majority to participate fully in reshaping the society as a whole within the framework of commonly accepted values, practices and procedures" (p, 243).

The report stated that this can be done by allowing and, where necessary, assisting the ethnic minority communities to maintain the distinct ethnic identities within this common framework. According to the report this involved providing an education which caters for all through a diverse curriculum, but also special treatment where boys are included and actively involved in their school and education. The consequences of the continued failure of African-Caribbean boys may invariably lead to further unrest, crimes and killings on the streets.

According to Little (1983), government reports, academic research and the writings of pressure groups mostly speak of ethnic minorities in the context of the consequences - such as riots, crimes and terrorism in a British society divided by colour. Social disorders such as the aforementioned riots cannot be fully understood unless they are seen in the context of the complex political, social and economic factors which together create a predisposition towards violent protests for fairness and justice. Little (1983) asserts that this was true of Bristol (April 1980), Brixton (April 1981), Handsworth (July 1981 and September 1985) and Toxteth (July 1981) where black youths turned on a system which they saw as not providing for their needs. These riots made authorities aware of the unrest among black youths and the differences in treatment they received from British institutions. However, despite the huge costs borne by tax payers to calm this unrest, little has been accomplished and the systems are not much different today.

The view held by Cindy John (2006) in discussing the Brixton riot, is that it took another twenty years before the police came under the scope of the Race Relations Act (1976) with a duty to implement racially sensitive policies. The author asserts that it was not until after the trouble spread to Toxteth in Liverpool in July that the government announced the creation of an Inner City Task Force with a ninety million pound budget to spend nationwide. John (2006) asserts that in spite of initiatives such as the Inner City Task Force and subsequently City Action Teams and the New Deal,

the "buppies" – young, upwardly mobile black people of the 1980s were largely a passing phenomenon. These "buppies" were educated in Britain and despite the inequalities they represented the few West Indians who achieved and had good careers.

John (2006) argues that the mixture of high unemployment, deprivation, racial tensions and poor relations with police were not unique to Brixton. Lord Scarman who published his report in November 1981 admitted that racial disadvantage existed but also concluded that institutionalised racism did not exist in the Metropolitan force. However, one advantage of his report was that it led the Sus law (where people were stopped and searched on the streets by the police and African-Caribbean men were more likely to be affect by this law) being abolished and the creation of the Police Complaints Authority and Police Community Consultative Group as well as to new approaches to recruiting police. Eighteen years later the Macpherson Report (1999) confirmed that institutionalised racism did exist in the police force.

John (2006) says that there was some political progress in the mid 1980's with black people becoming more politically active and in 1985 Bernie Grant became the first ethnic minority leader of Haringey Council and two years later was one of the first people from an ethnic minority to be elected to parliament. The riots also helped to crystallise plans by entrepreneur Val McCalla to start a newspaper in 1982 aimed at the black British community entitled 'The Voice'. However, since 1981 there has been continued sporadic outbreaks of public disorder both in Brixton and other major cities, most memorably in the north of England when White and Asians youths clashed during the summer of 2001.

The view held by John (2006) is that eradicating the underlying social problems which are at the heart of many of the disturbances swiftly climbed up the political agenda. Labour government set up the Social Exclusion Unit to tackle issues such as poverty and unemployment after its election victory in 1997. Although this has helped to reduce the number of children living in poverty and the number of people sleeping rough, other problems still exist such as the low academic achievement of

boys of African-Caribbean and Bangladeshi origin which has proved harder to overcome.

According to Gus John (2006 p.22) "it is already all too visible the societal consequences". What this author is saying is that underachievement is reflected in crime rates, gun crimes and young black men ending up in penal institutions. As a society we cannot afford riots similar to those which occurred in Bristol (April 1980), Brixton (April 1981), Hansworth (July 1981 and September 1985) and Toxteth (July 1981) or continue to lose young lives on the streets at the current scale. According to John (2006 p.71), "in the last twenty five years society has witnessed the phenomenon of paki-bashing, nigger hunting, and a year on year increase in the number of racial attacks, currently running at some 150,000 per year. In the last five years, there has been a sharp increase in the number of racist murders and attempted murders". John (2006) argues that even the few teachers recruited from the Caribbean experienced racism within school. A key reason given as to why African-Caribbean boys underachieve in school is because of institutionalised racism.

According to John (2006) the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry report (1999) emphasized the need for all institutions, not just the police, to tackle institutional racism and particularly after the Swann report (1985) when the then Community Relations Commission highlighted what black communities had maintained for two decades, that institutional racism was a major factor influencing the quality of black students' experience of schooling as well as their educational outcome. The controversial Macpherson report (1999), which came about as a result of the racist murder of the African-Caribbean youth, Stephen Lawrence, on the streets of London and is an investigation into institutional racism, places responsibility on each of us to make racial equality a reality in Britain. The Macpherson report (1999) found that there is institutional racism in services across Britain. This has infiltrated into school structures where it is often systemic and hidden. This will be investigated further in Chapter Five in relation to African-Caribbean boys.

According to Gilborn and Mirza (2000), everyone should be given the same opportunities to education, to services and to the job market regardless of their race.

In recognising that specific groups of children are underachieving in schools, over the last ten years the Labour government tried to address the issue by establishing programmes such as the Excellence in Cities Programme (DfES, 1999) launched in March 1999 and the Academy Programmes (DfES, 2000) which offered young people the chance at each stage of their education to experience the highest quality teaching and learning in state of the art schools. These programmes were intended to make a unique contribution to raising attainment of disadvantaged pupils in our most deprived cities, towns, and rural areas. As Lupton (2005) recognises, these are the areas where the majority of ethnic minority and African-Caribbean populations live and the programmes were intended to benefit them. However, even though the programmes brought huge levels of new financial investment, new approaches to teaching and learning and, crucially, new hope through the continual raising of expectations, it is the students in these areas who are underachieving the most. Lupton (2005) is arguing that it is not schools which are failing these students but rather it is because African-Caribbean students come from lower socio-economic areas and do not have the same opportunities as students who live in middle class areas where parents are richer and schools are better resourced. I agree with Lupton (2005) to some degree; however the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys is a much more complex issue.

Specialist Schools Status (DfES, 2006) was also an important part of the Government's plans to raise standards in secondary education - implemented to help schools, in partnership with private sector sponsors and supported by additional government funding, to establish distinctive schools identities through their chosen specialism. The intention was to help these schools to achieve their targets in order to raise standards. The 14-19 Education reforms (DfES, 2005) were deemed to be a major attempt to raise standards. This programme had three main elements: to raise attainment, design new curriculum and qualifications and improve their delivery.

However, even though these policy changes have helped to develop areas where they have been implemented, African-Caribbean and other ethnic minority children continue to underachieve at an unacceptable level. Rhamie (2003) argues that there has been forty years of research of African Caribbean underachievement yet African-

Caribbean boys continue to have below average performance. The author asserts that this is evidenced in disproportionately high exclusion rates and poor exam results. Ofsted (2002) states that pupils of Caribbean heritage, particularly boys, are amongst the most vulnerable to low academic attainment and any strategy will need to address issues facing this particular group of pupils. They argued that the lower achievement rates of African Caribbean pupils have been well documented over the years and that the academic achievement of African-Caribbean pupils is often higher at Key Stage 1 than other groups and then attainment gradually declines relative to other groups and is among the lowest at Key Stage 4 (Ofsted, 2002).

Government policies, changes in the structure of school and programmes for improving cities have not helped African-Caribbean boys to improve their attainment levels. The report entitled 'Education For All' (DfES, 1985) stated that in recognising the contribution of schools in preparing all pupils for life in a society which is both multi-racial and culturally diverse, the educational needs and attainment of children from ethnic minority groups need to be consistently reviewed. According to DfES, (1985) account must be taken of the factors outside the formal education system relevant to school performance such social deprivation, poor housing and unemployment. However, we are still facing major problems in the twenty-first century with underachievement of ethnic minorities including African-Caribbean boys which is threatening the very nature of society. In a Daily Telegraph article, Trevor Phillips, the Commissioner for Racial Equality was quoted as saying "if the only way to break through the wall of attitude that surrounds black boys is to teach them separately for some subjects, then we should be ready for that" (Tweedie, 2005 p.1). The implications of these recommendations involve taking African-Caribbean boys out of mainstream classes for some subjects in order to encourage and develop their learning. This strategy has cost implications to schools which are not realistic unless the government put in place strategies to ensure their implementation and provides appropriate funding. However, this argument may be seen to be contradicting those of Coard (1971) about removing children from mainstream classrooms. If African-Caribbean boys need special classes in schools today, this should be to help foster their cultural identity and learning; rather than to compensate for the reasons given by

Phillips (Tweedie, 2005). According to Coard (1971) black children should not have been removed from mainstream schools in the first place.

Pring (1999) argues that in the twenty first century secondary education is undergoing the most radical transformation since the 1944 Education Act. He asserts that there is a feeling widespread and deeply rooted – that the British education system is not succeeding. According to Lupton (2005) schools are failing and are being named and shamed by the government and threatened with closure, fresh start initiatives and more inspections which put additional stress on them to manage the day to day activities. She asserts that the issues surrounding these failing schools and the quality they deliver are far wider ranging and initiatives are not enough to address problems in disadvantaged schools. The view held by Lupton (2005) is that these quality differences are still seen by the government as the problem of schools, which must be tackled by initiatives at school level. She argues that the view of the government is that staff in schools are incompetent, lazy, ill-informed and unsuited to the work and that schools on the whole are being badly managed or have managers who are unwilling to put in place effective practices. As argued earlier in this chapter, Lupton (2005) asserts that it is socio-economic factors rather than changes in school policies that still determine education performance. This will be explored further later in this chapter.

Coard (2006), on the other hand, in one of the interviews with him, now argues that what is required is quality teaching and teachers who are not racist. Schools should aim to stamp out racism and racist teachers who have come into the profession with inbuilt values about people. For example this type of racism is inherent in them and is part of their make. Coard (2006) asserts that black boys in British schools continue to suffer from institutional racism and West Indian children are still being victimised in the education system today and that many are labelled SEN. He also contends that despite the many changes over the decades African-Caribbean boys are failing in school. According to Coard (2006) effective pedagogy is essential to children's learning and if we were to single out one variable it would be that of teacher expectations as they are on the front line and the entire system as experienced by the child is communicated through the teacher. The quality of teaching must be excellent

and teachers should not blame the system for students underachieving. He asserts that good teachers can produce excellent results teaching under a mango tree. What are required are skills, qualification and practical life experiences and a clear understanding of diversity. He concludes by saying that everything is possible with effective teaching. In contradiction, Maylor (2009) asserts that black teachers as role models may have little impact on attainment.

Coard (2006) goes on to say that this is both a current direct, and an inbuilt racist situation within teaching that must be addressed if black students are to form a positive part of the educational process and if not addressed will lead to continued exclusion from proper access to qualification and continued underachievement. An effective curriculum which encompasses diversity must be central to improve the performance of African-Caribbean boys and other ethnic minorities. Below the current curriculum is explored.

2.9 The National Curriculum and students' achievement

According to Tomlinson (2008) during New Labour's term of office the needs of the ethnically mixed British society were not reflected in curriculum changes or teacher education, even if 'citizenship' was introduced. Policies did not specifically cater for the needs of individual groups of children. The curriculum is generic and not focused on the individual needs of children from ethnic minority background. This is a contributing factor to the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys which can be classified as institutionalised racism. The nature of the National Curriculum which became statutory in 1988 has been heavily debated. The National Curriculum was proclaimed by Jones (1989) as being Eurocentric and nationalistic and not catering for diversity. According to Tomlinson (2005) under the Conservative government it reflected the historical legacy of imperialism. Even though New Labour has reformed the National Curriculum, Tomlinson (2005) argues that it is still ethnocentric and not catering adequately for diversity. She also argues that policies focus on having a national identity rather than cultural and racial equality. Tomlinson (2005) goes on to say that the policy of choice and diversity and targeting failing schools has had little success and has contributed to an exacerbated segregation and racial inequalities

because it is colour blind. The view held by Tomlinson (2005) is that because the National Curriculum is like this African-Caribbean boys' underachieve because of the lack of provision for their cultural and racial needs.

John (2006 p.21) argues that in the immediate aftermath of the last General Election "those of us who had been in the struggle to improve educational outcomes for black and working class children for decades welcomed the new government's commitment to Education". John (2006) claims however that policies have not addressed issues to do with ethnic minority children and the fight goes on. The author asserts that the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Report (Macpherson, 1999) pointed very clearly to the role of the National Curriculum, LEA's, schools and governors in preventing racism and reflecting the needs of diversity in society.

Hill and Cole (2001) argue that with a few exceptions, the hidden curriculum serves to reproduce educational, social and economic inequalities. Here the hidden curriculum is seen as procedures in schools, pastoral care and behavioural issues not directly specified as academic in the curriculum. The authors assert that the current National Curriculum is not adequately addressing the diverse educational needs of children in our society today and it is not addressing behavioural issues adequately. Thus there are barriers to learning for students in specific social groups where they do not get equal opportunities to the curriculum.

Muir and Smithers (2004 p.1) report that: "failure of school systems and individuals within it to successfully engage with students of African-Caribbean origin has severely hindered them and contributed to massive underachievement". What is being said here is that schools do not meet the needs of ethnic minority students and that this is a contributory factor to their underachievement.

According to McGee Banks and Banks (1995), 'equity pedagogy' is an essential component of multi-cultural education. They define equity pedagogy as teaching strategies and classroom environment that help children from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural groups attain the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to function effectively within, and help create and perpetuate, a just, humane and democratic society. The view held by McGee Banks and Banks (1995) is that it is not enough for

students to read and write and compute within the dominant cannon without learning to question its assumptions, paradigms and hegemonic characteristics. They argue that helping students to become reflective and active citizens of a democratic society is the essence of an equity pedagogy rather than one that merely prepare students to fit into society and to experience social class mobility structures which are characterised by pernicious class divisions and racial, ethnic and gender stratification are not helpful in building a democratic and just society. I agree with the view of McGee Banks and Banks (1995). It is only with 'equity pedagogy' that the curriculum will be able to reflect the needs of all learners.

The conclusion drawn is that the National Curriculum is not catering for the needs of ethnic minority children. This provision does not cater for diversity or reflect the cultural needs of these students. However, it is recognised that the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys and other ethnic minority groups is a very complex problem. According to Gilborn and Mirza (2000) "developing an educational agenda with regard to racial equality is clearly a priority". However the authors go on to say that the educational recommendations of the Lawrence Inquiry have been met by concerns about institutional racism on one hand, and confusion as to the way forward on the other. The authors further assert that most Local Education Authorities (LEA's) and schools lack clarity and direction when it comes to addressing inequalities of attainment between different ethnic groups. Gilborn and Mirza (2000) take the view that equality of opportunity is a vital issue of social and economic importance to the whole of society. They conclude that 75% of schools studied do not have a clear strategy to eradicate underachievement. Their report was published within months of the Macpherson (1999) report. The Macpherson (1999) report made clear recommendations to deal with institutionalised racism. However, Gilborn and Mirza (2000) clearly recognised that there was confusion and a lack of direction in dealing with underachievement. This suggests that even though the Macpherson (1999) report made recommendations that the strategies to address these were not adequately in place.

The conclusion that is arrived at is that despite the continued underachievement of African-Caribbean boys there has been very few education strategies under New

Labour's administration which attempted to cater for the needs of this group. This concurs with the view of John (2006) who claims the curriculum is white in every sense.

According to Tomlinson (2008) there is a muted debate over whether the school curriculum and pedagogy needs updating to fit a post-imperial globalised Britain. She asserts that in the twenty first century fierce arguments have continued about multiculturalism, integration and a 'British' identity and the demographic segregation of minorities in towns and city areas; arguments about segregated schooling; over faith schools; about the continued lower achievement of some groups while others have progressed well, over the possible ethnic penalties young minorities suffer in the labour market; over the reasons for the alienation of some young minorities from education and from the wider society.

The National Curriculum is too prescribed. There is not enough room for teachers to be innovative and cater for individual needs of students. According to Tomlinson (2005) the very idea of a National Curriculum is inappropriate at a time of globalisation. This suggests that the National Curriculum does not cater adequately for diversity but rather focuses on differentiation. For example the different levels of abilities. According to Allen and Ainley (2007 p.63) "the National Curriculum assumed the unproblematic existence of a unified national culture that could be imposed on all sections of society. It thus ignored the possibility that students might bring a variety of multicultural and different class experiences to school".

2.10 From New Labour to Conservative and Liberal Democratic Coalition

The newly appointed coalition Minister for Education, Michael Gove, in the Schools White Paper, (Department of Education, 2010 p.3) asserts that: "It is only through reform in education that we can allow each child the chance to take their full and equal share in citizenship, shaping their own destiny and becoming masters of their own lives". Labour's answer to dealing with underachievement was to set standards. Labour's 'Standards Agenda' (Ainley and Allen 2010) catered for all and it was not specific to meeting individual needs and equality and diversity was not a major focus.

The new White Paper, however, makes no mention of the problems experienced by children such as African-Caribbean boys.

Within weeks of taking office the Coalition government published a new agenda for education. This new White Paper, (DfE, 2010) outlines proposals which promise the reformation of teaching and give autonomy to headteachers. It makes little mention of meeting the needs of the diverse population in most London and other United Kingdom inner-city schools. According to Allen (2010) the new administration also proposes changes to the National Curriculum. Allen (2010) argues that the proposed changes want to make the curriculum more traditional and less multicultural. For example Allen (2010) notes that a special emphasis is given to learning British history. Despite the history of underachievement of certain groups, very little is said in the document about catering for diversity or the needs of African-Caribbean boys. Over fifty years after the arrival of the Caribbean community in Britain the curriculum still does not reflect the cultural and educational needs of children of the first and second generation to incorporate their history and culture. According to Allen (2010) the current White Paper is stepping back in time. The policy also proposes to reform education and move towards Free Schools and more Academies when the focus should be on meeting the individual needs of students.

Over three years ago, Tomlinson (2008) emphasised the lack of policies to cater for diversity and asserted that despite the plethora of initiatives, intervention and prescription concerning the school curriculum, teaching methods and teacher training, the New Labour Government never indicated serious interest in the development of a curriculum that would combat cultural ignorance, ethnocentric attitudes and racism. According to Tomlinson (2008), instead of having policies to cater for diversity New Labour focused on teachers becoming a managed profession, with workforce modelling, providing more teacher numbers, teaching assistants and prescribed networking, especially through school leadership course. The new White Paper, (DfE, 2010) proposes to give teachers more freedom but not to develop a multicultural curriculum. In my view this can only be another step back in the education of African-Caribbean boys.

2.11 African-Caribbean boys' underachievement in comparison to other boys

To illustrate how policies have failed to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys, this section of the literature review looks at past and present data on the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys and also compares them with other boys and discusses the extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement.

Today, in British schools, students' performance are measured by SATs, CATs, GCSEs and A-levels, but in the 1980's, performance were measured by Eleven Plus tests, the Certificate in Secondary Education (CSE) and the GCE Ordinary Level qualifications.   The Swann Report (1985) showed that West Indian children from all sub groups were on average underachieving at school, while Asian children showed a pattern of achievement which resembled that of white children, although there was some evidence of variation between different Asian sub groups (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi), some of whom were seriously underachieving. This report also stated that in recognising the contribution of schools in preparing all pupils for life in a society which is both multi-racial and culturally diverse, it is necessary to review the educational needs and attainment of children from ethnic minority groups. The report also states that consideration must be given to the factors outside the formal education system relevant to school performance.

Ahmed and Townsend (2003) also argued that Indian, Pakistani and Chinese boys in particular outstrip poorer white boys academically. They say that the only group that does worse is African-Caribbean boys, where only 16 per cent of poorer pupils gain five or more GCSE's at grades A to C, however Travis (2010) shows that white working class boys have fallen behind their African-Caribbean counterparts. Ahmed and Townsend (2003) further conclude that the New Labour government was aware of the need to address the under-performance of black boys. It is worth acknowledging at this point, that white working class boys are statistically a majority in British schools. Therefore their underachievement in comparison with African-Caribbean boys would be more statistically significant.

2.12 The extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement

According to the Office for National Statistics (2004), only 27% of African-Caribbean boys left school with 5 A*-C GCSEs. This concurs with the arguments of DA Vision (2004) that African-Caribbean boys start schooling at broadly the same level as other pupils, but during the course of their education they fall further and further behind than other students such as white working class and Bangladeshi boys. According to DA Vision (2004), in 2003, 70% of African-Caribbean boys left school with less than five higher grade GCSEs or equivalents. This represents the lowest level of achievement for any ethnic group of school children. According to DA Vision (2004) African-Caribbean boys have been the lowest achieving group at practically every key stage for the last four years. These boys begin school at KS1 as high achievers but tail off badly at KS3 and are the lowest performers in comparison to all other ethnic groups by KS4 (DA Vision, 2004). In contrast, according to the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF, 2009) African Caribbean boys start school with average academic levels but begin to fall behind from Year 2. In 2009 the gap had widened through secondary school with 42% of black boys achieving five good GCSEs compared to a national average of 59%.

According to Allen (2006) DFES figures for 2005 show that 42 % of black Caribbean pupils achieved 5 or more A* to Cs at GCSE compared to 55 % for British pupils as a whole. While black Caribbean girls' results compared reasonably well with those overall (49%), the boys trailed behind with 33%. The view held by Allen (2006) is that improving the academic achievement of pupils of black Caribbean origin in Britain is a continuing concern for parents, schools and government, especially the achievement of black Caribbean boys. Closing these achievement gaps is vital if people of Caribbean origin, and particularly Caribbean men, are to participate fully in the knowledge economy of the future.

According to REACH (2007) the data shows that black boys and young black men face serious challenges in every sector of society. They are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system than their peers. Black boys are amongst the least likely to

obtain 5 A* to C GSCEs, good A levels, and entry to the more established Russell universities as opposed to less well recognised and post polytechnic universities.

Prior to the start of the REACH (2007) programme black boys were (at least) three times more likely than other groups to be excluded from school. According to REACH (2007) only 31% of black African and 23% of black Caribbean boys achieve the benchmark of 5 A*-C GSCEs (including English and Maths), compared to the national average of 40%. Black Caribbean boys are also three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school than the average student. Black African and Caribbean students are significantly less likely to attend higher education.

Myer-Ferreira (2010) cites Professor Gus John as saying that despite the improvements in GCSE results among the African-Caribbean youngsters there are still no signs of the achievement gap narrowing between black and white students.

Adenekan (2010) asserts that it is true that recent official figures on the education of young black boys are dismal. She argues that only 31.9% of black boys achieved five A to C passes last year, against a national average of 51.9%, and there are twice as many black men in prison as there are in university. Adenekan (2010) asserts that given that black boys had the highest scores of any racial group of pupils in so-called baseline assessments of basic literacy and numeracy when British children begin school it is difficult to understand why they fall off the achievement stage later on.

Adenekan (2010) cites Prof David Gilborn, an educationist at London University's Institute of Education as saying that he believes black children are being condemned to failure early in life because of racist attitudes among teachers. Adenekan (2010) further cites Professor David Gilborn as saying that new tests being used to measure children's competence when they start primary school are not only damaging black pupils but that at secondary school level, teachers are entering them for lower tiers of GSCE exams because they believe black pupils are perpetual underachievers, thus damaging their chances of getting the grades that may determine whether or not they continue in education. Clearly, there is a need for more parental involvement in African-Caribbean boys' education. Adenekan (2010) argues that racism is not just

about groups like the BNP and that well-meaning white professionals who simply do not see equality as a major concern are guilty of institutional racism.

Travis (2010) quotes GCSE results for 2009 for boys on Free School Meals to say that "poor white boys are doing worst". He showed GCSE results for white boys as 39.9% in comparison to the failing African-Caribbean boys who achieved only 44.9% 5 A*-C grades. Chinese boys were the highest achievers of A*-C and achieved 83%, Indian 60.4%, Black 52.9%, Black African 56.0% and Pakistani 55.7%. This suggests that there are other factors at play in the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys because they all have access to the same teachers and the same curriculum.

The above data shows the alarming extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and that it is still a major education issue. The next section of this chapter critically reviews some of the literature which seeks to explain these poor performance levels.

2.13 Trends, patterns and explanations for African-Caribbean boys' underachievement

Having investigated globalisation, policy and data in relation to the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys, this section examines literature which looks at trends and patterns and reasons for the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. It looks at issues to do with gender, social class background, masculinity, exclusion from school and lack of role models and how these impact on the underachievement of these boys. First of all it looks at the performance of African-Caribbean boys compared with those from other ethnic groups.

As can be seen above, according Travis (2010) many boys in British schools in the twenty first century are underachieving. However, it is already evident above that the phenomena cannot be attributed to one group specifically. Whilst the focus over the last thirty years has fallen mainly on African-Caribbean boys, Bangladeshi and white working class boys are also underachieving at an alarming rate. Martino and Meyenn (2001) are of the view that boys' underachievement discussions really began in the

UK in 1995 and rapidly became a 'moral panic'. The authors further state, that the failure of boys and in particular white working class boys is one of the most disturbing problems we face within the whole education system. For Willis (1977) in his ethnographic study, non-participation in school by white working class youth was the norm. In his study of the Hammertown 'lads ' he concludes that working class boys used their working class relatives as role models and took working class jobs because they did not see it as necessary to get an education because their dads did not. This however, was in a time when there was a big demand for manual workers and no shortage of work. I accept Willis (1977) premise about white working class boys in the 1970s. However, white working class boys still, underachieve today although it may be in different ways to those of the boys in Willis (1977) study.

Whilst a significant number of African-Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani boys are underachieving in education, white working class boys are also doing so too (NUT, 2010). It is evident that today's job market is seeking a different type of worker with skills and qualifications and therefore it must be ensured that this is reflected in how boys are taught to develop their self-esteem and love of learning. According to Ahmed and Townsend (2003) white working-class boys are falling behind other pupils such as Bangladeshi boys at such an alarming rate that they are in danger of becoming the worst educated children. The authors show that government figures at that time revealed that white boys from disadvantaged backgrounds perform far worse than their equivalent in other ethnic groups from similar economic background. They contend that among poorer white boys only 18 percent achieve five or more GCSE's at grades A* to C. The evidence clearly point to the fact that other boys are underachieving in school. However, my argument is that African-Caribbean boys underachieve for different reasons to these boys as discussed further in this chapter.

According to Gilborn and Mirza (2000), however, patterns of inequalities in GCSE examinations place African-Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils (boys in particular) as the most significant underperformers in education. This puts them at a disadvantage in the labour and training markets. This they argue increases the likelihood of social and economic exclusion in their later life. The authors also

contend that ethnic inequalities of attainment vary from one area to another but despite this variability distinct patterns of inequality are consistently visible and when comparing like with like African-Caribbean and Pakistani boys do not enjoy equal opportunities. The view adopted by Archer (2003) is that there are concerns, which have been raised about Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups experiencing lower levels of academic achievement and high rates of exclusion from school. African-Caribbean and Muslim boys' (from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds) have been differentiated and singled out as educational problems that form part of an 'underclass'. (A group of people excluded from mainstream society).

The literature suggests that African-Caribbean boys suffer particular disadvantages which set them apart from other boys. Richardson (2005) quotes Diane Abbott, MP as saying that "teachers are failing black boys". The argument put forward by Diane Abbot is that: "black boys do not have to be too long out of disposable nappies for some teachers to see them as a miniature gangster rapper". She argues that from an early age the perception of African-Caribbean boys by society and teachers alike is that they are either potential criminals or will only be good at music and sports. This type of stereotyping has had a negative impact on the image of black boys. Ainsworth (2006 p.23) says at Key Stage 1 onwards black boys are on an academic decline. In contrast DA Vision (2004 p.33) says that these boys begin at KS1 as high achievers and tail off badly at Key Stage 3. As has been argued previously in this chapter, according to DCSF (2009) African-Caribbean boys start school on average academic levels but begin to fall behind from Year 2 (KS1). The gap widens through secondary school.

It is disheartening to report that by the time they reach Year 11 the continuation of this underachievement is reflected in tests scores and GCSE results. It has already been noted that Trevor Phillips, then, Commissioner for Racial Equality has been cited by Smithers (2005) as saying that the failure to tackle academic underachievement of African Caribbean boys is threatening to turn them into a permanent underclass. He is also cited by Smithers (2005) as saying that the problem has developed into one of the school system's 'most intractable' failures, which now risks alienating the group completely. The Commissioner is further quoted by

Smithers (2005) as saying that "it would be comforting to suppose that the main issue was gender or deprivation. But the evidence does not support this: Nearly half these boys' sisters make the grade, despite growing up in the same homes and being of the same social class". This raises questions as to what is happening to these boys in schools and why many of them are underachieving.

2.14 Differences between African-Caribbean boys and girls

Maylor, Smart, Kuyok and Ross (2009) discuss the gender gap between African-Caribbean boys and girls and argue that the GCSE examination results show that the gender 'gap' between black boys and black girls is wide. For example, in 2005, 33.3% of black Caribbean boys achieved five or more grades A*-C at GCSE and equivalent compared to 49.4 % of girls - a difference of 16.1 percentage points, compared to a difference nationally of 10.1 percentage points. The view held by Mirza (2009) is that most of the research into black children's experience in British education has focused on the underachievement of boys, whereas black girls are thought to be doing well. However, far from being served well by the system, black girls are having to make huge efforts to overcome obstacles to their advancement and are still falling behind white girls and boys (Mirza, 2009).

Asthana (2010) claims that the statistics are stark: boys are slipping behind girls in 11 out of 13 learning categories by the age of five; children from the poorest families are half as likely to achieve good GCSEs; black pupils of Caribbean descent are three times more likely to be excluded.

BBC News reports that for 2007 GCSE level, 49.1% of black Caribbean pupils obtained five good grades compared with 44.4% last year (up 4.7%). For instance 56.2% of black Caribbean girls obtained the equivalent of five good GCSEs, compared with 41.5% of boys. This is still considerably below the performance rate for girls generally, but the findings indicate that black boys are considerably underachieving compared to their sisters.

Muir and Smithers (2004) report on the findings of the London Development Agency (LDA) Education Commission to say that black schoolboys have been betrayed by the education authorities for almost half a century and that they are struggling to overcome racism from many of their own teachers. The authors assert that these pupils suffer from negative peer pressure, social disadvantages, inadequately funded schools and high teacher turnover. (See 2.14 in this chapter in relation to girls). Muir and Smithers (2004) argue that the relationship between black pupils and teachers is generally characterised by conflict and fear, in contrast to groups of white boys who when gathered together are classed as 'a group' - when black boys congregate they are considered 'a gang'. The authors assert that black boys lag behind from as early as primary school and the gap widens every year, thereafter. They also report that African-Caribbean men are the least likely of any group to have a degree qualification. Muir and Smithers (2004) have clearly identified some major factors above as to why black boys underachieve and this concurs with the views of Coard (1971) that school systems failed the early West Indian children.

Writing in the Observer newspaper in 2002, MP, Diane Abbott (2002) claimed that "there is a silent catastrophe happening in Britain's schools in the way they continue to fail black British school children". This, she argues is not a new issue, but is one that no one wants to address. While the gap between African-Caribbean children and the rest of the school population continues to widen; Abbott, the Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, was also reported as saying that "some white teachers misunderstand the way that black boys behave, seeing them as aggressive because of a 'culture gap', while others stereotyped them". Asthana (2007) in an Observer Newspaper article calls for more black teachers. The reporter quotes Steve Sinnott, then General Secretary of National Union of Teachers as saying that the reasons we want more black teachers in the classroom is not about the quality of teaching but it is about raising aspiration. If they see black teachers, they will aspire to be teachers themselves. I think it is true to a great extent, that more black teachers are needed to inspire African-Caribbean boys, but quality teaching is also essential to raise the boys' academic achievements.

One of the reasons given as to why African-Caribbean boys underachieve is said to be because of the racist nature of the education they receive. According to Coard (1971) the black child's (boys and girls) true identity was denied daily in the classroom. In so far as they were given an identity, it was a false one. They were made to feel inferior in every way. Coard (1971) took the view that the black child was made to feel dirty and ugly and 'sexually unreliable in school' and told by a variety of means that they were intellectually inferior in school. Even when they left school, they were made to realise that they and their kind were only fit for manual and menial jobs. He concludes that the black child acquired two fundamental attitudes and beliefs as a result of his/her experience in the British school system: a low self image and consequently low self-expectation in life.

Another explanation why African-Caribbean boys underachieve is because of a school system which does not recognise or understand their cultural makeup. Whilst the British classroom has changed over the past thirty years, there is still a lack of understanding of the way African-Caribbean boys behave in school, their body language and masculinity which teachers fail to understand (see Chapter Five, 5.2). However, as has been noted earlier girls on the other hand, do not face this problem as they are more focused on their learning because they are not caught up in peer group pressures or subcultures whilst boys do get caught up in the subcultures they develop in schools which distract them from learning (see Chapter Two, 2.14). Arnot, David and Weiner (2001) cite Sewell (1997) who argues that although African Caribbean boys and girls tried to be pragmatic and use school as the means to an end, the latter were more successful than the former. Black girls have not got an exclusive hold on this coping strategy. What is different is that boys appear to find this approach a less successful strategy. The view held by these authors is that the reasons for boys' lack of academic success is that the form of masculinity black schoolboys adopt, is often one of resistance - one of aggressive heterosexuality – which causes them problems in school, particularly where teachers' morale is low. Sewell (1997) identifies four types of masculine behaviours boys might adopt: 1) the 'conformists', 2) the 'innovators' 3) the 'retreatists' and 4) the 'rebels'. Sewell (1997) defines 'conformists' as those who see the world from the teachers' perspective. They obey

rules and move through the school system. The 'innovators' accept the goals of schooling but rejected the means. The origins of the pro-education values they adopt are mostly obtained from parents. The majority of 'innovators' is unable to carry through their desire for education into the schooling context where they needed to obey rules or avoid conflict and they invented their own world where they moved to 'Raggu' – a corruption of 'Ragga' which derives from Reggae music. Retreatists are never seen in groups of more than two and they resist schooling through subversion. They may walk the corridors pretending to be on an errand for a teacher. A sub category for retreatism is 'invisible resistance'. The 'rebels' could not verbalise in good standard English and have an inability or unwillingness to communicate on the same level as their teachers. According to Sewell (2007), roughly 41% of the students he surveyed were termed 'conformists', 35% of these students were classified as 'innovators; he found zero percent in the 'ritualism' category; 6% in the 'retreatists' category and 18% were classified as 'rebels'. The point the author is making is that the majority of African-Caribbean boys are conformists and innovators, thus they should do well and only a small percentage are rebels and the reasons for their underachievement may be the fact that they become rebellious as a type of masculinity in school. If the majority of African-Caribbean boys are conformist and innovators, masculinity does not provide an adequate explanation for their underachievement. Further literature about masculinity will be discussed later in this chapter.

2.15 Social class background

Social class is considered to be a key reason why children underachieve in schools (Lupton, 2005). The literature about economic deprivation is examined here. Therefore, African-Caribbean boys may underachieve because of their social class background rather than because of their race. It is pertinent to add here, that the ILS is located in one of London's poorest boroughs. According to Little (1983) the black community in Britain (and probably other migrant groups) are over-represented in the most disadvantaged sections of the community.

Alan Travis, Home Affairs Editor of the Guardian newspaper (January 2010) cites John Denham, Politician as saying that ten years after targeting people's race as a reason for failure, there needs to be a more subtle approach which focuses on class. He argues that the context has changed and it is time to widen the focus in tackling inequalities. "Focusing on somebody's race or ethnic background to explain their achievements or opportunities is far too simple". Socio-economic status affects life chances regardless of race or ethnic background, and the fact that minority ethnic families are twice as likely to be poor is not likely to be a reflection of simply their race. He asserts that there are still areas of concerns when it comes to racial inequality but these are often link socio-economic background/class.

Lupton (2005) argues that schools in lower socio-economic areas are five times more likely to be under 'special measures', and have students who receive free school meals because their parents are on low income. Little (1983) goes on to say that what is more contentious is why unemployment is higher, housing conditions inferior and educational underperformance greater among blacks than whites? People who arrive as immigrants, (as a result of globalisation and other reasons such as wars) inevitably go to the end of housing and unemployment queues, but this does not explain why some children born in this country do so poorly in schools. Sewell (2009) is of the view that child poverty causes underachievement; and he argues that there is universal evidence that in competitive situations those who have better diets, healthcare, housing and access to educational toys, books and private coaching are likely to outperform those who do not. He also argues that exceptional people may avoid this trend, but these remain in the minority. He stresses that poverty is not an excuse for underachievement but it is a contributory factor towards it. It is also clear that Sewell (2009) and Lupton (2005) do not have the same view about class and educational achievement. Lupton (2005) is much firmer about the relationship between children's socio-economic background, deprivation and underachievement whereas Sewell (2009) thinks many other factors are also at play.

Whilst it can be explained that some children will underachieve for reasons such as having SEN and/or EAL needs, or fail to reach their full potential, the concern for West Indian children (born in the Caribbean and those born in Britain who are

descendants of the first generation of African-Caribbean to arrive in the UK) as a group within the educational system causes much alarm. Even if underachievement cannot be explained, Little (1983) argues, its existence cannot be denied, and the influences it has on these children in placing them at a social disadvantage makes them the subject of racial discrimination and prejudice throughout the education system. Most African-Caribbean boys live in areas of high deprivation, poor housing and high crime rates and face a daily reality of the lived experience of street-cultures, gang patches, and gang warfare in their vicinity. However, there are children who do academically better than African-Caribbean boys even though they too are socially disadvantaged. Therefore, social class background does not fully explain the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys.

Lupton (2005) also argues that schools in areas that are socially deprived under-perform the most. She further asserts that while some schools in problematic areas do well in some subjects such as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development there are those who do not do well. It can be argued that lack of quality education is a problem in socially advantaged areas too, but the children from those areas do not face the social disadvantages that children in socially deprived areas do.

The argument here is that African-Caribbean boys may underachieve because of their social class background. However, their sisters are getting better examination results despite coming from the same background. In my conversation with Coard (2008) he argued that boys and girls experience the same set of circumstances differently. They are in effect, living in a different environment from their sisters, even though growing up in the same household with the same parents, boys have to deal with the neighbourhood, police, teachers and schools in a different way because they socialise in a different way to girls who are more likely to be at home helping in the house, looking after siblings and helping to cook and clean.

In fact social class differences affect many African-Caribbean boys long before they start school. This happens in pre-school years and has a growing influence as they get older. The odds remain stacked against these boys because the schools they attend are in lower socio-economic areas and are often under resourced. For African-Caribbean

boys' social class differences remain a powerful indicator of their subsequent educational achievement. Socio-economic factors may be the reason for the variation in pupils' achievement and illustrates that this is related to other important factors such as staying on rates, adult employment and crime. Yet improving schools and raising standards of achievement in disadvantaged areas remains both an aspiration and expectation among policy makers (DfES 2005, Harris and Chapman, 2004, Lee and Burkam 2002). However, as has been argued, by Lupton (2005) improving schools does not necessarily reduce socio-economic inequalities.

The view held by Lupton (2005) is that the government wrongly blames the way schools in lower socio-economic areas are managed as reasons why students are underachieving. However, the author also argues that it is in fact the educational policies implemented under New Labour which have not fully catered for the needs of children in these areas. In the IFS (see Chapter Three), there is a clear relationship between school success and geographical location apart from school 'R'. According to Madood (2004) for most British sociologists, class is the best explanation for educational outcomes. He asserts, however, that this is not the whole story and that other factors could be at play such as the proximity to good schools or aspects of individual biographies. These factors, he adds, may well include the interests and efforts by parents of these students. Madood (2004) is of the view that in the case of minorities, there will be factors which are distinctive to particular groups or to the condition of being a minority in Britain today, such as racial exclusion. Madood (2004) also asserts that these distinctive factors will work to reinforce or deepen class effects, others to lessen them. Most African-Caribbean boys live in areas in Inner London and other main cities in Britain which suffer from deprivation and unemployment and here it is indicated that the boys' social class background is a reason why they underachieve. It is worth pointing out that the sisters of these boys do well. This is discussed further within this chapter.

According to Lupton (2005) there are many factors preventing education from serving the role as "the great equalizer." Schools serving students from lower socio-economic areas receive fewer resources, face greater difficulties attracting qualified teachers, face many more challenges in addressing students' needs, and receive less support

from parents. This inequality of school provision is widely recognized. However, she argues that the inequalities facing children before they enter school are less publicised. According to Ainley and Allen (2010) New Labour claimed to be increasing achievement for all students, regardless of race, income, class, and prior achievement. The authors argue that this did not happen.

It is however, unreasonable to expect schools to completely eliminate any large pre-existing inequalities soon after children first enter the education system, especially if those schools are under-funded and over-challenged. According to Lutpon (2005) the inequalities children face are substantial right from "the starting gate." Lupton, (2005) asserts that disadvantaged children start school with significantly lower cognitive skills than their more advantaged counterparts. These same disadvantaged children are then placed in low-resourced schools, magnifying the initial inequality.

Lupton (2005) argues that what is needed is quality teaching to address the imbalances between disadvantaged students and their advantaged peers living in higher socio-economic areas. Schools in lower socio-economic areas achieve the worst inspection grades, have the worst quality of education, including, learning environment ethos and management of efficiency and they fail to provide acceptable levels of education. According to Tomlinson (2005) little is done to stop ethnic inequalities in education and the gap gets wider and policies of choice, diversity and targeting failing schools have only exacerbated segregation and racial inequalities and have had little success. She argues that many minority parents have expressed bitterness and frustration about the low attainment of their children. In particular, parents of African-Caribbean, Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils voice the most concern for their children's education. However, most ethnic minority children often attend schools in the areas where they live which are often in the poorer part of inner-cities with little choice of better schools outside their catchment areas. Selection of pupils by schools increases segregation and does nothing for social inclusion.

According to Lara-Cinisoma, Pebley, Vaiana, Maggio, Berends, and Lucas (2005) the most important factors associated with the educational achievement of children are not race, ethnicity, and immigrant status. Instead, the most critical factors appear to

be socio-economic ones. These include parental educational levels, neighbourhood poverty, parental occupation status and family income. There is some merit in Bracy's (2005) arguments that no one factor can be associated with the underachievement of ethnic minority children. Gilborn and Mirza (2000) on the other hand are of the view that ethnicity and class are important factors and the theorists say that the gender gap is much smaller than the inequalities of attainment associated with ethnic origin and social class background. This concurs with the argument of Lara-Cinisoma et al (2005) and typical of the ILS. Most African-Caribbean parents are working class, who live and bring up their children in areas of high deprivation and low incomes.

The view held by Noguera and Akom (2000) in their American study which explains why poor children of colour perform comparatively less well in school is that this is generally a less complicated matter. They say that the ways in which such children are educated in schools are affected by measures of quality and funding which is woefully inadequate. The authors argue that this is particularly true in economically depressed urban areas, where bad schools are just one of several obstacles with which poor people must contend. They conclude that the stark inequities manifested in inner-cities and some rural schools help to explain the low achievement rates of large numbers of poor children, a disproportionate number of whom are African American and Latino. They suggest that the problem is within schools, with inadequate funding, in working class geographical areas especially in rural and inner-cities where access to better schools is impossible and students are forced to go to schools which do not adequately provide for their needs. Although this study focuses on black students in America, the same is true of African-Caribbean boys in Britain who attend schools located in lower socio-economic areas which are under-funded and under resourced.

A fair and just society where everyone receives the same levels of service requires education which caters for diversity, but the view held by Tomlinson (2005) is that the political strategies implemented under New Labour have not embraced fully issues of diversity in schools and as a result certain groups have been excluded. Although she says that New Labour is more aware of the need to incorporate measures of social justice and equity, its focus is on globalisation and on an economically viable way of preparing a future workforce. According to Tomlinson

(2005) there are contradictory policies between education and market forces which encourage parents and students to compete for good schools and educational resources. This results in further segregation of social and ethnic groups, thus creating winners and losers in job markets. Tomlinson (2005) asserts that students in lower socio-economic areas are at a disadvantage as they are not getting the same quality of education as students in high socio-economic areas because they cannot move out of their catchment areas for access to better schools. This results in these students not getting good qualifications or being able to compete for good jobs. Tomlinson (2005) argues that singling out particular students in education does not raise achievement, as such policies have encouraged racism against refugees and asylum seekers in the wider society and we have no education policies designed to counter this. I do not agree with the view of Tomlinson that singling out particular students has a negative effect on their achievement level. In some cases it is essential to single out African-Caribbean boys and provide additional support to address their underachievement and to meet their cultural needs.

Tomlinson (2005) contends that education is not equal among the different races and social class backgrounds and pupils who get the better choice of schools do much better in school and in work. African-Caribbean boys fall into the category of 'losers' as they live in areas of high deprivation where there are diverse communities and because schools are allocated by catchments these boys are less likely to be placed in schools which are considered as good and therefore they do not enjoy the advantages of other students who live in more affluent areas. Even though the ILS was graded 'good' in 2008 Ofsted inspection they still face major challenges. It is relevant to mention this because the school has only just started to raise standards and was graded 'satisfactory' in previous inspections compounded by the fact that African-Caribbean boys continue to remain 'hidden' as discussed in Chapter Three.

According to Ofsted (1998) the extent to which one or other ethnic or social class group and one's gender dominate the lowest achieving group depends on the local context. A students' achievement is dependent on the geographical area and borough in which they live. Gamoran (2001) is of the view that students' educational outcomes are boosted or hindered by their families' socio-economic background. He

contends that although this is not fair to the student, such inequalities are likely to persist throughout the twenty-first century because there are few policies directed at combating this. Gamoran (2001) asserts that the most important reason for educational inequality between blacks and whites is socio-economic. He argues that whites tend to have higher levels of education, occupational status, and income than do blacks. These parental characteristics are claimed here as being associated with white students' better educational outcomes. So, students achieve according to their parents' social class background, the type of work they do and their characteristics. Here it is implied that African-Caribbean boys underachieve because of their parental social class background and the type of job they do. Richardson (2005) cites Doreen Lawrence, the mother of the murdered youth Stephen Lawrence as saying:

"I have a strong belief that what we are looking for lies within ourselves. We as black people have it within ourselves to demand more and insist we get it, because for too long we have overlooked our worth. We need to think about our contribution to the economic wealth of this country and what our votes mean at election time. We must consider how we can use this to demand what we are entitled to: the right for a decent education for our children".

She goes on to assert that:

"what I am saying is nothing new because Bernard Coard wrote about this long ago" (Richardson, 2005 p.10)

What is being said here is that black people need to take action to bring about changes for a better education and jobs for future African-Caribbean children.

The approach adopted by Gilborn and Mirza (2000) is that the child's social class background is a major contributor to his/her achieving in education. They argue that since the late 1980's the attainment gap between the highest and lowest social class has widened. They also argue that there is a strong association between social class background and success in education and that the higher children's class, the greater their attainment on average and that children from advantaged backgrounds were more likely to attain five or more higher grade GCSE's than peers at the other end of

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the class spectrum (unskilled manual group). They argue that the ways in which social class affects educational opportunities are multiple and complex and that some of these factors lie outside of the school, while others operate more through institutional processes and disadvantage particular groups of pupils.

Riley and Docking (2004) argue that despite the growing emphasis on the importance of pupils voice, little research has looked specifically at the perceptions of children from homes in socially disadvantaged areas, although some researchers have compared the responses of pupils from different home backgrounds. Baker (2002) adopts the view that the underachievement of ethnic minority pupils in British schools is a complex and sensitive issue, which is bound up with issues of racial discrimination and integration. He says that "in every ethnic group in Britain there are high achievers, so when highlighting overall patterns of achievement there is a danger of appearing to suggest that all ethnic minority pupils have problems or are victims of a school system that is failing them". This, the author suggests would be unfair to many students and teachers alike. He says that most patterns of ethnic minority achievement are also strongly associated with differences of class or poverty and that while not having English as a first language can be another important factor in determining success, he concludes by asserting that probably the greatest concerns are over pupils, especially boys of African-Caribbean origin and that this concern goes beyond examination performance to issues of discipline and motivation.

According to Lupton (2005) educational support through the revision of funding in initiatives such as New Deal for Communities (2000), Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (2000) to regenerate areas of high poverty and the launch of 'Schools in Challenging Circumstances Initiatives (2003) is an actual admission that these areas of deprivation in which minorities live have serious implications for the type of quality education they receive. There are contradictions in policy actions because in attempting to provide school initiatives in these lower socio-economic areas the government is acknowledging that these schools suffer lack of financial resources. Despite these strategies African-Caribbean boys continue to underachieve in British schools. Richardson (2005) cites David Gilborn as saying that a lot has changed in the education systems since the publication of Bernard Coard's book - such as policies to

bring African-Caribbean children back into mainstream schooling, attempts to adapt the curriculum to cater for diversity, employing more black teachers and investment in areas of high deprivation. According to Richardson (2005), David Gilborn also says that "much has remained unchanged. We have more research than 35 years ago and we have more academically successful black children – and yet we still endure a system that fails disproportionate numbers of black children".

This section has argued that socio-economic disadvantage continues to play an important part in educational attainment. It has also recognised that disadvantaged inner-city areas are often the ones where the African-Caribbean community live. Just like the white middle classes, the emerging black and Asian middle classes move their children out of inner-city areas. In other words socio-economic background and race are closely related. However, socio-economic deprivation is not, I argue, the key reason for the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys.

2.16 The trends and patterns of African-Caribbean boys' exclusion from school

This section deals with the effects of exclusion from school on African-Caribbean boys and their underachievement. African-Caribbean boys are more likely than any other group of students to be excluded from school because of their behavioural problems. They lose out on education and the barriers to accessing good education increase. The view held by Majors (2003) is that black exclusion is another example of the current failure in policy. He goes on to say that "while the government's social exclusion limit has set the first ever national target on reducing exclusion (one third reduction of both fixed term and permanent exclusion by 2002) no targets have been set likewise for a reduction of black exclusion". He argues that exclusions and underachievement have reached crisis point. This is evident in the IFS study in Chapter Three, 3.21 to 3.25, where African-Caribbean boys are mostly to be excluded from school than any other group.

According to Blair (2001) the centuries old image of black people as educationally inferior and behaviourally dangerous continues. She argues this is reproduced through the educational discourse of underachievement and now through exclusion. She goes on to say that the image of blackness conjured up in the media and terms like

'underachievement' and 'disruptiveness' have not helped to improve teachers' perception of black students. The assumption here is that African-Caribbean boys are in this category as they are more likely among all other groups to be excluded from schools and to subsequently underachieve. This group of boys is more likely to be excluded for behavioural issues and lack of conformity to existing structures which may lead to the formation of subcultures. According to Blair (2001) boys manifest these subcultures by maintaining a 'hard' image by presenting the other side of hardness – being 'cool'. In my view they develop these as a result of their exclusion as a defence mechanism and a way of being part of some grouping where they are recognized, have a sense of belonging, an identity and acceptance given their perception of not being accepted by the mainstream. Blair asserts that when they are not under pressure to protect their masculine image, they came across as vulnerable and nothing like as tough as they wanted to appear.

Tomlinson (2005 p.134) suggests that New Labour's policy of setting up social exclusion units has resulted in more black children being excluded from schools. "The education market encourages schools to get rid of pupils who disrupt the smooth running of the day to day operations and African-Caribbean children are four times over-represented in the old category of special education formerly known as 'educationally subnormal'. Students in the 1970s were excluded from main stream schools and sent to ESN schools. Coard (1971) is of the view that students were wrongly placed in these schools because schools were racist and did not understand students' needs. According to Tomlinson (2005) exclusion from schools operates in a racist manner and links African-Caribbean children (predominately male) to criminality, with black students being excluded more than their white peers. Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of London commenting in the foreword to a report by the Education Commission (2000-2003) argues that it has been clear for some years that Britain's educational system is failing to give black boys the start in life which they and their parents are entitled to expect. The report says that black boys are three times more likely to be excluded than their white counterparts and five times less likely to be classed as gifted and talented.

2.17 Youth culture and urban youth culture and the influence on African-Caribbean boys' subculture

Not all youth culture is black. However, Muhammad (2004) adopts an historical and radical perspective to describe youth culture and urban culture today and says that it is another way of saying 'black' culture. His view is that, wherever they may be on this planet, the one thing that black people have in common is the love of rhythm and beat. He asserts that black people taught the world how to dance and stay in rhythm with 'the sound waves' and that it was the blacks of ancient times that gave the people of Britain their very first dancing lessons. Muhammad (2004) argues that black people share historic and inherent essential ingredients which shape and identify their cultural makeup. This is true of the subculture developed by African-Caribbean boys which they act out in school.

Taylor (2003) sees the issues of urban culture in a different and evolving light. He asserts that as society has passed into the new millennium and technology reached new heights, many people in society remain fixated on a simpler time, a time when many children and young people were typically protected by their community and/or neighbourhood. For example, not so many years ago, a parent raising children in suburban communities could be relatively assured that their children would be safe from what they considered 'bad influences.' He asserts that today this is not true and that urban youth culture is the dominating force in the life of most young people. He argues that this is not only true throughout the United States; it is true throughout the world. African-Caribbean boys' subculture is part of this trend. This is discussed in more detail in Chapters Two and Five.

2.18 Technology and youth culture

I agree with Taylor (2003) who argues that if a closer look is taken at fashion trends, automotive design, movie and television programming, video games and sports, magazine publications, advertising and music. It is evident that an urban culture has evolved. Taylor (2003) contends that urban youth culture represents billions of dollars in numerous industries and it shows no slowing in its growth and influence. The view of Taylor (2003) is that urban youth are commercially exploited. He asserts that some

of the fastest-growing magazines in the world today, targeted at youth are The Source, Vibe, XXL, Gear and Murder Dog. One of the top performers in the world is Marshall Mathers, better known as Eminem, a young Caucasian man from the metropolitan Detroit area, notorious for his misogynistic and often violent lyrical content, as well as his unabashed denouncement of his mother (and frequently his wife). Taylor (2003) goes on to argue that today one of the most successful programmes on television is 106 and Park, a programme on BET (Black Entertainment Television) with a 'hip-hop' format. This reflects the subculture adopted by African-Caribbean boys. .

Taylor (2003) suggests that the difference today is that young people are connected to each other in ways never seen before. They are not solely dependent on their parents or traditional means for their knowledge and opinions. More and more frequently they are independent and many adults do a very poor job at trying to understand them. He asserts that it is his sincere hope that researchers, policy-makers, parents, law enforcement agencies, teachers and others will begin to understand better the new challenges regarding children and young people. He suggests that young people today are expressing themselves through hip-hop culture, new breeds of alternative music and a host of other methods. Taylor cites Singley (1995) the author of Edith Wharton: Matters of Mind and Spirit, who deemed it 'tribalism' and says that for the young followers of today's musical genres, whether they are devotees of Marilyn Manson or Marshall, it is a fact that young people all over the globe are connected by an ever-expanding technology. It no longer matters whether they live in upstate New York, the upper peninsula of Michigan or in the middle of a small fishing village in Alaska, the world is connected now in ways society is just beginning to understand that children are no longer isolated because of local circumstances instead they are influenced by global trends which African-Caribbean boys are also a part of.

2.19 Subcultures and African-Caribbean boys' subculture

Nayak (2004) suggests that subcultures are frequently theorised as 'counter-cultures' defined 'as against' the values, beliefs and social practices of the prevailing society. Nayak (2004) asserts that in less spectacular fashion, writers on youth began to

suggest that subcultures may coalesce around a loose configuration of values that may materialise through a given activity: skateboarding, break-dancing, or an interest in the Nu-Metal music scene. I agree with Nayak (2004) this subculture is demonstrated by most youth following the latest trend in fashion, music and dance. However, not all cultures are counter-culture. If this was the case, there would be no interaction between the main culture of society and people's subculture or people mixing within a diverse culture.

According to Byfield (2008) children, particularly during adolescence, seek to establish their identity. Byfield (2008) asserts that many black children living in white dominated societies struggle with a particular aspect – their racial identity. In her study she found about a third of the students talked about the multifaceted struggles they faced in coming to terms with their own racial identity, maintaining or rejecting that identity, and struggling to 'fit' into the dominant society. In my view, one of the reasons for black youth forming subcultures is because of their struggle with maintaining black identity whilst trying to fit with the main culture of society.

Byfield (2008) cites Majors (2001), Sewell (1997) and Kreisberg (1992) who she argues have taken a race perspective. The author goes on to say that these theorists attribute the non-conformist behaviour of black boys at school to a black male subculture which has various theories, many of them intertwined, offer a cocktail of gender and race based explanations for the behaviour of black boys and their disengagement.

Byfield also cites Ogbu (1992) who argues that blacks in the USA have developed an oppositional cultural identity manifested in music (rap, hip-hop and Jazz) through clothes (baggy, loose fitting) and even speech (Ebonics). Many black youths in the UK follow the culture of American youth in terms of music and dress. For example hip hop music, baggy trousers below the waist and hooded jackets.

In Chapter Five I discuss in-depth the issue of subcultures developed by African-Caribbean boys in school. I also discuss this is in line with the arguments of Sewell (2007), who said that black boys are 'Angels and Devils' in British (and American) schools and that they are heroes of a street fashion culture that dominates most of our

inner-cities. Sewell (2007) also argues that this experience of being the darling of popular youth subculture and the sinner in the classroom has led to the formation of a range of behaviours.

Whilst I agree that there are many arguments surrounding race and culture, the focus in this thesis is on African-Caribbean boys and throughout this work, the discussion about these boys is in relation to the black youth culture they have adopted from America and which has infiltrated into all youth cultures in Britain.

Within the ILS discussed in Chapter Three (as with all schools) there exists the official (main) school culture and the subcultures students bring with them to school. The main culture within the school consists of teaching, learning, testing and examinations. Schools work in line with the government's objectives to increase standards and the government expects all schools to reach targets measured through examination success. An important part of the official school culture includes expectations about the behaviour and attendance of students.

The African-Caribbean boys' subculture at ILS can be seen as one of a number of student subcultures. It focuses on being masculine, being 'tonked', (well built, with muscles in the arms, chest and legs as discussed in Chapter Five) and being one of the crew. Body language and certain types of behaviour such as wearing clothes in a particular trend (such as trousers below the bottom) and listening to rap music are all part of the subculture that boys bring to school with them. As well as concluding this study and making recommendations, I will also focus on the exact relationship between the main culture and the subculture in Chapter Six, 6.17 and 6.18.

2.20 Masculinity

There have been many debates about the effects of African-Caribbean boys' subculture and particularly their 'masculinity' on their performance at school. A major argument in the literature as to why African-Caribbean boys underachieve is because of the masculine attitude they bring with them to school and which portrays that it is not cool to learn. In a BBC News contribution, Sewell (2007) said that schools are too feminine for boys and those boys are being failed by schools because

lessons have become too feminised. He called for more nurturing of traditional male traits such as competitiveness and leadership and he argued that schools focus too much on female qualities such as organisation and attentiveness. I agree with this view. Since the early 1980's and in response to the pressure of a non- sexist 'equal opportunities' curriculum, schools have not focused on the traditional needs of boys. Whilst I broadly support this approach to the curriculum, like Sewell (2007) I consider that more focus should be placed on addressing traditional male traits in order to get rid of the stereotype that boys have that it is 'not cool to learn'.

Sukhnandan, Lee and Kelleher (2000) assert that education ministers have called for schools to challenge the 'laddish anti-learning culture' which has been allowed to develop over recent years, noting that many schools are already addressing the issue of boys' under-achievement successfully – but they argue that too many schools are not doing so. Boys do not think it is cool to learn and neither do their friends; so to be cool and be one of the lads, means education is not seen as important. Sewell (1997) is also of the same view. African-Caribbean boys have an 'attitude' which can be construed as bad behaviour (Sewell, 1997). In the interview with Coard (2006) he suggested that "what is actually at work is much biology combined with cultural differences". He argues that "there is no doubt that what boys bring to the table is very different to girls and therefore the masculine ways in which boys behave needs to be handled differently to girls and that what is needed are more positive male role models and more positive input from white teachers". He says that boys need to be taught in ways which will capture and focus their energies and imagination and defeat their often short attention spans or the tendency to be easily distracted by peers around them. Also, he maintains, teachers need to be more honest and progressive. Most importantly headteachers need to respond positively to ensure that they deal with boys more effectively. In my discussion with Coard (2006) he argued that "black boys need to be motivated, develop self esteem and understand their sexuality and this can only be instilled by parents and teachers". He sees masculinity as positive and that black boys develop masculine attitudes as part of the identity they are trying to create. He also says that it is up to schools to take this on board in the delivery of the curriculum. This, he asserts is an issue which requires better understanding by

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teachers in order to work out strategies to teach boys without stigmatisation. He asserts that there needs to be more black history and culture in the curriculum in order to improve black boys' sense of identity and self-esteem, and hence achievement.

African-Caribbean boys in Britain today are influenced by their American counterparts in terms of their dress, music, sports and street-cultures and these boys adopt such trends as part of their everyday life. This is enhanced by the fact that media broadcasts through television, radio and films on these topics create awareness for these boys as to the 'American way of life.' It is important to compare the way African-Caribbean boys behave with that of their peers in America. In Britain, black boys are seen as good at sport and are encouraged to pursue this route rather than academic schooling. However, in America the most important and highly paid sports people possess a university degree because they are contractually obligated to continue with their academic education concurrently when taking up professional sports. In Britain if boys are good at sports they are encouraged to pursue this with no emphasis being placed on the pursuit of an academic qualification.

Researchers in America have placed particular focus on how black boys construct meaning to their world. According to Martino and Mayenn (2001), in the midst of trying to get a handle on the education crisis of black boys, the literature has shown little about how boys construct personal meaning for their social and academic lives. The authors contend that black boys are both loved and loathed at school and that they set the standards for 'hip-hop' culture (type of music and dance) and 'athleticism' (sports) - while at the same time experiencing disproportionate levels of punishment and academic failure. The authors state that this juxtaposition leads to a range of behaviour responses and strategies within schools that set the tone for the educational experiences of black boys. The questions raised by these writers is how can these boys respond to a context that defines the way they behave as both 'sexy' (body language that says that they are cool and in fashion) and as 'sexually threatening' (some people perceive them as scary because of the way they look, behave and dress) and still create a space that they can call their own? The authors suggest that although both black girls and boys are facing problems at school, the problem facing black boys are more chronic and extreme, thus deserving special programmes and

curricular attention.   I have noted the extent of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement above. Martino and Mayenn (2001) argue that the boys' place as 'sexy' cultural icons is more problematic, thus creating an allure for boys to emulate this positioning within school culture as 'rebels' going against the norm in how they dress and behave.

Like all previous generations from across all races, black boys have formed their own youth cultures. This has intensified as a direct result of globalisation where we are able to communicate cultures across the world. Most British born teenagers from all cultures can relate to television channels such as MTV Base and Channel U which broadcast much of the music they have come to know and love. African-Caribbean boys are influenced by famous black superstars such as Puff Daddy (PD) Fifty Cents, Uncle Muda and Jay-Z. These artists play an important role in helping to shape the way boys have developed their musical taste and dress, as part of a move from Rasta to Raga (Sewell, 1997), Hip Hop and Rapping culture music. Boys also portray the 'non conformist' appearance of hair, fashion statements (wearing trousers below the bottom) and music that delivers a 'statement' of identity and rebellion. Those who do not understand this see these boys as rebels and threatening (Sewell, 1997). I agree with the view of Sewell (1997) that teachers can misunderstand the way boys behave. Some teachers do not understand African-Caribbean boys' subculture or the 'masculinity' they display.

Many prominent current American rap artists communicate messages through their music about issues of gang warfare; they portray images of being immortal, of being immune to gang killings and talk about the hood (neighbourhood) and the ghetto through their music. Some also portray images of great wealth as if it was the norm. In my view this sends out false messages to their audiences which have influence on young people across the world. This has infiltrated into British society and has had a major influence on youth culture and African-Caribbean boys are not alone in this. African-Caribbean youths are beginning to set up 'patches' in their areas copying the Blood (red) and Crips (blue) colour patch culture of America where members wearing a particular colour cannot cross another's patch. These cultures are quietly slipping into the streets of Britain because boys in this country see this as a 'way of life' in

America, portrayed by mass media. It is worth noting that all of these influences have an impact on youth culture across the races but there is a particular emphasis on African-Caribbean boys. Coard (2008) argues that boys adopt these American norms because they feel alienated and excluded from white society and culture, and their self esteem has been assaulted and their existence perceived as a threat. These norms have such huge appeal and are imitated. He suggests that if they were to serve very little social, emotional, pedagogical function to black British boys they would not be copied.

Martino and Mayenn (2001) also suggest that the negative cultural messages about black males in the media and in society that portray them as violent, disrespectful, unintelligent and hyper-sexualised do nothing to help the situation of the black boys. The authors contend that these cultural messages carry over into schools and affect the way black male students are treated. They state that, for example black boys' demeanours are misunderstood by white middle class teachers and are seen as defiant, aggressive and intimidating. They also argue that in almost every category of academic failure, black boys are disproportionately represented and they lag behind in test score performances and grades. The researchers conclude that African American males are more likely to be referred for special education placement than all other students and that they are much more likely to be suspended or expelled from school for poor behaviour.

Similarly, what is happening in America is also being experienced by African-Caribbean boys in Britain. The authors claim that there is growing evidence that black male disengagement with school develops in the early grades and continues to intensify as they progress through school and that by all indications black males consistently fall behind other students in school performance and lead their peers in school infractions and other negative outcomes. These researchers assert that as early as kindergarten, (nursery school) black males are treated differently from other males and female students and that throughout elementary and middle school black boys consistently receive lower ratings by teachers for social behaviour and academic expectation. This contradicts the argument of Ainsworth (2006 p.23) and DA Vision (2004 p.33). They conclude that black boys who spend more time on homework and

attend school regularly also perform better academically and are more engaged in their schooling. Martino and Mayenn (2001) argue that the grade retention and suspensions induce academic failure among black boys. The authors acknowledge that the research which exists on black males in school is relatively recent and typically focuses on factors that characterise or place these students at risk as learners but they say that little attention is given to how these males construct personal meaning for their lives in and out of school. They also recognise that discussion about how black boys make sense of their own masculinity has been noticeably absent.

Although the authors' study focuses on America, all of these variables/factors are similar to what is happening to African-Caribbean boys in Britain. Blair (2001) asserts that "from the time black children enter the education system, they begin to feel the extent to which their relationships with teachers are mediated by race, even if they cannot articulate it". What Blair (2001) is saying is although boys feel they are being treated differently by their teachers they are too young to understand what is happening to them.

The author argues that these children are criticised, reprimanded and punished more than other children. She goes on to state that young children at times are confused and distressed by the blatant racism they experience at the hands of some teachers, people who they look up to, consider infallible and from whom they seek approval and affirmations. Richardson (2005 p.192) cites Gary McFarlane - a black school governor - as saying that:

"upon leaving the primary school gates for the last time, black boys will notice how society's view of them changes and comes into sharper relief. The cute little black boy becomes the mugger and gangster. As a black boy you will be seen as a potential troublemaker, a low achiever with, at best a bent for sports and music, (although it is hard pressed to find many musical instruments in the average school). The negative effect of this stereotyping is reflected in the fact that at primary school black children hold their own academically, but when they enter secondary school a gap begins to

open up with their peers. Is there something wrong with black boys, the way they live, their attitudes, or is there something wrong with society?"

According to McFarlane, we are told that exclusions are high and academic performances are low because black boys have brought to school an anti-learning culture of rap, guns and drugs. His view is that the establishment and the media are trying to say that there is something wrong with black boys rather than with the system itself.

Sewell (2002) identified peer group pressures as the biggest threat to their education. Sewell (1997) contend that black boys construct their masculinity in a school context in highly differentiated ways and that they respond to schooling and the racism they experience within it, by taking up different versions of masculinity. In challenging the notion of black masculinity Sewell (1997) contends that "within the African-Caribbean community local cultures have developed out of an engagement with a British nationalism, which exclude and ignores the black presence in Britain". The outcome Sewell (1997) argues can be seen in the movement from Rasta to Ragga which is a politically creative discourse which struggles with questions of identity and also changing and influencing the white landscape of Britain. Black youth culture, the author concludes is in its greatest crisis since the "slavery of black people". In a sense Sewell's (1997) link to slavery suggests that this is a new self imposed enslavement adopted by boys, which stops them from performing, implying how little progress has been made since those early days of the enslavement of black people. This view is akin to African-Caribbean boys being 'their own worst enemies'.

In their study of black boys' masculinity Martino and Meyenn (2001) report that data from small group and individual interviews is able to inform most of their understanding of the vulnerable and complex school lives organised by black males and suggest that black boys create a very distinctive culture for themselves. Sewell (1997) on the other hand argues that 'black boys are Angels and Devils in British (and American) schools' and they are seen as heroes of a street fashion culture that dominates most inner-cities. Sewell (1997) argues that these boys experience disproportionate amounts of punishment in schools compared to all other ethnic

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groupings and says that black boys are viewed as the darling of popular youth subcultures and the sinner in the classroom, which has led to the formation of a range of behaviours.

It does not necessarily follow that African-Caribbean boys are anti-learning. For example that they do want to learn or that they are anti-school. Ofsted (2003) cites Shipman and Hicks who argue that one of the prominent factors that prevent the motivation of boys identified by the pupils and teachers alike is boys' peer group culture. This concurs with the arguments of Sewell (2002). The authors argue that the presence of friends makes the boys work less and that the peer group they observed in school is not an anti-work but a pro-social group. It seems that the boys do want to work, but they are influenced by peer group pressures because it is not seen as cool to learn. They contend that within the peer group the boys work to establish their self-esteem through social interactions not academic performances. This could be viewed as a reason why African-Caribbean boys' underachieve because they try to conform to the peer group pressures and therefore do not work hard. This is in line with Sewell (2002) and Mac an Ghaill (1994) who have linked the anti-school attitudes of some African-Caribbean boys to their underachievement. According to Mac an Ghaill some of these boys see learning as effeminate and their peers see them as being gay, soft or 'a wimp' if they like learning.

The image that most African-Caribbean boys want to portray is one of being: 'hard', 'well built, in with the music, a cool dresser and getting the girls'. They stand alone cross their legs, fold their arms and present this new identity they have developed. In attempting to define masculinity Connell (2005) argues that one's behaviour results from the type of person one is. For example an un-masculine person would behave differently from a masculine one. He asserts that an un-masculine individual is seen as being peaceable rather than violent, conciliatory rather than dominating, hardly able to kick a football and uninterested in sexual conquests. In other words what society would consider a 'wimp' (a weak person). But masculine people are seen as tough, brave and heroes and this is the image that African-Caribbean boys want to get across. Epstein, Elwood, Hey and Maw (1999) make reference to Willis (1977) to suggest that the problem of masculinity is not a new one. Over twenty years earlier Willis

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(1977) wrote about the ways in which working class boys often responded to the alienation and middle class values of schooling through strategies of resistance and, in the process, became embedded within their class status. Wang (2000) asserts that schools serve as one major site for producing and transmitting dominant notions of masculinity and the masculinities associated with class, ethnic and sexual grouping which interacts with the dominant role of all students. Wang (2000) asserts that "the discussion about masculinity is in the context of gender, culture and race".

Many men feel they need to be tough, portray the macho body image, be providers, and 'go to war'. According to West (1999) there is huge variation in masculinities across class, race and ethnicity and that most working-class suburbs have a very strong overlay of tough masculinity. West (1999) suggests that much of the debate about boys' underachievement ignores historical issues to do with race, immigration and poverty. The message the author gets from boys is that peers, parents and teachers want them to be heroes and that they have to prove their masculinity on the football field. West (1999) contends that some schools are seen to be concentrating on the culture of the school, rather than looking at what strategies can be implemented to induce boys to attain higher academic achievements.

In this section masculinity and subculture has been identified as a major reason for the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. However, other factors need to be explored such as the importance of role models in the boys' lives.

2.21 The significance of role models to African-Caribbean boys

Closely related to masculinity is the issue of role models. The literature on the issue of role models is examined below to establish the impact on African-Caribbean underachievement. According to the REACH Report (2007) black boys and young men face serious challenges in every sector of society. They are less likely to do well at school, more likely to be unemployed and much more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system than their white peers. The REACH group was commissioned to provide five recommendations on what government can do to help raise the aspirations and attainment of black boys and young men. Two out of the five recommendations of the report are: 1) that the government introduced a

structured national role model programme for black boys and young black men; 2) that the voluntary and community sector organisations work to support black boys and young black men from black-led consortium supported by the government. In an unpublished report for the National Union of Teachers, John (2008) responds: "we particularly welcome the report's (REACH, 2007) emphasis on the contribution of positive role models – like doctors, lawyers and other professionals can play in helping raise aspiration and inspire young black men". The REACH programme is currently being put into place and still needs to be coordinated across schools.

According to Womack (2007) black youngsters need a new generation of role models. She argues that these could be drawn from the business and education world to counter underachievement. Womack (2007) contends that too often role models for young black men are sports celebrities and rappers who glamorise crime, guns and gangs. Womack (2007) asserts that a key recommendation in order to close the academic gap between black and white pupils were for a structured national role model programme for black boys. Also required are stronger relationships and engagement between parents of black boys and schools to promote educational aspirations and also that Ofsted should provide greater consistency in the way schools are inspected

Sewell (2007) writing in The Times Educational Supplement argues that by surfing television channels or going on line, today's black children can, find plenty of images of rap stars, but he asserts, there is a need for more positive black role models. Sewell, however, criticises the new Black Boys National Role Model Programme (REACH 2007) recommendations to be headed by the first black winner of the television programme 'The Apprentice' Tim Campbell whose new role will be to headhunt twenty black men such as doctors, lawyers and businessmen. Sewell (2007) argues that the call for role models is "not sufficient". He says that 'The Black Boys' National Role Models programme' is a bold claim (by Hazel Blears, then Communities Secretary and now opposition Member of Parliament) to be an "antidote to a culture of low aspiration", but that we should not patronise our boys with so called role models. We must challenge them with high expectations where they are the centre of the achievement process. His view is that what is needed is more

funding and boys need real content, lessons in emotional intelligence and the resilience to break away from peer group pressures. It is important for African-Caribbean boys to have good role models who they can relate to. However, I agree with Sewell (2007) who in criticising the REACH programme, says that this is not enough to address the underachievement of these boys. What these boys need are high aspirations and expectations, not just role models although they are important in the lives of the boys.

Sewell (2009) asserts that as black communities in the UK struggle to replace the father figure, the mantra of role model is heralded as the new solution. He states that in 2007, the government announced that 'successful role models for young black men' were recruited to counteract educational underachievement and the influence of gang culture. As noted above, the search was lead by Tim Campbell, the first black winner of the television programme, The Apprentice who hunted for twenty men who were doctors, lawyers and businessmen. However, he goes on to say that the cry for more positive black role models in response to the underachievement of black children just plays to a cliché and that the evidence shows that, the only real beneficiaries are the role models themselves. Sewell (2009) further asserts that the problem is that children, black or white, need exposure to experience and authenticity. The role model who comes to the assembly and waxes lyrical about his own experience is usually forgotten by playtime. What Sewell (2007) is saying is that children need a different type of mentoring which provides them with experiences and practical authentic help and that bringing in role models into school is not the answer as boys benefit very little.

Ojumu (2007) asserts that recently the importance of early intervention has led to creation of 'Sure Start' and various mentoring and role model schemes across the country. There is more understanding of how things can go wrong in a boy's life, especially during adolescence.

Ojumu (2007) claims that there is an old African saying that 'it takes a village to raise a child'. He argues that although the black diasporas in Britain is so broad it is hard to talk about a coherent 'black community', traditional African and Caribbean culture is

characterised by large extended families, in which relatives and friends share the burden of raising children.

Ojumu (2007) goes on to argue that it has been hard to recreate that supportive network in a strange land, though some immigrant communities have managed it successfully. There are too many fractured black families, in which fathers play little or no role in the upbringing of their children. The view is that whether we like it or not, family separation is a fact of twenty first century life, but that does not have to mean children have to grow up in neglect. Ojumu (2007) asserts "when I was young my father used to annoy me by saying that I would have to work much harder than my white peers to succeed". Given the struggles black boys face today, they need more support than ever before if they are to have a chance.

Doughty (2007) asserts that black boys must be encouraged to stop idolising rap stars and footballers if they are to be steered away from the gang and gun culture. Doughty (2007) is indicating that there are links between gang and gun culture and with black boys idolising rap stars and footballers. The view held by Blair (2001) is that although outside mentors can be valuable, it seems to signal a failure by the school to create an environment in which students feel that adults already in the school are their role models and that they can get the help and support they need from them. The theorist claims that outside mentoring can have certain advantages, not least in academic outcome, and where mentors are found for students from all ethnicities because of particular benefits offered by such partnerships, the strategy should not be discounted. However, Blair (2001) says that when only black students are selected for mentoring and mentors are found only from their own communities (which is not to decry the racial/ethnic matching in mentoring schemes), it nevertheless seem to give out a message equivalent to that of Supplementary Schools, signalling failure by mainstream schools to provide adequately for students. Blair (2001) is saying that bringing outside mentors into schools is another way of singling out African-Caribbean boys negatively and this suggests that schools are failing the boys. It is important however, to single out boys if we are to help them achieve.

African-Caribbean boys need professional black role models who they can relate to and share a culture with, in order to help raise their self esteem, image and to help them understand the importance of education. This is essential in forming part of a positive role in British society in terms of career and personal development. The riots such as those in Bristol, Brixton and Handsworth, Toxteth, Operation Trident mentioned earlier, the stop and search policy which has caused much discord, unrest and tension among African-Caribbean youths (and have done little to change their status in society or the perceptions of how they are seen in society) have all had a negative impact on boys. Today, almost daily there are gun and knife crimes and black on black killings among youngsters who have turned to drugs and crime on the streets of Britain. Many innocent black youths get caught up and some of them lose their lives.

As noted earlier, Phillips (2005) argues that black boys continuing poor performance in schools could turn them into a permanent underclass. He goes on to say that "the hand wringing of liberals feels increasingly irrelevant in the face of the accumulating inequalities that are slowly detaching the African-Caribbean community from the rest of society". The author expresses concern for the fate of black boys in Britain and the need for changes and soon. His concerns arise from the fact that the result of the continued underachievement among this group of boys is that they will have no jobs and they will become a permanent group who have limited life chances in society.

2.22 The implication of the literature review for future research

I have reviewed a large amount of literature about why African-Caribbean boys do not succeed at school. Even though social class and deprivation are important in themselves, I do not consider these factors to be enough in explaining why this happens. It is also the case from reviewing the literature that other minority ethnic groups perform better, including many of those who have arrived in this country more recently, many of whom could also be described as economically deprived. Some of the new arrived migrants are much more socio-economically deprived that the established African-Caribbean community. The literature also shows that African-Caribbean girls perform better than their male counterparts (Phillips, 2005).

African-Caribbean boys are the most enduring underachievers in British schools. The literature review has highlighted other key areas in addition to social class and deprivation as to why they are underachieving in the British education system. Underachievement has been viewed from a range of perspectives. For example, the review has looked at the issue of masculinity and how this is central to African-Caribbean boys' subculture.

The review commenced however, with a look at the historical journey of the African-Caribbean child in British schools and the emergence of the African-Caribbean community in Britain and the way in which schools failed to respond to their needs. Coard (1971) describes how West Indian children were labelled as ESN by British schools on the basis of the way they spoke, in particular their 'choice of words' which were often at odds with what Coard (1971) describes as 'standard classroom English'. In other words what was considered normal English in the West Indies was seen as linguistically inadequate in the British classroom. Teachers often saw West Indian children as not being responsive when they tried to engage them. Coard (1971) argued that as a result teachers say these children as 'dull' and that it was difficult to assess their intelligence. However, there were cultural reasons which teachers did not understand. In particular, this was asserted by Coard (1971) to be because in West Indian schools children were used to listening and not responding to teachers. The argument of Coard (1971) is that these are institutionalised and systemic racism.

The literature review has also shown how 'globalisation' has produced new population shifts and produced multi-cultural inner-city areas and schools very different to those described by Coard (1971) where African-Caribbean students often represented a visible minority alongside the majority white students. As a result of globalisation schools today, particularly those in inner-city areas have become culturally diverse with large numbers of new migrants. Despite many schools becoming multi-cultural, the National Curriculum however, when it was introduced failed to address issues of diversity and is still failing to cater for the diversity that is found in many inner-city schools today. The research questions are designed to discover whether institutionalised racism takes more complex forms in a school which is culturally diverse.

The literature shows that African-Caribbean boys are still behind most other minority groups in terms of their performance. If this is not due to socio-economic background it has been argued that masculinity and subculture could be contributors to the boys' underachievement. I have also looked at the significance of exclusions from school and the importance of good role models.

The work of Sewell (1997, 2002, 2005, 2007, and 2009) on how African-Caribbean boys' masculinity is perceived in schools has also been of considerable importance. It has described the way boys behave within the school context and how this is interpreted by teachers.

2.23 The gaps in the literature about African-Caribbean boys

Although the literature discusses the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys from various perspectives and has been very informative, there is a need for studies from the point of view of the boys' in order to get their perspective of school, how they view teachers, qualifications, further and higher education and how they think they are affected by peer group pressures and the boys' views about their subculture. The literature included in the review, although it discusses masculinity and subcultures does not examine this from African-Caribbean boys' perspective or how this subculture interacts with the main school culture. These are major gaps which require further investigation. Many accounts of subculture assume that there is an inevitable conflict with the main culture of the school or that it is the subculture which is the cause of underachievement.

In particular, there is a lack of studies about African-Caribbean boys in multi-ethnic inner-city schools in Britain. This is particularly so in schools where they may be a minority group as the following chapter will highlight.

I have also not found any studies where teachers are asked about their perspectives on African-Caribbean boys and how they perceive the boys' attitudes to learning, the significance of their subcultures and socialisation in school. It is also important to establish what teachers think are the necessary policy implications for changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving.

It is also important to hear the opinions of headteachers as managers of schools in relation to African-Caribbean boys and their underachievement. I have not found any studies which address this issue.

Although there have been studies of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement, few have attempted to imbed their arguments and research from the historical perspective adopted by Coard (1971) in comparing the early experiences of West Indian children to those of African-Caribbean boys today and comparing how his views about systemic and institutionalised racism in terms of labelling students differ to what is happening in school today.

2.24 The next step - the literature review, the research questions and empirical study and emerging themes.

The next stage was to conduct an Institutional Focus Study in an Inner London School (ILS) which has a diverse ethnic population. The IFS can be found in Chapter Three. This is followed by a case study as part of an empirical study in the ILS which involves interviews and questionnaires with African-Caribbean boys and their teachers which focus on the research questions as described in Chapter One. In the empirical study, question 1) a, b and c is designed to find out how the boys see school, learning and their teachers. I want to establish whether boys are 'anti-learning' and represent a counter-culture in the same way that Nayak (2004) suggests that subcultures are frequently theorised (see 2.19). I also want to find out if African-Caribbean boys' subculture is like that of the white working class boys described by Willis (1977) (see 2.13). According to Willis (1977) white boys underachieved because of constraints their subculture placed on them, not because of the school structures. Sewell (1995, 2007 and 2009) implies that there are issues with African-Caribbean subculture and masculinity that may hinder their achievement in school. I also want to establish if there is any evidence that the boys have a 'laddish' anti-learning culture and the masculinity they display affects their learning. (Sukhnandan et al 2000) (2.20). I can only find this out from hearing the boys' voices.

Byfield has cited Ogbu (1992) as arguing that black youth in the USA use music and clothes as part of an oppositional cultural identity which is being adopted by black

youth in this country. The research questions have been developed to find out if there is a conflict between this attachment to music and dress and doing well at school.

Question 2) a and b, was developed as part of the empirical study to examine whether African-Caribbean boys' subculture and their peers had a negative effect on their learning. This question and the evidence generated by the empirical study could help to identify how the boys' subculture interacts with the main culture of the school. I wanted to get a greater understanding of African-Caribbean boys' subculture and the role it serves in relation to school and friends, through hearing their voices. Question 2) c of the empirical study will provide a greater understanding of the boys so strategies can be developed to help them.

The relationship between question 3, a and b and the empirical study provides a channel to hear to voices of the boys' teachers. Coard (1971) said that teachers did not understand the early West Indian children who came to Britian. Coard (2006) in his interview also said that teachers were racist and had inbuilt values about people and that as a result, black students were being victimised by the education system. It is therefore important to hear what the teachers in the ILS think about African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning. Also how teachers perceive the boys' subculture and socialisation and how they think it affects the boys' learning. Also whether they think parents are actively involved in supporting their children.

 I also wanted to find out the boys' perception about being excluded from school as the literature review suggests there is a strong link between African-Caribbean boys and exclusion from school. Majors (2002) has asserted that exclusion from school of African-Caribbean boys has reached crisis point. He relates this crisis to the failure of policy in catering for the needs of African-Caribbean boys. In the IFS I investigate the situation of African-Caribbean boys' exclusion in the school and I look at the Learning Support Unit (LSU). Tomlinson (2005) has suggested that social exclusions units contribute, rather than solve problems of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. Therefore it is important to hear from the boys about what they think about exclusion from school and how they think it affects learning, as part of the empirical study. Another emerging theme from the literature is that of peer group

pressures and how this impacts on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. What has emerged is that African-Caribbean boys are one of the most underachieving ethnic groups (2.11).

In the empirical study, I also want to find out what teachers think about how policies and strategies could improve African-Caribbean boys' learning and achievement. It was identified in the literature review that the National Curriculum does not cater for diversity. John (2006) argued that the National Curriculum is white in every sense of the word. The empirical study includes questions to teachers about policy and particularly about the National Curriculum. It is important to find out teachers' perceptions about the National Curriculum and government policies in relation to race and education. The literature has shown that British schools have become diverse because of globalisation as discussed in (2.4). I want to establish if the teachers think that the National Curriculum addresses this.

As a result of the finding in the literature review it was also important to hear from the headteacher as to her views on national policy and whether it was adequate for dealing with African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and what in her view were the reasons for their underachievement.

Above I have discussed how the literature review has contributed to the formation of the research questions for students, teachers and the headteacher. I have also discussed how the themes in the literature review contributes to the empirical questions and methods selected. Having considered and designed the research question it was important to decide the most appropriate method of collecting the data to ensure the emerging themes and questions are addressed. I chose questionnaires for students and teachers, interviews for the head teacher and the boys and also a sociogram for students. I have discussed methods of data collection in depth in Chapter Four.

New research about how African-Caribbean boys perceive school could prove valuable to educationalists, teachers, parents and significant others in working out strategies to help these boys in an educational context, to understand the importance of learning whilst also helping teachers to understand the boys and some of the factors

underpinning their behaviour. It is important to review the existing literature in order to get a greater understanding of the general approaches to the failure of African-Caribbean boys and the historical factors associated with black students in British schools and to compare these with the issues affecting African-Caribbean boys today. Some of the themes covered in this review come out prominently in Chapters Three, Five and Six.

The research shows how aspects of African-Caribbean culture or rather how it is interpreted by the education system, results in conflict between the boys and the school. I will examine issues like 'masculinity' and the effects of peer group pressure on learning, but I will also examine the effects of school structures and the current National Curriculum on restricting the attainment of African-Caribbean boys. Out of the various theories and perspectives that I have covered in this chapter I continue to find the work of Coard (1971) and John (2006, 2008) of particular significance.

The school system has changed considerably since the time of Coard (1971) and in no sense of the word could ILS be considered to be overtly racist, as several authors in this literature review have argued schools are. African-Caribbean boys continue to experience conflict with the school structures, the way learning takes place as well as what is learned. My interest is in how this happens in ILS and in how teachers there perceive this, particularly because a significant number of them are black (though not necessarily African-Caribbean). In this sense I am continuing in the tradition of Coard (1971) but also examining concepts like 'masculinity', through developing the arguments of Sewell (2002, 2005 and 2007). According to Sewell (1997) there are disproportionate disadvantages among African-Caribbean boys in British schools, both in terms of measured attainment and in terms of exclusion from schools. I am also continuing in the tradition of John (2006) who argued that the curriculum does not cater for diversity and Sukhnandan et al (2000) who discuss the laddish anti-learning culture and other contributors mentioned in this chapter.

Unlike in the 1960s and 1970s when African-Caribbean students were enrolling in predominantly white secondary schools, I am particularly interested in how African-Caribbean boys have become just one group within a school like ILS. I am also

interested in exploring strategies to give this group of students a positive chance to improve their academic achievement. As stated, the first part of the research (Chapter Three) will focus on a study of the school, its student population and the area from which it is drawn and how the school's management has responded to government pressure to raise general standards of performance. Chapter Four and Five which follow the IFS will focus on a case study with students and their teachers. The concluding Chapter Six will also focus on proposals to help raise the academic achievement of African-Caribbean boys.

2.25 Summary

This chapter has investigated the literature about the reasons for the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. It has divided the literature into themes starting with the effects of government policy and globalisation. It has then looked at the data on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. Finally it has looked at trends, patterns and explanations for the boys' underachievement. It has also identified the gaps in the literature and explains the next steps in the study.

CHAPTER THREE

A STUDY OF ONE INNER LONDON SCHOOL (INSTITUTIONAL FOCUSED STUDY)

3.1 Introduction

This Chapter is an Institutional Focus Study (IFS) of an Inner London School (ILS) and leads on from the literature review in Chapter Two. It puts the school in the context of the inner-city borough where it is located. It describes the social geography and the performance of other schools in the borough and compares them to ILS. This is followed by an analysis of the school's ethnic make-up and the way its policies are implemented. Finally, it looks at the position of African-Caribbean boys as a group within the school. Particular focus is given to their over representation in the learning support unit. The IFS serves as the basis for the more specific research in Chapter Five which builds on the argument that African-Caribbean boys can become 'hidden'. To develop the study I have used statistics about the borough and the school's records about its students.

3.2 The school

The school being investigated (ILS) is located in one of the poorest boroughs in London. It houses a diverse ethnic population, to which African-Caribbean people have contributed since the late 1950's. The ILS is a maintained institution funded through the Local Education Authority. It is a vibrant co-educational community school with a population of approximately 1400 students (see figure 1). On entering the school one cannot help but feel welcomed. There are pictures on the wall of students at work and at play. Its multi-cultural environment is visible immediately. Walking round the corridor during a lesson change would give the impression of a chaotic school, but when the bell rings the students quickly settle down. When entering the schools premises it is clear that the majority of students are of Asian

descent, but you can also see many 'black' (African, African-Caribbean and 'other' black) students. White students are few and far between. There are few signs of conflict between the various ethnic groups and students move happily around together. Teachers can be seen in conversation with students, sometimes laughing and joking.

The school has split sites, with Years 7 to 9 at the lower school and Years 10 to 13 housed at the upper site. This study focuses on the upper school where students are preparing for public examinations – GCSEs, A-levels or vocational alternatives.

3.3 The ILS student population

The majority (68%) of the school's student population are from Asian backgrounds. This is made up mostly of Indian (59%) and Pakistani origin (9%). The whole school's African-Caribbean student population is (15%) 217 of which 63 are boys. There are also 225 students with refugee status of mixed/various ethnicities registered in the school.

Figure 1 – The student population in the ILS
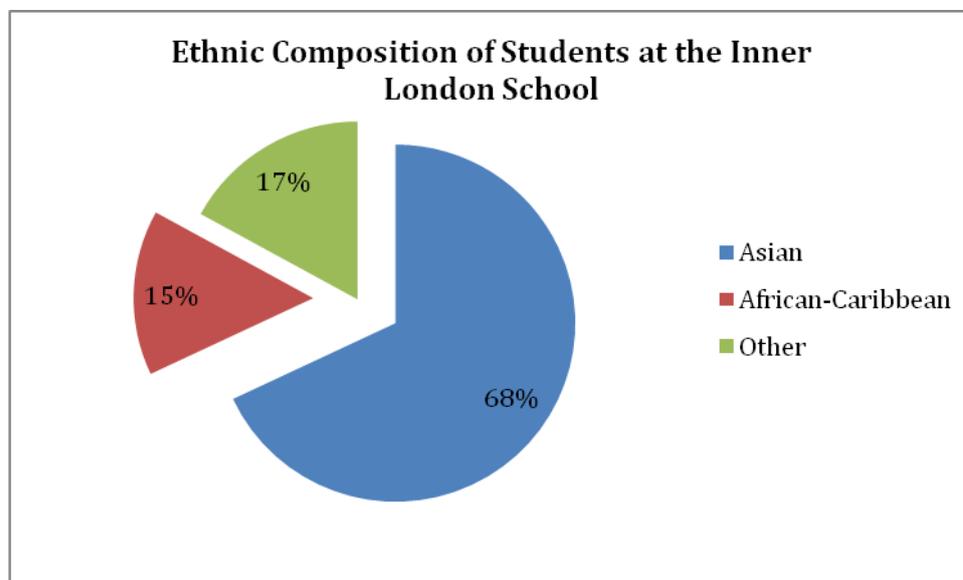
In the chart above Asian students represent the largest group and African-Caribbean students represent the second largest group. However there is a 4:1 ratio in favour of Asian in comparison to African-Caribbean students. The third group includes

students from many different ethnic backgrounds such as African, European and Afghanistan.

3.4 Ethnic composition of teachers employed in the Inner London School

The chart below provides a breakdown of teachers' ethnic background at Inner London School.

Figure 2 – Ethnic composition of teachers at the Inner London School
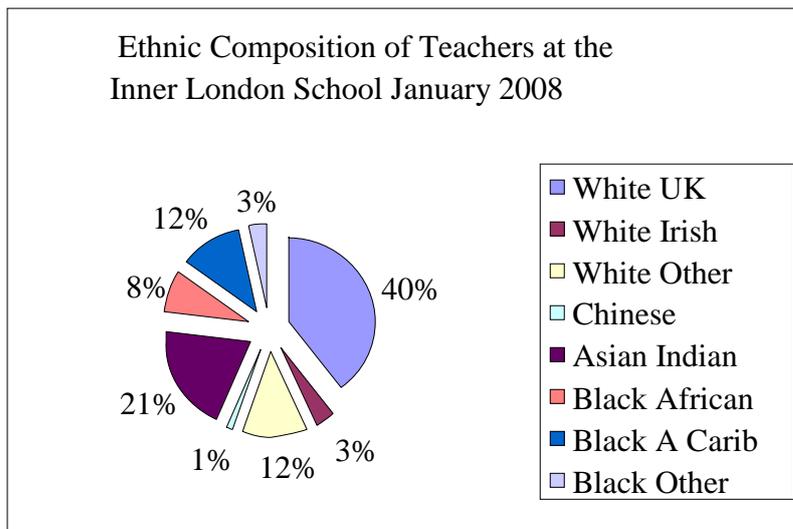
Source: The Inner London School's data (from Human Resources Manager) 2008

Figure 2 shows that, even though the ILS teachers are multi-ethnic, the majority of teachers are White, making up 55%. 21% are Asian, 12% are African-Caribbean, 8% are African, 1% Chinese and 3% are black other. Chapter Six will postulate there are significant cultural differences between African and African-Caribbean teachers. The chapter will show that this results in differing relationships with African-Caribbean boys.

3.5 Some general features of the school

This school was awarded the Specialist Schools Programme (SSP) (DfES, 2006) in Maths and Computing in 2006 (School's Handbook, 2006). The aim of the SSP is to help schools, in partnership with private sector sponsors and supported by additional

government funding, to establish distinctive identities through their chosen specialism and to achieve their targets to raise standards. Maintained schools are able to apply for SSP in areas such as arts, business and enterprise, engineering, humanities, languages, mathematics, computing, music, science, sports and technology. Schools are able to combine any two specialisms. The ILS applied for and was awarded the SSP after two local businesses provided the initial grant of £50000 which the scheme requires. This was after the school had failed to get any of the more established 'national' companies that have offices in the area to support them. The school continues to take every opportunity to work with the local community.

Participation in this programme requires schools not only to focus on subjects relating to their chosen optional specialism, but also to meet the statutory National Curriculum requirements and deliver a broad and balanced education to all pupils. The purpose of this government strategy is to enable schools to continue to nurture students and encourage them to reach their fullest potential (Jack Petchey Foundation, 2007).

The school may benefit from participating in the above programmes because most of its students are from lower socio-economic groups of the population. African-Caribbean boys are more likely to live in lower socio-economic areas and attend schools within their catchment. Because these boys live in such areas they are negatively affected by under resourced schools which are unable to cater for the diverse needs of students. Therefore, it does not necessarily mean that African-Caribbean boys will benefit from anything the SSP programme offers.

The current headteacher has been in post for over eight years. Her aims are to move the school from 'satisfactory' to 'good' or even 'outstanding'. While she is careful to value the contribution of established staff, she has been keen to bring in new and younger teachers. In the interview with the headteacher (see Chapter Four and Five) she stated that the school faced many constraints and that between 2004 and 2007 there was a middle class flight from the area. This suggests that she saw the local area of the school becoming increasingly a lower socio-economic area described by Lupton (2005) in Chapter Two.

Due to its SSP funding, large amounts of computer hardware at the school confound the limited resources elsewhere. In particular, the buildings and general accommodations are in a state of disrepair. There has been some major renovation to the upper school site, with an extensive programme involving the installation of double glazed windows to the main building. Until the summer of 2008 the Sixth Form Centre remained a rundown wooden construction. It is essential to include reference to the physical state of the school because in an age of glistening, 'schools for the future' such as City Academies, which according to Garner (2008) are schools that are improving at a faster rate, it is easy to forget that there are many schools in dilapidated conditions and that some of the educational problems these schools face may be exacerbated by their environment.

In January 2008 the headteacher announced that as a result of selling land owned, but not currently used, by the school, together with a loan from the Local Authority, there would be a brand new Sixth Form building erected in September 2008, which would have all the modern features of a high technology school. A new Sixth Form centre was rebuilt and opened in September 2008. In January 2010 the headteacher reported that the LEA had notified her that the school's Building Schools for the Future (DfES, 2007) application had been approved and that the timetable was being drawn up. (The school was supposed to be moving to one site in 2013 as part of this plan). However, this project has since been abandoned by the Coalition government.

Raising standards is at the heart of the plan for the new Sixth Form. In designing the interior of the Sixth Form building the headteacher said that she gave careful consideration to the voice of students' and their need for better study facilities, restrooms and equipment. However, African-Caribbean boys are least likely to benefit from this new initiative because they are less likely to stay on to the Sixth Form. This problem and strategies to deal with it are discussed in Chapter Five and Six.

In 2007 the school was also awarded the 'Sportsmark' (DCFS, 2007) for excellence in curriculum provision for Physical Education (PE). The school has a history of participating in national competitions in sport and music with some notable successes, including students being selected for regional teams in cricket and football. This

programme gives African-Caribbean and other boys the opportunity to move on to league football or county and national cricket. However, the issue of African-Caribbean boys being drawn into sports was discussed in Chapter Two.

3.6 The school's mission statement and developmental plan

The school Policy Handbook (2008) states that raising standards is at the heart of its policy and the school has consistently achieved good examination results, combined with national success in the arts and in sport. This reflects its commitment to an all round education where every student is expected to strive beyond his/her potential.

The mission statement makes a firm commitment to equality and fairness toward its students. This is enunciated as: 'Raising achievement by learning together and caring for each other' (Policy Handbook, 2008). There are also very clear commitments to the students' educational development and welfare, so as to achieve the school's vision, part of which is included below:

"To provide an inclusive education that ensures that all students achieve in line with their full potential" (p, 10).

"That all students have equal access to a curriculum that offered opportunities for academic, physical, social, moral and spiritual development" (p,10).

The Ofsted (2004) Inspection reported that the school provided a satisfactory education for its students. Although standards on entry to the school were below average, the overall achievement of students was satisfactory by the end of Year 9 and considered to be good by the end of Year 11. It is also reported that the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory throughout the school. Ofsted (2004) also reported that the overall achievement was satisfactory in the Sixth Form, but A-level results were not high enough. This meant that not many students achieved A* to C grades. (See Figure 3 and 4 below).

Ofsted (2004) reported that the school faced some major challenges in its endeavour to raise standards because the attainment of students on entry was below average and English was not the first language for a high proportion of them. Many of the

students possessed weak literacy skills, especially in writing. Furthermore, significant numbers joined the school after Year 7 and many came from the developing world sometimes never having attended school.   According to Ofsted (2004) report mentioned above, in terms of levels of literacy, the school was below average compared to other schools in the borough. Two subsequent Ofsted inspections in 2008 and 2011 have upgraded the school's performance in literacy compared to other schools in the borough.

The School Development Plan (2007) encompasses some very clear policies to achieve its mission and aims. These include raising the standard of teaching and learning, moving all teachers to 'good' or better in lesson assessment based on the Ofsted criteria and embedding 'assessment for learning' as a key element of the National Secondary Strategy. The school has attempted to ensure that all teachers use ICT effectively in order to develop the 14-19 Curriculum.

3.7 The social and economic influences on the school

There are important external socio-economic constraints which the school has to face. The borough in which the Inner London School is located has very distinctive characteristics. It is one of the most culturally diverse areas in the United Kingdom and more than 50% of its residents have non-white ethnic backgrounds. The borough has vibrant African-Caribbean and Asian communities. There are many Hindu temples and Mosques and it also has one of Britain's largest Irish communities whom started to settle in the borough from the 1950's. The borough is said to be a mix of bustling inner-city and more laid back suburbia where affluence and opportunities coexist alongside high levels of deprivation (London Research Centre, 2005). There are some pockets of wealth and regeneration in the area but on the whole, the borough's population is predominantly working class.

Approximately 130 languages are spoken in the borough's schools, with 73% of all students coming from ethnic minority backgrounds. 55% of all students have English as a Second Language in the ILS 46 different languages are spoken.

3.8 Crime statistics in the borough

It is important to make reference to the crime rates in the borough in which the school is located so as to give a picture of some of the external social problems. In 2006 there were 33,018 crimes of all kinds and in 2007 a total of 28,465 (Metropolitan Police, 2006). Gun crime is increasing in pockets in the south. These figures provide an important context to life in the borough where the ILS is located. The south and the east of the borough, which has more people in lower socio-economic groups is associated with the majority of crimes. The north of the borough is more affluent and has a lower crime rate.

3.9 The make-up of the population in the borough in which the school is located

The 2001 Population Census, (London Research Centre, 2005) revealed that the borough had a White population of 45% with 29% who classified themselves as British (said to be the lowest population of Whites in Britain). Asians made up 27.8% with the largest non-White ethnic group among Asians being Indian, accounting for 18.5%, followed by Black Caribbean 10.5%, African 10%, Chinese and other 7.2%. The borough also has a large Irish population of between 7-10%. I would consider it likely that this diversity will continue to develop over the coming years. In recent years, for example, the borough has also had an influx of migrants from Somalia, Kosovo and Eastern Europe.

As someone who came to the borough in which the school is located from the Caribbean in the mid 1960's, I have observed the changing demographics of the borough. The arrival of the African-Caribbean people started in the 1950's they moved into what was then considered to be a suburban white middle and working class area. The Caribbean people originally settled mainly in the south, the region in which the school is located, but which now also houses a large Asian population. The majority of the borough's Asian population started to arrive in the early 1960's and settled predominantly in the south www.brentbrain.org.uk.

It is generally accepted that the north side of the borough is more affluent and that schools in this area take in children who come from more privileged backgrounds.

Schools in the south are in a lower socio-economic area and therefore more likely to have an intake of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, as schools take students from their catchments area. There are 60 primary, 14 secondary, 5 special and four private independent faith schools in the borough. The total number of students is 39,223 with 22,245 of these in primary and 16,978 in secondary schools.

The borough has a waiting list of approximately 4,000 students for school places and is struggling to find schools for students. This is because most schools are oversubscribed and cannot accommodate the inflow of new migrants.

3.10 The school Sixth Form

The school prides itself on having a large Sixth Form with over 300 students making up Years 12 and 13. Just over 50% (52%) of Sixth Form students are on vocational and Information Communication Technology courses, although several A-level options are available. In this school there are a lot of students who do well at their GCSEs, but opt to attend other schools and Post-16 colleges. In the Sixth Form there are 25% of students following one year vocational courses before starting an A-level/Level Three course. At the time of this study there were twelve African-Caribbean boys in the Sixth Form.

The school still manages to place over one hundred students in local universities each year and between five and ten manage to reach Russell group universities. The school also offers foundation courses in the Sixth Form for students who find it difficult to progress mainly because of English being their second language. Until the qualification was abolished in 2010 Sixth Form students have been encouraged to do Key Skills in Literacy and Numeracy up to Level Two. Students who did not do well in mathematics and English GCSE used the Key Skills route to get the C grade equivalent which gave them the opportunity of meeting the requirements by universities of A*-C grades in maths and English. Up to thirty percent of Sixth Form students used Key Skills qualifications as a way of getting into higher education because they did not have GCSE qualifications in mathematics and English.

It is possible that a number of students fail to do well in the English GCSE examination or do not speak fluent English because they have been educated in another country. Therefore, English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes provide them with a basic education in order to access further education and traditional academic qualifications. These classes help students to improve their English skills in reading and writing, therefore helping to break down the barriers they face in accessing academic qualifications.

As part of the National 14-19 Agenda, the school joined the Functional Skills pilot scheme. This may have been due to the experience of teaching literacy and communication skills to large numbers of students. Functional Skills claimed to be more practical than Key Skills which provided qualification in literacy, numeracy and communication. Functional Skills have not been developed in the way that Key Skills had been in the past.

The National 14-19 Agenda will however entrench divisions between academic and vocational learning because students will be encouraged to consider new vocational diplomas at age 14 (Allen, 2007). These new diplomas will offer Functional Skills rather than maths and English. At the time of writing this report there was no plan by the school to bring in any of the new diplomas and since the Coalition government have placed the diplomas on hold.

3.11 Constraints faced by the school

The headteacher has great ambitions for the school. In addition to providing a new building and to moving the school on to one site with modern technological facilities and providing a new Sixth Form building with modern equipment, she wants to raise standards and close the achievement gap in the ILS examination performance in comparison with more successful schools in the borough. However, whilst some of the challenges the school faces can be dealt with at school level, other problems need higher government input. There are three major constraints faced by the school; the first is that the school suffers from the lack of financial resources.

A second constraint is the lack of parental involvement in children's education. This is discussed in Chapter Five and Six.

The third constraint is the barrier that many students face in accessing the curriculum because of EAL issues. The school acknowledges in its Handbook (2008), the value of the diverse languages, knowledge and experience of its students. The headteacher recognises the language development of bilingual learners as the responsibility of both the school and the community which the school serves. The school also tries to provide access to the mainstream curriculum, by providing EAL support, developing collaborative teaching strategies, programmes and materials to meet the needs of bilingual learners.

3.12 The position of the school in the league tables in comparison with other schools in the borough

Figure 3 - The borough's league table percentage in GCSE A* to C grades from 2004 to 2007. The higher the points scored the more successful the school.

School Name	Location	2004	2005	2006	2007
A (I) (F)	E	78	97	88	52
B (ILS)	**S**	**47**	**46**	**32**	**35**
C (I)	E	100	96	85	94
D (AC)	S	29	16	18	23
E (F)	S	18	38	29	24
F	N	70	68	68	61
G (F)	S	64	64	42	63
H	S	53	53	37	44
I (F) (I)	E	95	89	100	95
J (F)	N	80	88	84	84
K	S	35	52	25	25
L	S	48	36	44	42
M	N	62	75	69	67
N (F) (I)	E	-	-	96	96
O	N	70	72	69	72
P	S	46	40	36	38
Q	N	68	64	49	44
R (F) (I)	S	97	100	91	100
S	S	40	57	38	45

Figure 4 - The borough's school's league Tables A-C grade point score for A-level from 2004 to 2007. The higher the points scored the more successful the school.

School Name	Location	2004	2005	2006	2007
A (I) (F)	E	-	-	-	-
B (ILS)	S	176.4	173.1	555.2	547.7
C (I)	-	-	-	-	-
D (AC)	S	81.1	198.8	613.8	675
E (F)	S	135	150	555	628.5
F	N	261.9	254.2	659.3	611.7
G (F)	S	241.8	236.9	730.1	677.5
H	S	221	198.9	563.5	620.7
I (F) (I)	E	-	-	-	803.6
J (F)	N	310.3	316.8	775	439.2
K	S	180	221.3	483.8	626.0
L	S	202.2	203.6	614	553.6
M	N	250.4	271.9	700.8	709.3
N (F) (I)	E	-	-	-	-
O	N	282.2	294.8	770.9	774.9
P	S	184	213.1	492.9	591.7
Q	N	234.8	275.3	629.2	642.9
R (F) (I)	S	271.4	310	726.6	831.8
S	S	194.9	186.9	586	615.3

The schools where data is missing in the above table did not have a Sixth Form at the time of this report.

Key to the tables above:

I have labelled all secondary schools in the borough A to S. The ILS is represented by letter B.

(I) = Independent (F) = Faith School (AC) = Academy N = North E = East S = South.

School 'N' in the above tables did not have an examination year until 2006 or a Sixth Form because it is a new school.

Figure 3 and 4 show the distribution of A-level performances in the borough. Inner London (ILS) is towards the bottom of the table. Schools in more prosperous parts (north and east) of the borough perform much better. In 2004 the school, situated in the south of the borough achieved a 47% pass at GCSE. A*-C. In 2005 ILS ranked at number eight for GCSE/GNVQ attainment at A*-C with 47% and ninth for A/AS-level, with point scores of 173.1. The reasons for the 'decline' in the GCSE scores for the ILS in 2006 and 2007 are not clear, there was considerable debate among staff as to why this had happened. Although not shown in the figure above, in 2008, it was reported in the national league tables that the scores for the school had increased to 49%. Some considered this was due to the changing nature of the school's population and the increase in refugee status students. In 2009 it was also reported to have grown to 63%.

The highest scoring school in the borough (R) is privately run and is located in the south of the borough. However this is an independent Hindu faith school drawing students from a wide area. The highest achieving state school in the borough (O) achieved at 72% for GCSE and for A/AS-level at 774.9 point score. The highest achieving school in the borough is a faith and independent school (R) scoring 100% in GCSE and 831.8 for A/AS-level. These statistics indicate that the ILS has attainment levels below average.

The key division in the borough remains those between schools in the private sector (I) and those that are maintained. The maintained schools can also be divided into north, south and east of the borough, with schools in the more affluent north and east having much higher results than those in the south. The borough also has several religious/faith (F) schools. These schools, with the exception of school C, generally perform above the borough's average.

School J is a long established faith school in the north which has now 'moved' into the borough because of boundary changes. The ILS is in the south and is a secular,

state school. Its results reflect its membership in the three categories. In other words the data indicates that it is a lower performance school.

In 2005 the school achieved 46% in GCSE A*-C in 2006 this dropped to 32% and in 2007 there was a slight increase to 35%. The average point score being 173.1 in AS/A-level in 2005, 555.2 and in 2006, 547.7. In 2006 and 2007, the formula for working out the point scores was changed by the government, thus the disparity between 2005 and 2006. This again indicates that the attainment levels are below the average. In 2006 performances fell further, but in 2007 increased slightly. It is not possible to identify the exact cause of this decline, as indicated above, although informal conversations amongst teaching staff tend to blame the fact that the composition of the school is changing further and that it has become 'rougher'. (For example fights outside the gates and noisy students in the corridors, more fights in the school and bullying).

The performance of the school is of key concern to the headteacher who, in her interview, (see Chapter Five, 5.6) stressed the importance of raising standards in the school. These are problems that need to be addressed and resolved if the school is to achieve its aims, raise its achievement levels and compete with other schools in league tables.

3.13 Gender differences in achievement in the school

There are differences within the school between the attainment of boys and girls. In 2004 the average total score at the end of KS4 (GCSE year) was 264.72 for boys and 272.19 for girls; in 2005 it was 264.9 for boys and for girls 320.2. This shows a disparity in achievement between the sexes. In 2005, statistics also showed that 112 out of the 122 boys (92%) were entered for 5 or more exams, 51 (46%) attained A*-C grade in GCSE and 100 (82%) A*-G, 119 (97%) gained at least one qualification; but there were 3 boys (2%) achieving no passes at all.   However, out of the 89 girls entered for exams, 46 achieved (52%) A*-C grade in GCSE, 87 girls achieved A*-G (98%), 89 (100%) of girls achieved at least one qualifications and there were no girls who failed. Girls appear to be doing better than boys in GCSEs (ILS, Database 2004 and 2005).

The school's performance table for Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE) and A-level qualifications showed that out of the 56 boys entered the average point score was 174.6 and 60 girls achieved 171.2 point scores. In A-level and VCE qualification the achievement levels between the sexes appeared to even out. Like elsewhere, a major problem within the school is the growing disparity between boys and girls at GCSE level. (ILS, Database 2004 and 2005).

3.14 The 'gifted and talented' cohort

Not all students underachieve and as is the case in all schools, a 'Gifted and Talented' cohort exists in ILS. In the DfES White Paper, *Higher Standards: Better Schools for All.* (DfES, 2005), the government argues that the role of schools is to ensure they provide the 'stretch and challenges' needed by gifted and talented pupils in every lesson, so they can achieve to their full potential. The school had one hundred and twenty six students registered as Gifted and Talented.

The majority of Gifted and Talented students were Asian (62%). There were ten African-Caribbean students in this category, six boys and four girls (7%). It is interesting that there were more boys than girls. It is also significant that African-Caribbean boys are represented in this group. This suggests that the school is not totally failing all African-Caribbean boys and that some do extremely well. There will always be exceptions to rule.

3.15 Figure 5 - The ILS gifted and talented students by ethnic background:

Gifted and Talented Students by Ethnic Background 2007

Legend: Afgan, Bangladeshi, Iranian, Somalian, African-Caribbean, Chinese, Indian, Kosovan, Nepali, Other Asian, Black African, Other Ethnic Origin, Portuguese
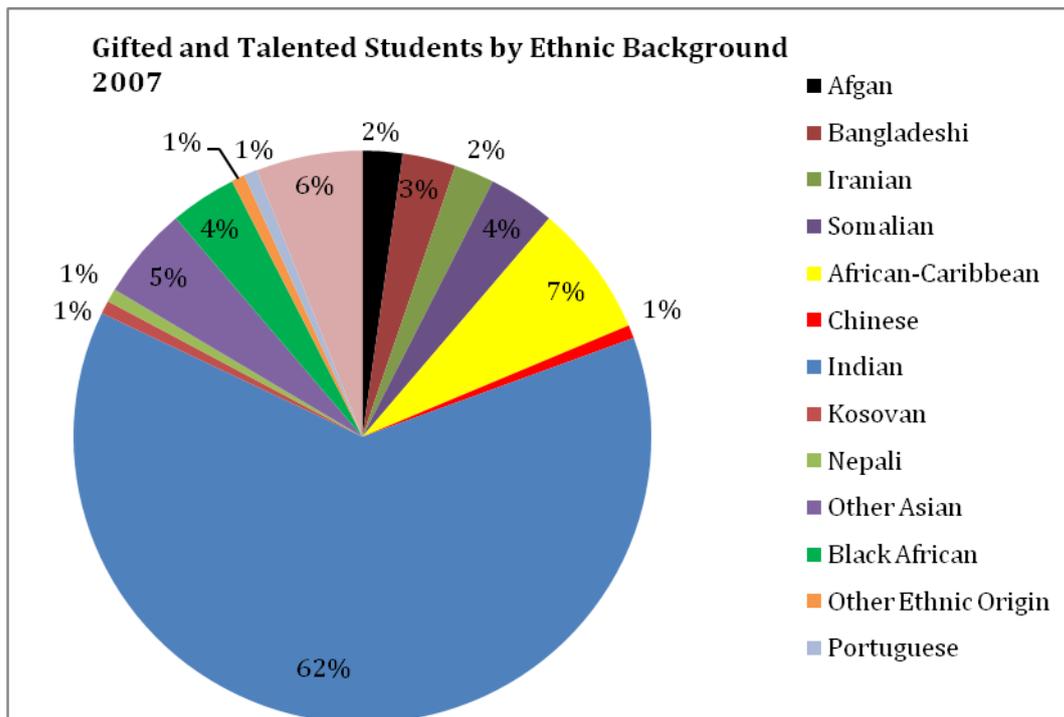
It is sometimes difficult for the school to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils, particularly in mixed ability classes. The then Government has spelt out its commitment in the White Paper (DfES, 2005) that every school should have access to an 'expert' or leading teacher in gifted and talented education. This is to help the school and its teachers ensure they have the skills and expertise to be able to stretch and challenge gifted and talented pupils.

As in previous years where a handful of students went to 'Russell group' universities, some of the high achieving students will also end up at top universities. The school's gifted and talented co-ordinator supports these students.

3.16 Special educational needs

Students with Special Educational Needs *(*SEN) are supported by the school's own budget as in all schools. Most of these children are on 'School Action' or 'School Action Plus'; but a few have Statements of SEN which enables the school to receives extra funds to support their needs. The school works in partnership with parents to assess the Special Educational Needs of the student.

The main principles which inform the way the school manages Special Educational Needs, processes and procedures, are governed by the 1996 Education Act (amended by the SEN and Disability Act, 2001) which sets out the code of practice.

According to Potts, Armstrong and Masterton (1995) children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty requiring special educational provision. When a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age he/she is classified as having learning difficulty. Also if a child has a disability which prevents or hinders him/her from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age then he/she too is classified as having learning difficulties (Potts, Armstrong and Masterton, 1995).

Learning difficulties can be classified as follows, - cognition and learning, behavioural, emotional and social development, communication and interaction problems, sensory or physical difficulties. The criteria, which give guidance about policy on different levels of needs for each of these categories, are included in the Inner London School Policy Handbook (2007). However these are only guidelines as each student has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs.

The provision made by the government emphasises the involvement of parents and children in meeting the child's Special Educational Needs and every opportunity should be taken to discuss with parents their children's needs and the progress they are making. It adopts the approach that it is important to listen to parents and take very careful account of their perceptions of their child. These include the child's biological parents and other adults who may have parental responsibility, for example grandparents and foster parents, as they too have a right to be involved in the child's education.

The school takes particular care if students are looked after by the local authority, (in public care). There is regular communication with the child's social worker and the Looked after Children Education Support (LACES) team. This is to ensure that the child settles in school and social workers know of any concerns early as they assume parental responsibility for the looked after child. In 2005/6 there were 12 girls and 20 boys at the end of KS4 with Special Educational Needs and in 2006/7 there are 189

SEN students without statements and 17 statemented students across the school. No explanation is given for the huge increase in 2006/7. The increase could possibly be that more students of refugee status came into the school or that 2006/7 cohort was higher achievers compared to those of 2005/6.

3.17 Figure 6 - The school's data on the ethnic breakdown of students with Special Educational Needs:
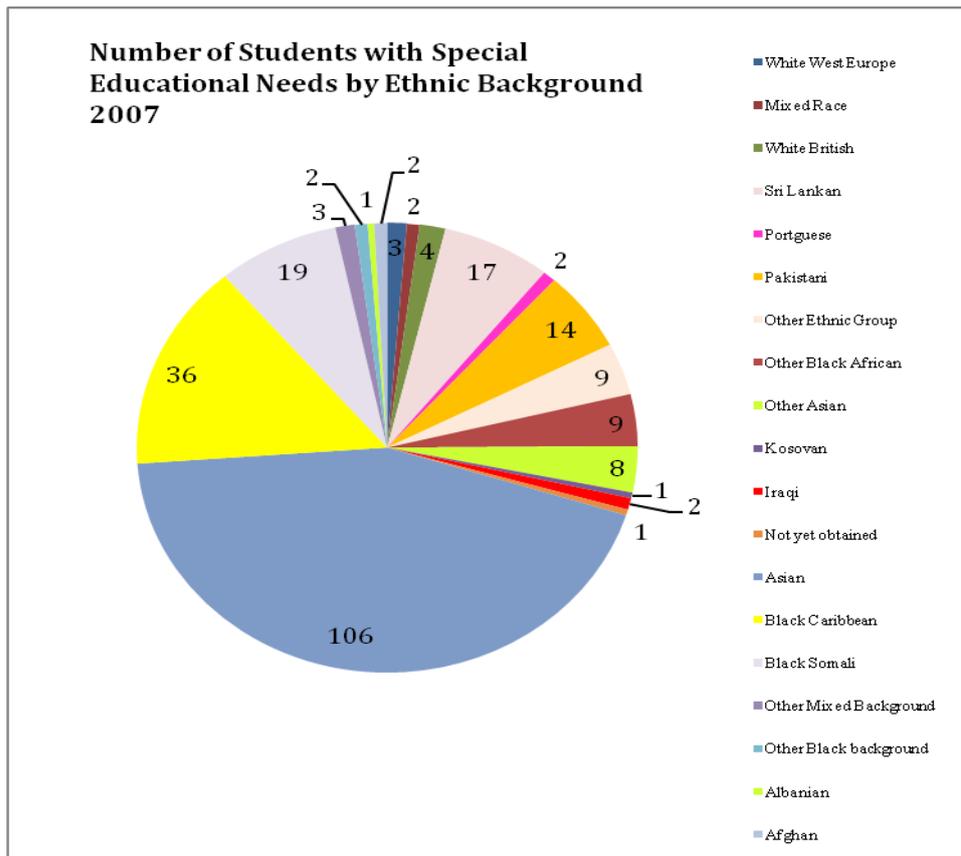
Although 7.8% of the student population is identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN), Bartlett and Burton (2003) suggest that SEN is often not a 'given' but can be a 'creation' of the educational system itself, through the environment and services it provides. In other words, SEN is not inbuilt in students, but is created by schools. This concurs with the arguments of Coard (1971. Today all these needs are classified as SEN. Bartlett and Burton (2003) argue that pupils who do not achieve the designated attainment level, for example, in literacy or numeracy, may be categorised as having learning difficulty. But they assert that this could be simply

because the standards have been set at a particular level. For example if it is expected that 80% of eleven years old students will achieve a certain level in mathematics, it follows that the 20% who are expected not to achieve this fall short of the 'norm' and are excluded from mainstream classes. They are then placed in segregated settings or units with lessons designed to redress the deficit. Some students in this category at ILS are excluded from some main stream classes and participate in Work Related Learning, Enterprise and Skills for Working Life classes. These students are not expected to achieve GCSE qualifications. Some are given support in mainstream classes and can be expected to achieve GCSE qualifications.

3.18 Students with EAL and their achievement

According to the ILS Ofsted (2004) report, eighty five percent of students had English as an Additional Language (EAL) and even though some of these students have become fluent many are in need of further support to master English as a fully effective means of communication to make the most of their learning. Due to its limited financial resources and having to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, it is difficult for the school to provide this adequately.

3.19 Figure 7 - Percentage English speaking students and languages other than English for 2006/7.

Percentage Students with English and other First Language 2007

15%

85%

- Language other than English
- English Speaking
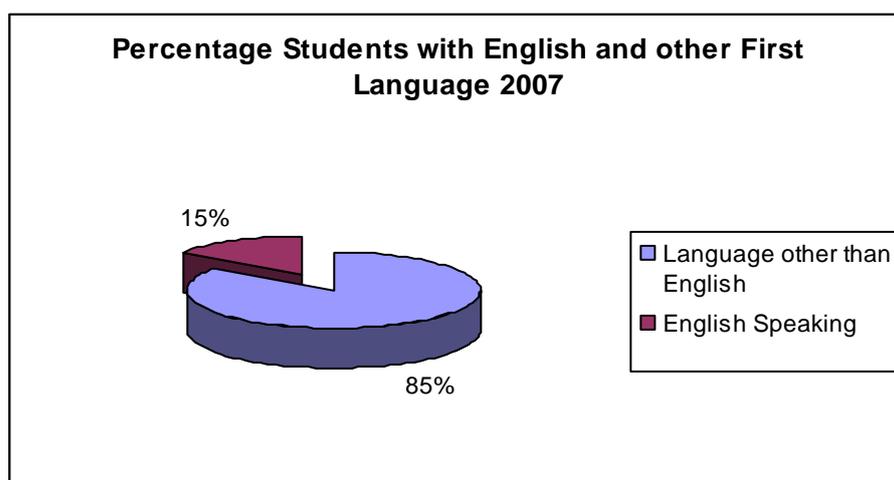
An additional problem in the school has been that until 2005, students with SEN and students with little or poor English have been the responsibility of the same head of

department – though this did not mean that students labelled SEN and EAL were treated the same way. The department included qualified special needs and language support teachers. However in 2007 the headteacher considered this was in need of review and when new government proposals for teacher management responsibilities were introduced, appointed a specific ESOL leader.

The primary objective of the EAL policy at the school is to ensure the inclusion of students, to raise their attainment levels and to provide a support network for those teachers with EAL pupils. Given the nature of the school's population this is still one of the largest challenges it faces.

Many KS4 and KS5 students; regard school as a place where they meet their friends. (This is discussed further in Chapter Five). It is sometimes difficult to get students to use English because they tend to communicate with each other in their native language, when they are not in classroom situations – and sometimes even when they are in the classroom.

Pupils' level of English is identified with reference to Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA) levels of EAL. This information is forwarded to the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service for the purposes of monitoring EAL. Whilst account is taken of EAL development, the school's aim is to set and review appropriate and challenging targets for individual pupils through an Individual Learning Plan.

According to Potts, Armstrong and Masterton (1995), most schools and colleges in England still take it for granted that all teaching and learning should take place in English. This assumption often leads to some students being excluded from areas of the curriculum and their own language and culture being devalued and marginalised. The writers ask how students, whose mother tongue is not English and who have only lived in England for a short time gain access to the curriculum. Diversity in schools is a very challenging problem both in Inner London and other major cities in Britain.

3.20 African-Caribbean boys in the Inner London School

African-Caribbean boys make up a small percentage of the entire school's intake with only 63 in the school in January 2008. An argument throughout this thesis is that

African-Caribbean boys remain a 'hidden' population. These boys are 'hidden' because the school focuses on the majority of students who are largely of Asian descent by providing ESOL. In this respect ILS is probably different to other schools which have a larger intake of African-Caribbean students or where they coexist alongside a majority white population as was the case when Coard (1971) wrote his book.

Some of the school's teachers classify a wide range of students as 'black'. Within this category African-Caribbean boys are not given an independent identity. They are grouped, for example with black African and black Somali - this is investigated in much more detail in Chapter Five and Chapter Six. Therefore African-Caribbean children become 'hidden' because of this classification. Also, the increasing number of African students complicates issues further, because they too are classified as black and the two groups are often not distinguishable. The distinction is important because African boys achieve higher results than African-Caribbean boys. What is being suggested here is that even though African-Caribbean boys are a close knit group, they may be in danger of becoming 'hidden' as all 'black' boys are grouped together. Therefore the school is not as successful as it could be in working with African-Caribbean boys as a specific group. I will develop this argument in Chapter Five and Six.

The problem of underachievement among African-Caribbean boys has recently become a topic of discussion at the school and the management is currently looking at ways to get African-Caribbean boys to learn and to focus on raising their attainment levels by starting a focus group to discuss how best these boys could be supported. The school considers that mentoring may be the best way forward in helping boys achieve and has started to train teachers in mentoring African-Caribbean boys.

Ainsworth (2006) in a report on behalf of the borough in which the school is located shows that over many years, key statistics have indicated that, academic and economic outcomes for children and young people from African-Caribbean and some Black African heritage groups continue to be below borough averages. This is in line with the evidence collected from Inner London School. The author claims that while

African-Caribbean pupils achieve above borough averages at Key Stage 1, they progressively fall below the borough's average from Key Stages 2 to 4. The report confirms that African-Caribbean pupils are significantly over represented in exclusions both internally and externally. The report reveals that 48.5% of permanent exclusions, 51.6% of fixed term exclusions from primary schools, 26.9% fixed term exclusions from secondary school and 29.3% 16 to 19 year olds were of African-Caribbean descent (Ainsworth, 2006) which is consistent with the findings at Inner London School. Bearing in mind that the ILS African-Caribbean population is 15% and 55% of permanent exclusion were from this group in 2006/7, this is extremely disproportionate (see Figure 10 below).

The overall summary and conclusions of the findings from the Ainsworth (2006) study is that there has been a decline in African-Caribbean academic outcomes from Key Stage 1 onwards and that Black Africans have significantly better outcomes. (This is contradictory to the findings in Chapter Two, where it is reported that most African-Caribbean boys start to fall behind when they enter secondary school).

According to Ainsworth (2006) male academic outcomes have started below and have then declined more steeply than female academic outcomes. The author also concludes that African-Caribbean's were under-represented in teaching and support staff in the borough's school when compared to the demographics of the schools (Ainsworth, 2006). In ILS 12% of the teaching staff were of African-Caribbean decent and 55% were white.

In the Sixth Form in the Inner London School, there were only twelve African-Caribbean boys. This is because after Year 11, boys leave the school either because they did not achieve the necessary number of GCSE's to enable them to go on to A-level subjects or they had gone on to college, apprenticeships or dropped out of education.

In the interview in Chapter Five the headteacher recognises that black boys underachieve and that this was a concern to the school. However, in discussions with the database manager, she said that there were no statistics available which show the breakdown for underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. In September 2008,

attempts were made again to get the data from the database manager on performance figures for African-Caribbean boys but they had not yet been produced and the manager was not aware of a problem of underachievement amongst this group. This evidence confirms what has been argued about African-Caribbean boys being a 'hidden' population in the school. In Chapter Two a variety of reasons were presented as to why African-Caribbean boys might underachieve in schools. These continue to be prevalent in Inner London School too.

3.21 The Learning Support Unit (LSU), underachievement among students with learning difficulties and those disaffected and disengaged from school.

The Learning Support Unit is a section in the school which supports students with behavioural and emotional problems. These students are taken out of mainstream classroom because they either disrupt lessons or have become disaffected and disengaged, The position of African-Caribbean boys in the ILS is clearly identified by their over representation in the LSU. Students who are disaffected and disengaged from school are another group who underachieved and who invariably leave school with no formal qualifications. According to Huskins (2000) youth disaffection and disengagement from education and training is of major concern to the present government. The view held by this author is that whilst social conditions such as poverty and unemployment play their part, the family remains the main early influence on children's attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. This may be a positive factor in terms of basic care and social skills development, but in some cases negative in terms of abuse and neglect. The author recognised that underachievement, truancy and exclusion from school could be precipitated by a variety of sociological and psychological factors, including early learning difficulties, bullying, pregnancy, parenthood, racism, cultural difference, as well as responsibilities at home such as caring for family members.

Failure by students in school can also be caused by a mismatch between their needs and what the school provides. Huskins (2000) argues that alienation from school for those young people could be reduced by a range of good practices in secondary schools which gives disaffected pupils equal priority to successful pupils. He also

asserts that a consistent and positive whole school policy is required to prevent disaffection and reintegrate disaffected pupils and encourage all students to value learning.

The majority of young people who demonstrated disaffection during adolescence could be identified during their primary years as displaying the warning signs of trouble to come, and for many, poor school performance, particularly in terms of literacy and numeracy hindered future progress and leads to reinforced failure. Linked to this was also a lack of pro-social attitudes and behaviour expected in school. The increasing numbers of exclusions from primary schools evidenced this, which was a recipe for future disaster. According to Huskins (2000) it is important to identify and rectify weaknesses in reading and writing as early as possible as is early diagnosis of SEN. It has already been evidenced in this chapter that this is a major problem which poses many challenges for the school and its resources in meeting students' needs. In Chapter Five one African-Caribbean boy in the Sixth Form was identified as not being able to spell simple words. In a formal conversation with the headteacher in February 2010, she was concerned that students got to the sixth form without their needs being identified. This is both in terms of EAL and SEN students.

3.22 Students who have 'learning difficulties' in the ILS.

Learning Support Units (LSU) in school centres have proved a unique base for pupils who have disengaged with education. This is a place where they can have time out, reflect, learn and manage their behaviour. With skilled staff input pupils work at gaining self-confidence and belief in their abilities.

The ILS, LSU is based on the lower school site although it is hidden away in a long corridor as if it is not meant to be seen. It is staffed by a teacher/manager and a teaching assistant. This unit is responsible for keeping all students who are at risk from exclusion, in school and learning whilst addressing their social, emotional, behavioural and academic needs. The aim is to minimise the disruption caused by the most difficult students without excluding them from school by providing a separate short-term teaching and support programme, tailored to meet their needs in the LSU. In some cases the desired objective is achieved and pupils return to mainstream

classrooms but a few go on to be permanently excluded. The LSU looks after a maximum of ten students at any given time. All students are referred by either the Learning and Pastoral Leader or a Senior Leadership Teacher for a period of up to six weeks/half a term. This period can sometimes be extended for as long as the students require intensive support for behaviour or learning needs.

Whilst students are in the LSU they continue to follow the National Curriculum and where applicable their GCSEs. Teachers are expected to set and mark work for them. Each week all students in the unit are taught two lessons of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills and one lesson of Success Maker, a numeracy and literacy computer programme testing their level of competence. The students are given immediate feedback on how well they have done. They are also encouraged to think positively about their future and to improve their weaknesses by taking responsibility for their actions in school

The main impact of LSU is that students remain engaged with education through a variety of flexible packages and gain greater confidence and self esteem which is measurable through their improvement in basic skills and GCSE results. Students also improve their behaviour, social skills and attendance in school. The LSU staff members help to reduce exclusion by improving pupils' organisational skills and helping them to understand the consequences of their behaviour in school. My understanding is that students can return to the classroom from the LSU with improved behaviour. There were some students however, who returned to the classroom but then returned to the LSU again or were permanently excluded. As table 8 shows, African-Caribbean boys feature disproportionately as having spent time in the unit. The LSU however, is a continuation of the situation that West Indian children faced in the 1960 when they were labelled as Educationally Subnormal and placed in separate schools (Coard, 1971). The only difference now is that the management of these boys is more sophisticated and they remain in their school but away from other children and mainstream classrooms for a period of time.

3.23 Figure 8- Number of students in the LSU by ethnicity 2006/7

Number of Students in Learning Support Unit 2006/7 by Ethnicity

- Black Caribbean
- Black African
- Somalian
- White UK
- Asian Pakistani
- Asian Indian
- Asian Bangladeshi
- White European
- Other
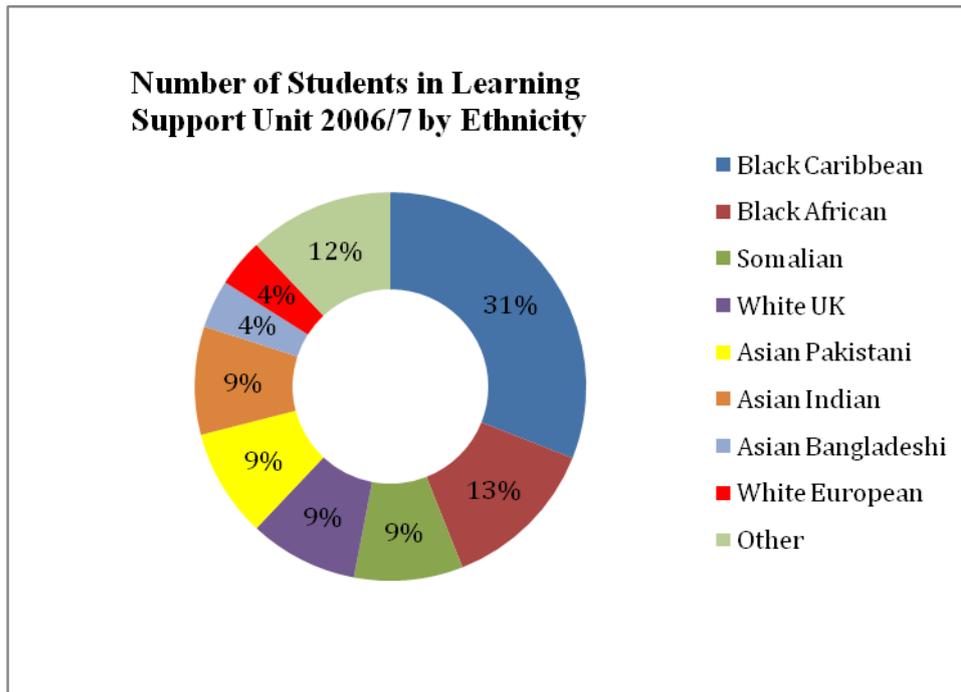
In 2006/7 the largest group of boys (31%) who entered the unit were of African-Caribbean descent, 13% Black African, 9% Somalia, 9%, White British, 4% White European, 4% Asian Bangladeshi, 9% Asian Indians, 9% Pakistani and 12% other. These findings illustrate that even though African-Caribbean boys are a small minority in the school population they appear to be the group with the largest behavioural and emotional problems. Even though they are 'hidden' as a population in the school, they stand out in terms of being placed in the LSU. The reasons why African-Caribbean boys may end up in the LSU are explored further in Chapter Five.

3.24 Figure 9 – Learning outcome of boys who spent time in the LSU

Outcome of Students being in the Learning
Support Unit - 2006/7

Legend:
- Permanent Exclusion
- Expected Reduction in Negative Behaviour
- Improved Attendance to School
- Improvement in Education Achievement
- Improved Behaviour in Classroom
- Re-integration from KS3 PRU
- Never Returned to School
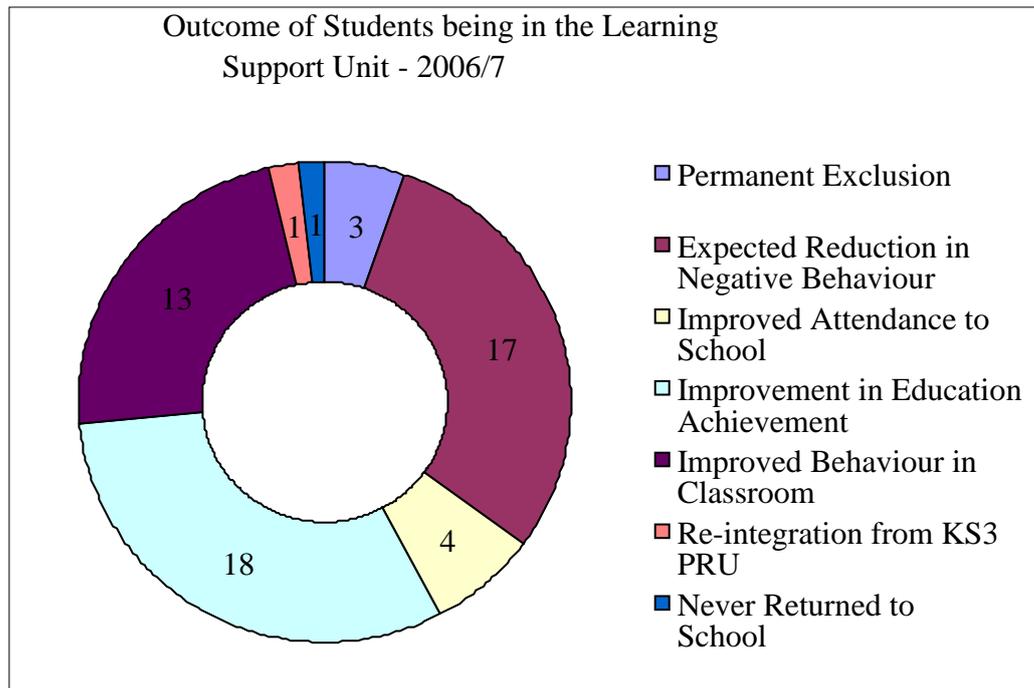
Of the fifty seven boys in the LSU in 2006/7, three were permanently excluded, seventeen achieved expected reduction in negative behaviour, four improved attendances to school, eighteen improved their educational achievement, thirteen improved behaviour in the classroom and one was re-integrated from KS3 to the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). One student never returned to school. On the whole the findings indicate that the majority of boys returned to the normal classroom with improved behaviour and attitude to learning and achieving (ILS database, 2007). The above statistics shows that time in the LSU helps to improve behaviour in most cases but that poor behaviour recurs or can lead to permanent exclusion. Although there appear to be some positive aspects of being in the LSU, attending the unit and staying away from mainstream classrooms denies students the opportunity to access the full curriculum and learn with others. Once again this is in line with the arguments of Coard (1971).

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Of the three boys permanently excluded two were African-Caribbean. Bearing in mind the percentage of African-Caribbean boys at the school, as table 9 shows, this figure is disproportionate (School Learning Support Report, 2007) to the school population. Once again, this will be further explored in Chapter Five.

3.25 Figure 10 - Percentage students by ethnicity permanently excluded from school.

Percentage Students by Ethnicity Permanently Excluded From School in 2006/7

- Black Caribbean
- Other

33%

67%
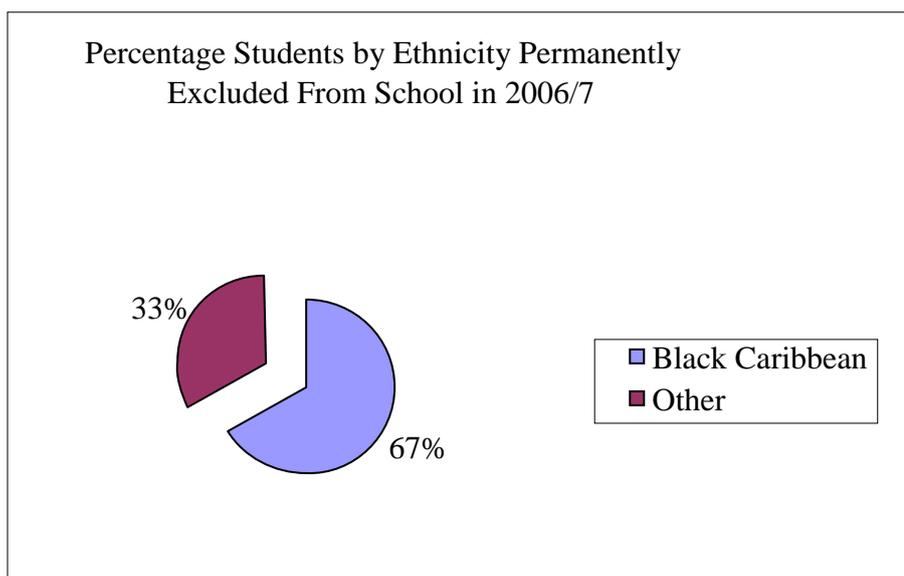
At the start of 2007/8 the LSU took in six boys and one girl with behavioural problems. Three were boys of African-Caribbean descent, one African, one White British, and one Asian. The girl is classified White European. Again in 2007/8, the statistics indicate that African-Caribbean boys had the highest level of behavioural and emotional problems and were more likely to end up in the LSU (School Learning Support Report, 2008).

The above data indicates that even though African-Caribbean boys are a small minority they are more likely to be identified as having behavioural problems and to be excluded from school. Even though the school does its utmost to ensure that students are included in school rather than externally excluded there are still a proportion of students whose behaviour results in them being excluded without having obtained basic academic qualifications such as GCSE.

In many ways the introduction of the LSUs is a step forward. At the time Coard (1971) was writing African-Caribbean boys who had behavioural issues would have been removed from the school very quickly and placed in 'ESN' schools. In contrast the LSU acts as an important intermediary and more often than not behavioural issues are addressed and the boys returned to the mainstream classroom. LSUs however, are not a solution to the difficulties that African-Caribbean boys experience in schools in terms of their more general underachievement. LSUs can only be a short term responses to deal with behavioural issues. The school seeks as part of its behaviour management policy to manage these issues rather than address the real needs of the boys or understand the cultural issues and identities portrayed by them. Chapter Five and Six discuss these issues further.

3.26 The school's policy of inclusive learning to develop students' academic achievement

The school has a history of developing inclusive practices, which enable access to the curriculum through the development of effective intervention strategies and support. There is a student support group made up of key members of staff and representatives from external support agencies which operates as a multi-agency group comprising, Assistant Head of Inclusive Learning as chair, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) the Lead Learning Mentor, the Learning Support Manager, the school's nurse and the learning and progress leaders. This group meets fortnightly to ensure that all students who are not achieving to their full potential can be identified. They ensure that intervention takes place as early as possible to identify the barriers to learning that the student is experiencing. The group also ensures that appropriate co-ordinated strategies are put in place to assist the individual to reach his/her full potential (Huskins, 2000). I found no evidence that this has a particular emphasis on addressing the needs of African-Caribbean boys.

3.27 Personal, social, health education and citizenship (PSHE)

This is a very important area of student development which takes place mainly during tutorial time. The focus is on raising students' social skills and confidence. The programme is designed by the Head of Personal, Health and Social Education (PHSE)

and Citizenship, working closely with the tutor team. It involves outside agencies that have specific expertise. For example the police, the fire service, business partners and nurses. Topics covered include school procedures and processes, dealing with bullies and assertiveness training. A wide range of issues are discussed such as racism/sexism, sex education, drugs and other personal development skills. In the Sixth Form they learn about the process of applying for university, getting support with their application and support and advice in their studies so that they can achieve the necessary qualifications for university. These programmes work in a general sense as they prepare students for society. However, I consider that particular focus needs to be placed on African-Caribbean boys in such programmes as they are more likely not to get into the Sixth Form to do A-level qualification. PSHE is pertinent to the development of the African-Caribbean boys so that it improves their awareness of major issues in society which may affect them, for example gun and knife crimes, gangs and patches and also for their personal health and fitness. These issues are pertinent to all students and recommendations are provided in Chapter Six to justify catering specifically for African-Caribbean boys.

3.28 Mentoring as a strategy to raise achievement of students

Like most other schools the Inner London School provides mentoring and support to individual students. The Learning Mentor programme was introduced in schools through the Government's 'Excellence in Cities' (EiC) policy launched in 1999. The main aim of the policy is to improve educational achievement and address underachievement of students in schools in urban areas. The Learning Mentor Strand of this strategy provides schools with additional resources to assist in reducing barriers to learning by working intensively with students to identify and seek solutions to addressing underachievement.

Some key findings of this strategy are worth emphasizing: that successful implementation of the Learning Mentor role requires that it is clearly defined and explained to other staff in the school. Creating the right atmosphere and culture for mentoring to occur is an important role of the leadership of schools so that what pupils experience is a consistent, high-quality approach to mentoring.

In the school, mentors support any pupil a teacher considers would benefit from additional monitoring and support. Some students have weekly one-to-one sessions with the mentor, initially for half a term, which is then reviewed; others take part in group workshops and activities. The school's Learning Pastoral Leaders have referral forms or sends an email to the Lead Learning Mentor. It is questionable whether the mentoring system is working like it should be because it does not specifically meet the needs of African-Caribbean boys who are referred. This issue is discussed further in Chapter Five.

According to the ILS Handbook (2007) the school implements a targeted and early intervention policy of mentoring for its students. This project is a way of offering pupils the additional support and encouragement needed to achieve set outcomes linked to the five 'Every Child Matters' outcome. This is achieved by supporting achievement, personal development and well-being of students. The Handbook (2007) says that mentors help students to get a sense of direction and to focus on what they want to achieve. These mentors are assigned to all boys with behavioural problems and not specifically targeted at African-Caribbean boys alone. This policy at the school is generic rather than targeted at specific groups. However, African-Caribbean boys would benefit from interventions of this kind even though mentors have not been trained to meet the specific needs of these boys.

3.29 Mentoring of African-Caribbean boys to help raise academic achievement

As a result of the continued over representation of African-Caribbean boys in the LSU because of 'behavioural' problems, in September 2007, as part a strategy to deal with underachievement of African-Caribbean boys, the school started a working group to discuss ways to help African-Caribbean boys through a mentoring programme. The group discussed the best approach to mentoring boys in the school and trained several black teachers to act as mentors to African-Caribbean boys. The aim of this new project was to get African-Caribbean boys to focus on learning, for mentors to listen, guide and support the boys when needed. Whilst this is still in its early stages of development and African-Caribbean boys have not yet started to benefit from the support it could provide. In spite of the potential, in March 2008 this programme was

shelved because of time constraints and other pressures in the school. For example not enough teacher time was available to cater for all the boys. This indicates that the needs of African-Caribbean boys are not the priority of the school. Teachers trained for the delivery of the programme, were only informed through the school's email system that the programme would be abandoned. This was a missed opportunity to start to help the 'hidden' population of African-Caribbean boys.

3.30 Extra-curricular activities sport, music, dance and drama to motivate students and keep them actively involved in school.

The school's philosophy is that it is essential to offer young people a rich and varied diet of extra-curricular activities. Students participate in extra lessons such as mathematics and English to raise their attainment levels. In addition, the school has made sporting activities available to students, providing girls' and boys' football, girls' and boys' cricket, netball, athletics and basketball. It also provides dance, guitar, drumming (kit, dhol, and djembe), steel pans, chess, Latin, science, Year 7 and Year 9 lunchtime club, comics, art, computers and information communication technology, hacky sack, and geography. The issue of extra-curricular activities are discussed in Chapter Five.

The school has recently been successful in external competitions where students have gained credit in events as diverse as cooking, debating, and street arts. These work quite well with all students, but more activities could be focused on the cultural needs of African-Caribbean boys, for example, black history, black cooking, debating issues relating to black arts and cultures. This would help to improve their own cultural awareness of black issues and achievements which would help to raise their self esteem and awareness. As well as students from other cultural groups getting a better understanding of black issues, these boys would also feel that they were the 'lead group' in the activities. In Chapter Five African-Caribbean boys said that they did not have enough extra-curricular activities and that there should be more emphasis placed on black history. However, these sessions are unpaid and teachers do this voluntarily as a gesture of goodwill. Those best qualified to offer these activities may have

missed the opportunity or be reluctant to offer their services. This is also discussed in Chapter Six.

3.31 Enrichment days

In 2006 the school introduced a programme of six enrichment days where activities included; museum visits, multi-sports, citizenship, health studies, mathematics games, science investigations, music, art, Information Communication Technology (ICT), and year group visits. These are generic programmes for all the school's students, but more focus could be placed on the cultural needs of African-Caribbean boys such as black music, black arts, history and culture. This would again broaden the awareness of others as well as giving the African-Caribbean boys the centre of attention in the activity. However, there could be some individualised programmes which could help to cater for the needs of these boys as part of the programme.

3.32 Parental involvement and early intervention in addressing achievements and behavioural issues

The issue of parental involvement is wider than working in partnership with their children's school. This takes many forms including good parenting in the home, the provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent/child discussions and good models of constructive social and educational value. Parental contact with school should be through the sharing of information and participation in school events. This is a key factor in helping to raise pupil's achievement (Desforges and Abouchaar 2003).

According to the School Handbook (2008), Inner London School is committed to developing a partnership for learning between students, their parents and teachers so students can work to their best ability and problems can be dealt with as they occur. All parents are invited to participate in their children's learning. The school also has parents on the Board of Governors who oversee the running and policy making of the school and there is a thriving Parent Support Group that meets regularly to discuss issues affecting the progress of children at the School. The enthusiasm for involvement of parents is developed at academic review days and open evenings. It is

also done through the school's policy of keeping parents informed of their children's progress and behaviour. This ensures that concerns are addressed at an early stage so that intervention can take place as early as possible to avoid issues which may affect children's academic achievement. This sounds perfect but in reality there is a need to work with parents more. This was confirmed by teachers and the headteacher in Chapter Five, 5.5 and 5.6.

Many parents find it difficult to come to school when needed because they are working, or they may be single parents with several roles, for example working, running a home and looking after children. A lot of African-Caribbean boys' are from single parent backgrounds and some of these parents may not be able to participate fully in their child's school. Parents being unable to fully support their children's learning in the way described is only one factor to explain the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. In Chapter Five the headteacher discusses issues surrounding single parent backgrounds and involvement with their child's school in more depth.

The view held by Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) is that while standards of attainment in academic subjects have increased significantly, there remains a significant gap in the relative levels of attainment between children of different social class backgrounds and that this gap is associated with different levels of parental involvement. This is an interesting hypothesis but essentially blames African-Caribbean boys' underachievement on the parents. Most parents want to play an active role in their children's education and it is only a minority of all ethnicities who do not. However, children in schools in lower socio-economic areas are more likely to be from ethnic minorities who have needs beyond the normal curriculum such as EAL and SEN. Funds are directed to EAL and SEN, therefore African-Caribbean boys are seen as a part of the general EAL/SEN problem and they become 'hidden' with their needs not being addressed. These EAL and SEN children take up a lot of the school's resources therefore other students suffer as a result because of lack of funds.

3.33 Community and industry links

The school has developed strong links with the world of work and all students undertake work experience as part of their personal development and practical experience. The School is actively involved in Educational Business Partnerships and the students regularly run Business Enterprise projects. There are employers and community organisations involved in mentoring students. Most students are encouraged to visit business and community organisations to develop greater understanding of work, the local community and to develop practical understanding of businesses. The benefits of this is that students get practical understanding of businesses and how they are run so that they can relate their studies to the real world of business. This encourages students to develop into rounded individuals who understand the world of work-related studies and business.

3.34 Ofsted, the school's development plan for 2007-2010

In 2004 Ofsted graded the school as satisfactory. While this chapter was being completed a more recent inspection took place (May 2008). This showed a marked improvement in the overall performance of the school, with the school receiving an overall grade of 'good with some outstanding features'. However, groups of students identified in this study still continue to underachieve. Some teachers at the ILS argue that the reason why the report is good is because Ofsted's criteria for assessing schools has changed and is now more of an administrative process rather than looking at teaching and learning in any great detail. Although the school has improved its performance in 2008, the needs of African-Caribbean boys are still not fully catered for and they are still a 'hidden' population. Ofsted reports based on brief visits to schools, rarely give specific breakdowns of performance levels of particular ethnic groups. They only look at achievement at school level in terms of teaching and learning.

3.35 Summary

This chapter has provided a summary of the main characteristics of 'Inner London School'. It has looked at the borough in which the school is situated and has compared its performances with other schools in the borough. Most significantly it has examined the position of African-Caribbean boys within the school.

In many respects ILS is not a typical British secondary school. It is a school where there are few white students. However, this does not mean issues of race are not important. It has examined a wide range of the school's policies and practices as well as the make up of the teaching staff. Even though the school spends significant time and resources on addressing educational failure most of these polices are of a general nature and do not cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys and as a result they are 'hidden' and over represented in the LSU.

In Chapter Five, I look at the position of these boys in more detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

As a result of my initial interest in the underachievement of African-Caribbean and after reviewing the literature review in Chapter Two and the IFS (Chapter Three), a series of research questions have been identified for investigation. Before this is attempted, there needs to be a discussion of the various methodologies available and also of the theoretical framework that support them. It is also necessary to identify the most appropriate method of collecting the data. Consideration also has to be given to issues of reliability and validity of data. Ethical issues have been addressed later on in the chapter in subheading 4.46.

This chapter covers:

the purpose of the study

a theoretical perspective of methodology, paradigms and philosophical issues in conducting research studies

the approach adopted and the research design

the pilot study

the actual case study

issues of validity

ethical considerations

4.2 The purpose of the study

As outlined in Chapter One, the aim of the study is firstly to explore African-Caribbean boys' attitudes to learning, to school, to their teachers and to explore the subcultures developed by these boys in a school context. The second aim is to look at teachers' perception of African-Caribbean boys in the school.

Building on the work already done by other contributors in this field such as Sewell (1997), Blair (2001) and Martino and Mayenn (2001) my findings are intended to assist educationalists, teachers, parents and other interested parties in finding ways to motivate these students to learn, as well as giving them a better understanding of the subcultures that African-Caribbean boys develop, and why they behave in the ways that they do, so that new strategies can be identified to help them succeed in secondary education.

4.3 Methodology, paradigms and the underpinning philosophical issues

In this study of African-Caribbean boys it has been important to maintain a consistent and rigorous approach to the research, so that logical conclusions can be arrived at which provide a clear, reliable and objective understanding of the perceptions of these boys and their teachers (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003). Before the research commenced, it was necessary to investigate a wide range of different methodological approaches, (this is discussed later in this chapter) so as to be able to decide the most appropriate way to hear and record what the students and teachers in the Inner London School (ILS) had to say, in the most effective way. For this investigation a case study was selected as the most appropriate methodology.

Careful consideration was also given as to the methods to be used to collect reliable data. These are discussed in more depth later in this chapter. Triangulation is a key approach to data gathering (and therefore, to teacher research). One should gather a wide variety of evidence for the purposes of triangulation (Jacob, 1990; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Wiggins, 1998). Triangulation is also discussed further later in this chapter in 4.44.

As also discussed later in this chapter, I selected questionnaires, interviews and a sociogram as methods to collect the data. As opposed to relying on one single form of evidence or perspective as the basis for findings from the study, multiple forms of evidence are used to check the validity and reliability of the findings (Jacob, 1990; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Maxwell, 1996; Wiggins, 1998). Over-relying on any one form of evidence may impact the validity of the findings. According to Wiggins (1998) by using multiple forms of evidence and perspectives, a truer portrait of the participants can be developed. While the same biases in evidence collection still come into play, because more types of evidence are being used to form one's opinion about the participants, there are more cross checks on the accuracy of the data/decision.

I acknowledge the view held by Hopepfl, (1997) that researchers who use quantitative research employ experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypothetical generalisations. However, the approach adopted in this study is not 'scientific' or experimental but data derived from questionnaires will be of a quantitative and a qualitative nature. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) emphasise the importance of measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables to illustrate the meaning of quantitative research for its use of explaining social problems. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) note that charts and graphs illustrate the results of the research and commentators employ words such as 'variables' 'populations' and 'results' as part of their daily vocabulary. The quantitative research in this study is through the use of questionnaires which has produced data in the form of charts and graphs. The qualitative is in the form of discourse.

As a result of selecting multiple methods of data collection, this study uses both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although the study uses both methods, the approach is primarily an interpretive one. The qualitative data derives from the interviews and the questionnaires from the participant comment boxes. The main data from the questionnaires is of a quantitative nature. The sociogram provides both quantitative and qualitative data. According to Baker (2006), interpretive research is

described as qualitative to distinguish it from the quantitative nature of statistics. In this study quantitative data is in the form of numerical charts and graphs.

The qualitative and quantitative approaches to research adopt a philosophical stance which assumes all research rests upon epistemological and ontological assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the kinds of entity that exist in the world of the participants. Figure 11 below provides an overview of these assumptions.

This research is of a qualitative and quantitative nature and is a case study of an ILS where African-Caribbean boys' underachievement, their attitude to teaching, learning and the subcultures they develop as well as teachers' views of these boys are investigated. Interviews and semi-structured/open questionnaires will be used as the main research tools and also a sociogram.

According to Stake (1995) interpretation is a major part of all research and the function of the qualitative researcher during data gathering is to maintain rigorous interpretation whilst making assumptions from the data collected and arriving at conclusions. However, the researcher must also understand that other interpretations exist and that these need to be attributed to those researchers as a real or generic source too. Although the quantitative method raises the same questions as the qualitative method it differs in the way that it approaches research. The quantitative method assumes a positivist stance and the qualitative an interpretivist as seen in figure 11 below:

4.4 Figure 11 – Is based on Creswell (1998) and provides an overview of the assumptions behind the qualitative and quantitative methods and the questions it raises in relation to this study of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement.

Assumption	Question it Raises	Qualitative Studies Interpretivist	Quantitative Studies Positivist
Ontological Assumptions	Raises questions as to what the nature of reality is.	In qualitative studies reality is subjective and multiple as seen by the participants in the study. For example achievement as seen by African-Caribbean boys and teachers.	In quantitative studies the reality is objective and singular and apart from the researcher – however in this study I was very much a part of the research and although data collect was mainly numerical, the approach adopted was interpretive by nature.
Epistemological Assumptions	Raises questions as to the relationship of the researcher to that being researched. Insider view of knowledge of black boys – viewed critically by black boys	In qualitative studies the researcher interacts with what is being researched. For example I will work with African-Caribbean boys in the Inner London school as a teacher and researcher.	The researcher is independent from that being researched In this study I was involved and passionate about the study and the approach adopted was interpretive in nature providing mainly numerical data.

Axiological Assumptions	Questions what the role of values is in the research	Axiological assumptions acknowledge that qualitative research is value laden and in danger of researcher bias. However, in this study I will be looking at the values of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers and attempting to remain objective at all times and put any biases aside.	Value free and unbiased- I may be seen to be biased because of my passion about the work in relation to the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys
Rhetorical Assumptions	Raises questions as to the nature of language of the research	Qualitative studies have an informal research approach with decisions evolving and have a personal voice. For example this case study of African-Caribbean boys in the ILS In my reporting I will invariably be looking for positive as well as negative responses and will attempt to be critical	Quantitative studies have a formal research approached – based on set definitions and have an interpersonal voice – In this study I have on occasions used 'me' 'I'. Therefore using the personal voice indicates the qualitative dimension to this study. In this respect the study falls into an interpretive

		about what I discover.	stance.
Methodological Assumptions	Raises questions as to the process of research.	Qualitative studies are generally inductive and developed for understanding. It is accurate and reliable through verification. Verification will be done through a colleague and fellow researcher in the school.	Quantitative studies are generally deductive and numerical - They are accurate and reliable and valid and context free. - This study is numerical but with some perceptual data deriving from textual data in the questionnaires.

4.5 The research question for which the study has been designed

As stated in the first chapter the research question is:

How do African-Caribbean boys perceive school and learning and how do the boys' teachers perceive them in their school?

To answer these questions I intend to focus on the following issues:

1. What are African-Caribbean boys' attitudes to school and qualifications?

    a) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of education?

    b) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of learning?

    c) How do African-Caribbean boys view their teachers?

2. What are African-Caribbean boys' views of their contact with peers in relation to? learning?

    a) How is African-Caribbean boys' learning affected by the subcultures they bring to school?

b) Why do these subcultures develop, what function/role do they perform for these boys?

c) What strategies can be developed to create positive and supportive learning cultures for the boys?

3. How do teachers perceive the attitudes of African-Caribbean boys towards learning?

a) How do teachers perceive these boys' subcultures and socialisation in school?

b) What do teachers think are the necessary policy implications for changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving?

By adopting the above approach to the study, a greater understanding of how African-Caribbean boys and their teachers interact in a school context may be obtained.

Having formulated the research question from the IFS (Chapter Three), the Literature Review (Chapter Two), the pilot research Shane and Jason (4.20) and the first interview with Coard (2004) the research tools were designed and the ethical issues which arise from a study like this were addressed. In this respect Bassey (2000) argues that the first stage of the study is to identify the research as an issue, problem or hypothesis, formulate research questions and draw up ethical guidelines. The next stages are to collect and store the data, generate and test a series of analytical statements, identify the outcomes, write the case report and then publish the findings. Bassey (1999) argues that research is about attempting to make a claim to knowledge, or wisdom on the basis of systematic, creative and critical enquiry to try to discover something that was not known before and then communicating it to others. This provides a platform for asking research questions and drawing up ethical guidelines. Ethical issues are discussed later in this chapter.

4.6 Research approach

I share the view held by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) that constructivist (interpretive/naturalistic) researchers attempt to understand the multiple social

constructs of meaning and knowledge by using research methods such as interviews and observations. These methods of data collection allow them to acquire multiple perspectives and the research participants are viewed as helping to construct the reality. The interpretive approach attempts to analyse society through the eyes of its members and seeks to describe how they see the world and adopts what are sometimes called ethnographic methods of research like participant observation and informal interviews. Interpretive approaches are concerned with 'meaning'. Though in terms of numerical data, African-Caribbean boys might be shown to fail at school, in contrast to quantitative approaches, the key issue is how do the boys see it?

The interpretive approach is 'subjective' because it refers to the ways in which people make sense of their world and assign meaning to objects and relations. For qualitative researchers, the social world is always a world of human construction, not a world to be 'discovered' - they see outcomes as a process not a product.

In contrast, the positivist approach usually involves large-scale research with resulting data being of a quantitative nature. This approach often requires the researcher to have a large budget. In contrast, the interpretive approach is generally much smaller in scale, with the 'qualitative' data collected mostly from interviews, observation and some questionnaires. According to Cohen et al (2003) the interpretive researcher begins with individuals and set out to understand their interpretation of the world around them. For this study, it was important to conduct the study with African-Caribbean boys and their teachers in their school settings in order to focus on their underachievement, to find out their views about teaching and learning and subcultures and to hear the views of the boys' teacher. The interpretivist approach was most appropriate.

Research activities generally reflect wider philosophical approaches about the nature of scientific knowledge but they also reflect more practical constraints. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) argue that in endeavours to come to terms with problems of day to day living, we are heavily dependent upon experience and authority and their value in this context should not be underestimated nor should their

respective roles be overlooked in the specialist sphere of research where they provide richly fertile sources of hypotheses and questions about the world.

According to Scott and Usher (1999) the methodological approach chosen to conduct studies is dependent on the participants and the situation of the study. The ontological and methodological assumptions pose some implications because the contrasting ontologism, epistemologies and models of human beings will in turn demand different methods. These are idealistic, ontological stances that give rise to epistemological assumptions which sit on subjectivity. This issue has been taken into consideration in the case study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers. I have conducted the study in the participants own environment and I have tried to separate my role as both a teacher and a researcher, thus remaining objective.

4.7 Research design and research methodology adopted for this study and - case study

Research design

The view held by Yin (2003) is that research design is a "blueprint" of research, dealing with at least four problems: what questions to study, what data is relevant, what data to collect, and how to analyse the results. The view held by this theorist is that the main purpose of the design is to help to avoid situations in which the evidence does not address the initial research questions. In this sense, a research design deals with a logical problem and not a logistical problem.

According to Stake (1995) the design of all research requires conceptual organisation, ideas to express the required understanding, conceptual bridges from what is already known, cognitive structures to guide data gathering and outlines for presenting interpretations to others. In qualitative case studies researchers seek greater depth and understanding of the case and want to appreciate the uniqueness and complexity of social interactions. In a sense all case studies are unique, but this does not mean that the data that they uncover cannot be used or that general conclusions cannot be drawn. In this case study a unique situation is being examined of a group of African-Caribbean boys in the context of their school and of their teachers. This study

examines their attitudes to school, qualification, learning, teachers, contacts with peers and subcultures.

In this study it was necessary to give careful consideration to the design of the case study and to consider the type of data to be collected and how it would be analysed. Yin (2003) states that, for case studies there are five components of a research design which are especially important 1) a study's questions, 2) its proposition if any, 3) its unit(s) of analysis and 4) the logic linking the data to the proposition; and; the criteria for interpreting the findings.

In designing the research I had to identify and formulate the problem from the literature review and the IFS and design a set of questions to help answer this. It was also necessary to design a set of pilot questions to test the hypothesis. According to Yin (2003) defining the research questions is probably the most important step to be taken in a research study so you should allow patience and sufficient time for this task. He contends that the key is to understand the research question has both substance and richness and the questions must be asked as to what the study is about. The literature review and the IFS in this study were instrumental in contributing to the development of the research questions discussed earlier in this chapter.

According to Yin (2003) each proposition directs attention to something that should be examined within the scope of the study. For instance, he argues, assume that your research, on the topic of inter-organisational partnerships, began with the following questions: How and why do organisations collaborate with one another to provide joint services (for example, a manufacturer and a retail store collaborating to sell certain computer products)? The author argue that these "how" and "why" questions, capturing what you are really interested in answering, lead you to the case study as the appropriate strategy in the first place. Nevertheless, these "how and "why" questions do not point to what you should study. Yin (2003) argues that only if you are forced to state some propositions will you move in the right direction.

The view held by Yin (2003) is that linking data to propositions can be done any number of ways, but none has become as precisely defined as the assignment of subjects and treatment conditions in psychological experiments (which is one way

that hypotheses and data are connected in psychology). The theorist contends that one promising approach for case studies is the idea of "pattern matching", whereby several pieces of information from the same case may be related to some theoretical proposition. He states that one type of pattern is time-series pattern. The pattern matching technique is considered as a way of relating the date to the proposition, even though the entire study consists of a single case.

Yin suggests that analysing case study evidence is especially difficult because the strategies and techniques have not been well defined. Familiarity with various tools and manipulative techniques is helpful but every case should strive to have a general analytic strategy. This relies on theoretical propositions, setting up a framework based on rival explanation and developing case descriptions. These strategies can be used in practicing five specific techniques for analysing case studies: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. These techniques present persistent challenges to produce high-quality analyses, which requires investigators to attend to all the evidence, display and present the evidence separate from any interpretation and show adequate concern for exploring alternative interpretations. The different patterns emerging are sufficiently contrasting that the findings can be interpreted in terms of comparing at least two rival propositions.

Yin (2003) states that the unit of analysis is related to the fundamental problem of defining what the case is. It could be a problem that has plagued many (as in the case of the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys) and it was important to ensure that the units were selected carefully in line with the research questions and from a wide range. In this respect the decisions was to select African-Caribbean boys from Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 and their teachers.

The view of Yin (1993) is that simple designs have single units of analysis and more complicated designs can have multiple units embedded within each other. For example a school might be the main single case, but an embedded unit of analysis might be the students in the school. When an embedded design is used, a different research question and instrument is needed for each unit of analysis. Secondly the

researcher needs to decide whether it is a single or multiple case studies. When the focus is on a case study the researcher is dealing mainly with the logic whereby initial hypotheses or research questions can be subjected to empirical testing.

According to Yin (2003) single case studies are a common design for doing case studies, and two variants have been described: those using holistic designs and those using embedded units of analysis. Overall, the single case design is eminently justifiable under certain conditions – when the case represents (a) a critical test of existing theory, (b) a rare or unique circumstance, or (c) a typical case study of the group being investigated or when the case serves as an exploration (d) revelatory or (e) longitudinal purpose. The theorists argue that a major step in designing and conducting a single case is defining the unit of analysis (or the case itself). However, the author argues that within the single case there may still be incorporated subunits of analysis, so that a more complex or embedded design is developed. The unit of analysis is African-Caribbean boys and the embedded units are the teachers of these boys. I would consider that I satisfy a), b), c) and d) of Yin's (2003) criteria.

This study will focus on African-Caribbean boys in Years 10 to 13 and also on their teachers. Yin (1993) states that before entering the field to collect data, the researcher must try to identify the major unit of analysis for the case study and must decide what the case is. For example is it a single person, an institution or a curriculum? Once this is defined, it provides the stability for the case study design. I address these issues below.

4.8 Case studies and Designs

According to both Hakim (2000) and Yin (1993) case studies are useful designs for research on organisations and institutions in both the private and public sectors, which encompass studies of firms, workplaces, and schools. They assert that the exploratory case study is aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures. Yin (2003) argues that every exploration should have some purpose. The design for an exploratory study should state this purpose, as well as the criteria by which an exploration will be

judged successful. They argue that when Christopher Columbus went to Queen Isabella to ask for support of his "exploration" of the New World, he had to have some reasons for asking for three ships. He also had some (mistaken) criteria for recognising the Indies when he actually encountered it. In short the theorist argues that his exploration began with some rationale and direction, even if his initial assumptions might later have been proved wrong. The same degree of rationale and direction should underlie even in an exploration study.

Effective research designs help to ensure that a) empirical results are interpretable with minimum ambiguity and b) interpretation will bear directly on the casual hypothesis of study. A well articulated design serves as a technical or logical plan, guiding data collection and analysis to achieve these two goals. Without such designs, the results of empirical studies may be un-interpretable, regardless of the precision of the instruments or measures used.

A case study is the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not really distinguishable from its context. The view held by Yin (1993) is that the inclusion of the context as a major part of a study creates distinctive technical challenges. Yin (1993) argues that in ensuring the richness of the context of the study there are likely to be more variables (for example, in this study there are students from Year 10, 11, 12 and 13, their teachers and the headteachers, so there are six variables) than data points - items of factual information derived from measurement or research or something already established but measured that could become a framework for future research.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) case studies have a number of advantages which make them attractive to educational researchers. They argue that case study data is strong in reality but difficult to organise whereas other research data is often weak in reality but susceptible to ready organisation. The authors argue that case studies are down to earth and attention holding, in harmony with the reader's own experience and provide a natural basis for generalisation. The particular strength of this methodology lies in its attention to the subtlety and complexity of the case in its own right. The view is that case studies recognise the complexity and embedded

social truths, and that by carefully attending to social situations case studies, can demystify some of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants. They argue that the best case studies are capable of offering some support to alternative interpretations.

4.9 Why the case study methodology was selected

An important factor in choosing the case study method is that, as a teacher in the Inner London School, easy access to African-Caribbean boys, teachers and the headteacher can be obtained, to collect primary data. Also working in the school as a teacher enables me to see the boys and teachers in their natural settings and to observe the way they interact. As a result, further inside knowledge of the institution, the boys and their teachers can be gained. It is recognised that there are disadvantages too. For example an outsider might be more convoluted and may not see any hidden agendas whereas, an insider may see or know things and read more into it than the outsider would. In other words, someone from inside the organisation may not be able to separate their role as a researcher to that of a teacher and 'stand back' enough to remain totally objective. Stake (1995) takes the view that a case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case and most studies stem from the interest in education and social research about people and programs. It is its uniqueness and commonality that we seek to understand. This is pertinent in trying to get to grips with how African-Caribbean boys interact in school both in a social and educational context and in examining how their teachers perceive them.

A further reason for selecting the case study method is that it facilitates the study of the students in their school settings in order to find out about their opinions, beliefs and attitudes. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. The case study method is appropriate, because these contextual conditions are appropriate to the study of African-Caribbean boys. It is important and necessary to hear the voices of these boys within the institutional context because it allows me to find out about their attitude to

learning, school, teachers' and to look at the subcultures they develop within the educational settings in which they learn, play and develop social roles (Yin, 2003).

Case studies have a further strength, because the results are more easily understood by a wide audience as they are frequently written in every day informal language and therefore immediately intelligible and speak for themselves. This methodology captures unique features that might otherwise be lost in larger scale data which may hold the key to understanding the situation. Case studies are also strong on reality and provide insights into other similar situations and cases, thereby assisting interpretation of other similar cases and can be undertaken by a single researcher without needing a full research team. The case study can also embrace and build in anticipated events and uncontrolled variables (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2003).

According to Cohen et al (2003) however, the weaknesses of case studies are that the results may not be generalisable, except where other readers/researchers see their application. Also case studies, compared with larger more quantifiable studies, are not easily open to cross-checking, therefore they may be seen to be selective, biased, personal and subjective and prone to problems of researcher bias, despite attempts made to address reflexivity. Researchers who use case studies invariably accept that there are methodological issues associated with them. This does not however, prevent them from being thorough and reliable.

This study will continue to emphasise the need to examine how the participants in this study see their world, how they perceive their experiences, and how they feel about teachers, learning, qualifications, school and subcultures. The view held by Gomm, Hammersley and Foster (2000) is that what becomes useful understanding is a full and thorough knowledge of the particular, which is not scientific induction but naturalistic generalization. This they argue develops as a product of experience allowing the researcher to derive knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about them and how these things are likely to be later or in other places with which this person is familiar.

As a result of time constraints and funding, the single case study method has been chosen as it is the most cost effective and appropriate methodology. Working in the

school in which this study is based, participants would be more accessible without causing them too much disruption in their natural school world. According to Gomm *et al*. (2000) a case is often thought of as a constituent member of a target population and since single members generally do not reflect whole populations, one case study is seen to be a poor basis for generalization. The case needs to be a person or an enterprise or whatever bounded system is of interest, an institution, a programme, a responsibility. It is distinctive in the first place because it gives great prominence to what is and what is not 'the case' – the boundaries are kept in focus and what is happening is seen as important within those boundaries and is considered vital, determining what the study is about. As this study is about one Inner London school and looks at African-Caribbean boys within it, it is therefore a bounded study of one institution and one group of students and their teachers.

In summary, case studies involve stories, pictures, action research, leading to 'fuzzy' generalisation (Bassey, 1999) and produce outcomes as 'interpretations'. Bassey (1999) is of the view that fuzzy logic is a way of encapsulating the claim to educational knowledge of qualitative empirical research. It is agreed that a fuzzy generalisation cannot compare with the certainty of a scientific generalisation and that the uncertainty of fuzziness of statements which contain qualifiers that are sometimes 'true' contrast with the statistical generalisation of quantitative empirical research which is considered to be true in most cases.

Unlike the experimenter, who manipulates variables to determine the casual significance or the quantitative researcher who asks standardised questions of large, representative samples of individuals, the case study researcher observes the characteristics of an individual unit which could be a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community - with a view to establishing generalisations about the wider population to which the unit belongs. In research generalisation and application are matters of judgment rather than calculation and the task of the case study is to produce an ordered report. Although predictive and retrospective generalisation is also used in case study methodology, as this research is a small study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers, it is not my intention to 'generalise'. However the

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intention will be to attempt to provide pointers that will allow the reader to generalise and develop the arguments about African-Caribbean boys further.

4.10 Benefits and limitations of being a teacher researcher in the institution

The teacher as researcher

In this part of the chapter there is a review of some of the literature on the theory of being a teacher researcher.   This is followed by an analysis of the benefits and limitations that have arisen from carrying out this particular study on African-Caribbean boys.

In the study of African-Caribbean boys I have adopted the role of an insider researcher in the school where I am a teacher. I have adopted Robson's (2000) model in categorising myself as an insider researcher. As a professional I am carrying out a study in my work setting where I am a long standing member of the profession. The view held by Corey (1953) is that, through using research in their own schools, teachers, can make better informed decisions because they have a better understanding of the school and school practices.   This research is a premise of the view of Corey (1953) and derives from the argument that through school based research a better understanding of the ILS can be obtained.

The approach of Cohen et al (2003) has also been adopted in this study. The authors are of the view that a teacher can ask herself or himself: 'what do I see as my problem?' 'What do I see as a possible solution?' How can I evaluate the outcomes and take subsequent action?' The authors also argue that teachers are more likely to change their behaviours and attitudes if they have been involved in the research that demonstrates not only the need for such change but that it can be carried out – the issue of 'ownership' and 'involvement' that finds its parallel in management literature suggests that those closest to the problem are in the best position to identify it and work towards its solution. I agree that it is important to take ownership and to be actively involved in the study of African-Caribbean boys. In Chapter Two, Three and Five, I have demonstrated that I have ownership and involvement in the problem of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and that I was keen to test this and find

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solutions. The approach of Cohen et al (2003) has shaped my work in the ILS as a teacher researcher. I have been able to obtain direct contact with students and teachers in order to identify problems, find solutions and make recommendations. I have described below the main benefits of being a teacher working in the organisation and how this has helped facilitate the smooth process of conducting research.

Anderson (2009) suggests that every day, teachers engage in research and working with students to facilitate learning. They develop lesson plans, evaluate student work, and share outcomes with students, parents, and administrators. Teachers then begin again with new units and lessons to clarify and review concepts as well as develop new understanding. This they argue may not sound much like research - most of us call it teaching. They state that if those activities are described in slightly different language, then it could be said that on a daily basis teachers design and implement a plan of action, observe and analyse outcomes, and modify plans to better meet the needs of students - that is research.

In this study, I am taking a broader view of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers and not looking at lesson plans or evaluating students work but at their attitudes to school, teachers, learning, peers and qualifications. The reason is that this study focuses on the opinions of the boys and their teachers and there has been little research conducted in this area. The research outcome will be made available to students and teachers and it will also be used to make recommendations and provide strategies which will help to bring about changes.

The view of Anderson (2009) is that what distinguishes teacher research from the everyday work of teaching is that teacher research consists of intentional and systematic inquiry in order to improve classroom practice — intentional because the teacher chooses to pursue a particular question; systematic because he/she follows the steps described below. In teacher research, the teacher chooses a question he/she wants to know more about (the research question), plans how to gather useful information (data collection), reflects on what was learnt (data analysis), and determines how content or instruction can be modified to better serve student needs (conclusions or outcomes). The approach of Anderson (2009) is important to my

work. Although this study is systematic and intentional, it is designed to improve the academic chances of African-Caribbean boys and I am researching particular questions to achieve a better understanding. Anderson (2009) is also of the view that teacher research is simply good teaching that is planned and written down in a formal way. In this study, I want to highlight good and poor teaching.

According to Anderson (2009) in teacher research, teachers decide what to study. The research question emerges from a teacher's nagging or curious "I wonder…" about some aspect of classroom life. As a result, teacher research addresses the challenges teachers actually face — not the challenges someone else thinks they face. In addition, teachers participate in the production of knowledge and theory about classroom life. Not only the research questions but the methods and conclusions also come directly from teachers. So much is written about teachers and for teachers, but writing by teachers can be especially valuable — and represents a great professional opportunity for the teacher writing it. Finally, the author argues that the findings of teacher research impact on teacher practice directly, because they stay in the classroom or are shared with the researcher's colleagues. Research findings are not generated to appear in a scholarly publication that takes significant time to filter back to the classroom. Findings can affect practice immediately as teachers make decisions about a strategy's effectiveness for student learning.

4.11 Insider/outsider researcher

According to Robson (2002) the term insider researcher is used to describe projects where the researcher has a direct involvement or connection with the research setting. The view of Denzin and Lincoln (2000) is that such research contrasts with traditional notions of scientifically sound research in which the researcher is an 'objective outsider' studying subjects external to his/herself.

Hubbard and Miller (2003) assert that teacher-researchers bring to their work an important element that outside researchers' lack - a sense of place, a sense of history in the schools in which they work. The theorists go on to argue that because of the presence over time at research sites, teachers bring a depth of awareness to data that outside researchers cannot begin to match.   This, they argue, is because teachers

know their schools, students, colleagues, and the learning agendas. Therefore, teacher research is grounded in this rich source base.

Costley, Elliot and Gibbs (2010) are of the view that an important aspect of work based research is that it is within the researcher's own work practice. The authors assert that in an organisational context, the culture and structure of the work situation and the actions and thinking of colleagues are likely to shape the researcher's work. The view is that when researchers are insiders, they draw upon the shared understandings and trust of their immediate and more removed colleagues with whom normal social interactions of working communities have been developed.

Costley, Elliot and Gibbs (2010) argue that an insider is in a unique position to study a particular issue in depth and with special knowledge about that issue. The view is that the insider has an advantage because they have special knowledge about the organisation and have easy access to people and information that can further enhance that knowledge which allows the researcher to investigate and make changes to practice.

The relationship between working as a teacher and being an insider researcher at the same time can be complex. Willis (1977) in his historic 'Hammertown' study of white working class boys and their attitudes to school did not work as a teacher but did conduct research in the classroom by observing lessons and interviewing students. Even though Willis (1977) was a researcher from outside of the organisation he adopted the role of being 'one of the lads' in his ethnographic study. It could be argued that in this type of situation students did not feel compromised in the way that they might do if they were being researched by a permanent teacher in the school.

In contrast, Shilling (1989) worked as a supply teacher to conduct his research and collect data. Shilling (1989) had the advantage of being both an insider and an outsider. As he explains students did not see him as being a 'proper teacher'. However, Shilling (1989) reports that because he was a supply teacher there were often control problems when he taught these students. This raises questions as to whether students would be serious in their answers to research questions if they were not taking the teacher seriously in lessons.

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However, the benefits of being an insider researcher override that of the outsider. I have described some of my research experiences below.

4.12 Practice – benefits of being a teacher researcher

Conducting research in the ILS as a teacher of business studies had its benefits and limitations. The main strength was that the school had a range of statistical data to provide the context (see IFS in Chapter Three). It might be difficult for an outsider to obtain this information. Also because of my familiarity with the school's policy and my inside knowledge of the school, the subject departments, the staff and the pupils, it is easier to access this information - a researcher from outside of the school would need to spend a great deal of time becoming familiar with these. It allowed easy access to any data about the students in this study. It was also possible to speak directly to the headteacher to obtain authorisation to conduct the study. It was easier to get permission from parents of the participants and to tell the boys what the study was about. Being a teacher in the school provided easier access to teachers to speak about what I was doing and to enlist their help in the study. It would be more difficult for an outside researcher to access these facilities.

4.13 Benefits of insider research in studying the boys

Unlike Shilling (1989), in the ILS school, not only was I a teacher in the classroom but also a teaching leader. Because of the formal relationship I had with students I was able to have greater command in the classroom and a better rapport with them in the study. There needed to be a separation of the role of teacher from that of researcher. It was made clear to students that the research work was a personal study and that they were helping to complete research. The students were reassured again in the documents they signed to agree or not agree to the study.

As an African-Caribbean teacher in particular, at the school there were two potential advantages: i) the boys might see me as culturally similar to them and be more open, ii) they were familiar with me and therefore may have been more trusting and more frank and open in their responses.

4.14 Benefits of insider researcher in studying the teachers

Being a teacher in the school meant that the management was not worried about ethical issues and trusted my judgment. If I had been an outsider wanting to interview these students, there would be issues of regulations, legislation and issues of 'child protection'. This would probably mean having to have a member of staff with me, possibly a senior member of staff which would have been a budget constraint for the school, but it would also have meant the boys might have provided more guarded answers. There would also be issues to do with police checks for outsiders working in schools and would be timely and costly.

Most of the teachers in the school were supportive of the study and respected the work I was doing and they were co-operative. This was because of the professional relationship I already had with them. An outside researcher might not find teachers so trusting and supportive.

Had I been an outsider researcher, it would be difficult to co-ordinate and choose the 'right moment' to approach teachers during their busy teaching day. There would also be issues of timing and access to participants in the study as this would mean disrupting the school day or arranging to meet students outside of teaching times. For example they would only be able to come into the school at specific times arranged by the school. An outside researcher would probably have a much smaller time window to conduct the study which is a clear disadvantage as they would have very limited time in the school.

4.15 Benefits of insider research in studying the headteacher

As an inside teacher researcher I was able to make direct contact with teachers to secure permission to conduct the study. There were no problems with gaining permission because being a teacher in the school did not pose concerns about police checks, trust or ethical issues as would be the case for an outsider. Because I was a teacher in the school, the headteacher was more likely to allow me to interview her, the boys and teachers. The headteacher also trusted my professionalism and did not have concerns about police checks or issues concerning working with children as she

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was aware that I already had these checks conducted as a teacher. She agreed wholeheartedly with me conducting the study and gave her permission to do the survey questionnaires with the boys and teachers and also the interviews with African-Caribbean boys. The headteacher may have been secure in the knowledge that I would not misuse information or breach trust or professional relationship with students. The headteacher was also made aware that the school would not be named in the study and therefore may have been more honest in the answers she provided at the interview. Being an insider researcher, I simply could email or contact the school secretary to make an appointment, whereas an outsider researcher would find this more difficult.

A key benefit of being a teacher in the school was that I could also organise the follow up interview with the headteacher and ask her to go through the transcript for a true and accurate account. I also had easy access, to show permission letters to students and parents for approval and to get signed approval to conduct the study. An outsider would have found this difficult (although not impossible) to arrange.

4.16 Limitations of being a teacher researcher

Despite what I have argued above, as a teacher/researcher collecting data, there is a possibility that some pupils and staff participants could be less frank in their responses. Had I been an outsider researcher the participants would know that I would leave the school and not have any more contact with me. As an insider researcher they would see me in the classroom, in the corridor and at staff meetings and might worry that the information they provided could be misused against them or make them feel compromised. Trust becomes very important at this stage and issues of ethics are also important considerations in order to ensure fairness to participants. The skilful researcher must ensure that participants are kept informed, know the scope of the research and have freely consented to take part. It is essential to ensure that participants are respected and treated as individuals who have a choice and that the role of the teacher is separated from that of the role of the researcher, to avoid students fearing that they may be affected in school by what they have said to the

researcher. As a teacher/researcher it is essential to avoid conflict between teacher/student and researcher/student relationships (Munn and Drever, 1999).

One issue arising from being an insider researcher is the problem of validity. According to Kvale (1995) with insider research, the concept of validity becomes increasingly problematic because of the researcher's involvement with the subject of study. Kvale (1995) asserts that positivist researchers may argue that, because of this involvement, the researcher is no longer `objective' and their results may be distorted. Thus, from this essentially correspondence view of validity – whereby `valid' or `true' knowledge corresponds to an objective world – the validity of insider research is threatened. On the other hand, neo-positivists and anti-positivists claim that, because complete objectivity is impossible the researcher's biases threaten validity or trustworthiness.

The view held by Kvale (1995) is that the researcher's relationships with subjects may have a negative impact on the subject's behaviour such that they behave in a way that they would not normally and that the researcher's tacit knowledge could lead them to misinterpret data or make false assumptions. There is also a possibility that the researcher's inside knowledge leads them to make assumptions and miss potentially important information. The researcher's politics, loyalties, or hidden agendas may lead to misrepresentations and their moral/political/cultural standpoints could lead them to subconsciously distort data,

I have taken action throughout the study to avoid bias and in Chapter Five and Chapter Six I have addressed the issue of validity and have provided feedback on the actions which I adopted to ensure that the data collected was valid and trustworthy. See 4.44 and 4.45 in this chapter and Chapter Six, 6.2 and appendix number 14.

4.17 Boys – limitations

Being a teacher researcher within the organisation, some students were worried about the outcome of what they said in the study and whether it would affect their results. However, it was explained to them clearly what the research was for, and the

confidentiality of the data. For example I assured them that their names would not be mentioned in the study. Students only participated in the study with the consent of their parents, the school and the students themselves. (See section on ethical consideration in this chapter in 4.46). There may have been some students however, who were never really convinced.

As I was a teacher researcher some boys may have felt uneasy and not have been totally honest in their responses because of the conflicting roles. I only taught one of the boys in the sample. Other boys that I did not teach asked if they could be part of the study because of my presence and role in the school. Teaching the one boy on the other hand, could be a limitation because I have a direct professional relationship with him in the classroom in that I also assess his progress. He may be worried about bias. For example he could be worried that participating in the study would affect how I mark and grade his work which would negatively affect his overall results.

4.18 Teachers - limitations

Being a teacher researcher in the school also has its limitations. Some teachers did not want to participate in the study. This could have been because they knew me and felt that I would misuse information given. This may not occur had I been an outsider. A few teachers questioned me as to what the study was about and in the end some did not see the value in the work that I was doing and ten declined.

4.19 Headteacher - limitations

A major concern of being an insider researcher was that the perception that the headteacher had about whether the study would affect my work and she wanted to ensure that I was able to separate my role as a teacher in the school from that of researcher. Had I been an outsider the issue of workload would not arise. She did not express any concerns to me other than getting permission from the participants and their parents and the teachers to do the work.

Summary – teacher as researcher

This section provided arguments about the benefits and limitation of being a teacher researcher. It contrasted the benefits and limitations of insider researcher to that of the outsider. It has also looked at the general theoretical perspective on school based research as well as the attempts of other researchers such as Willis (1977) and Shilling (1989). It has also examined the benefits and limitations for different groups in the study at the school.

This section has shown that there are many benefits to being an insider teacher researcher. However, it has also highlighted the limitations or hindrances to conducting such as study.

4.20 Piloting the study

It was also important to test the research methods before the data was collected. By conducting a small pilot study with Year 10 and 11 students and their teachers I was able to find out their initial views about the research problem which contributed in formulating the research questions. As a result the interview questions and questionnaires for students and their teachers were altered so that they focused on the research questions and were made significantly easier for students to understand. For example when conducting the pilot study the students regularly asked for an explanation of what was meant. This prompted me to ensure that questions were clear and easy to understand. Being a teacher in the school made it possible to collect a large amount of data which an outsider may have had difficulty with. The role of teacher as a researcher is discussed above in this chapter. Students of the ages in the sample are, it could be argued, more likely to feel ill at ease if they are confronted by an outside researcher asking them questions about school.

Based on the findings from the IFS (Chapter Three) conducted in the ILS and as a result of reviewing the literature on African-Caribbean boys, (Chapter Two) the main research question was identified with four sub questions to be answered. This was then followed by the designing of the data collection methods.

Some of the data collected as part of a pilot study has formed the foundation of this study and has contributed to selecting the data collection methods most appropriate for this research. The pilot study consisted of interviews with two thirteen year old African-Caribbean boys Jason and Shane (pseudo). These two boys were open; light hearted and humorous when they were being interviewed. The boys were selected because they were African-Caribbean, attending secondary school in an Inner London borough similar to that of the ILS. Jason and Shane were also similar to the boys in the actual sample. They were typical African-Caribbean teenagers of the same age group as those in the intended study.

At this time a first interview was also conducted with Bernard Coard the author of 'How the West Indian Child is Made Educationally Subnormal in the British School System' (1971). As mentioned in Chapter Two, Coard was one of the first writers to study the problems faced by the West Indian child in British schools and still enjoys almost celebrity status because of his study. It was important to ask him about the problem of African-Caribbean underachievement today. A pilot study was also conducted with some teachers using a questionnaire and with some students in ILS, to help formulate the research questions that would eventually be used to help formulate the actual questionnaires and interview questions. The pilot study interviews with Jason, Shane and Bernard Coard were also used to formulate questions for the interview with the headteacher of ILS to try to gain an understanding of her views on the problem of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement. The insights gained from conducting these pilot interviews, enabled me to ask a set of pertinent and relevant questions directly related to the research problems identified. I will refer to these when I discuss questionnaire design later in this chapter.

4.21 Research context

As discussed in Chapter Three, the ILS is a community school which has specialist status in mathematics and computing. The school caters for boys and girls in the 11 to 18 age range. It has a population of 1451 students and is situated in a diverse multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith area of London. As already noted, fifty nine percent of all students are of Asian background, mostly of Indian decent. It is important to

emphasise this as it has been argued in Chapter Three that African-Caribbean boys are a 'hidden' population in the school. Fifteen percent of the school's population is of African-Caribbean origin.

As stated in Chapter Three, there are approximately two hundred and twenty five students who have refugee status on the school register. The percentage of students for whom English is not their first language is high – 79 per cent. Some of these students have, over a period of time, become confident users of English but a significant number are at an early stage of language acquisition and many others are in need of further support to help them master English as a fully effective means of communication so that they can make the most of learning (Ofsted, 2004).

Returning to Chapter Three, the ILS Census (2006) shows that the school has an African-Caribbean population of 217 students of which 63 are African-Caribbean boys from Year 7 to Year 13.

Semi structured interviews were conducted with 14 of these boys. They were chosen randomly from those who participated in the questionnaire and represented different years. The difference in numbers reflects the fact that in Year 10 and Year 11 there are more boys than in Years 12 and 13 as discussed in Chapter Three. **(See Appendix one – interview questions – African-Caribbean boys).**

4.22 Participants in the study: the students

This study investigates a sample of the school's population (African-Caribbean boys) in Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 and also a sample of teachers and the headteacher to find out about the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. This will be investigated from different perspectives in order to get a good understanding of their view as participants in the study context.

4.23 Research population and rationale for choosing years 10, 11, 12 and 13 for the study

This reason for focusing on boys in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 is because they are the students who are preparing for GCSE or taking GCSE, A-level and vocational route

intermediate and A-level equivalent examinations. These students were selected at random from the different years.

The rationale for selecting Year 10 and 11 students was because they are in the GCSE year and the research could show how motivated they are to do well and achieve good examination results. The Year 12 students are entering the first year of their A-levels or vocational route studies and it would be interesting to find out what it is they aspired to do, what expectation they have of the school. The Year 13 students are approaching their final year of studies and either looking forward to going to work or university. The study helped to establish how many were going on to further study, the type of study, and how many wanted to go directly into employment.

4.24 African-Caribbean Student participants for the interviews to establish representation

The participants in the study consist of five boys from Year 10, five from Year 11, two from Year 12 and two from Year 13.

In deciding on the sample population for the study it was necessary to look at the number of African-Caribbean boys in the school in order to choose a sample. It was identified that in Year 12 and 13 there were ten boys from African-Caribbean background. Therefore the sample was reduced for these two years to reflect the population

African-Caribbean boys were chosen from Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 to participate in the study. Of the 63 African-Caribbean boys selected for the questionnaires, I wanted to have a minimum of 40. The sample chosen made up 34% of the African Caribbean students in the school. Even though some boys refused to participate, I still had the required number. See below:

4.25 Figure 12 – The number of boys selected to participate in the questionnaire and interviews were as follows:

Questionnaires:

Year 10 No. of Boys	Year 11 No. of Boys	Year 12 No. of Boys	Year 13 No. of Boys
15	15	5	5

Interviews:

Year 10 No. of Boys	Year 11 No. of Boys	Year 12 No. of Boys	Year 13 No. of Boys
5	5	2	2

It is important to add here that only four boys in Year 12 returned the questionnaires and two in Year 13. All Year 10 and 11 boys returned the questionnaires.

4.26 The rationale for selecting teachers as participants for this study

The rationale for using teachers was to find out why they thought African-Caribbean boys underachieve and how they felt these students could be motivated to learn and to achieve better results. It was also important to see whether teachers thought new education policies could help.

4.27 Rationale for selecting the headteacher as a participant in the study

The rationale for choosing the headteacher was to look at the phenomena of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement from her perspective and to investigate present and future polices or strategies to combat underachievement across the school with particular emphasis on African-Caribbean boys.

4.28 Questionnaire - teachers

In the interview with Coard (2006) he argued that quality teaching and teachers who do not suffer from inbuilt racism are an essential resource in British schools; therefore it is vital to hear teachers' views so as to make a difference in educating African-Caribbean boys.

An important part of this study, therefore, was to illicit teachers' perception about students' attitudes to school, learning, subcultures, why they think the boys underachieve and what they think the school and the government can do? The feedback from the pilot study with students, Jason and Shane (pseudo) also assisted in the design and development of the questionnaires. Shane and Jason gave their views on how they saw school and teachers and how they saw learning and socialising with friends.

There are approximately 100 teachers in the Inner London School and a sample was chosen to reflect that population. One third of teachers were randomly selected at the upper site of the school. An ethnic breakdown of all teachers at ILS is provided in Chapter Three.

Questionnaires were given to 30 teachers in the upper school.

The questionnaire method was used to collect data because this method is structured and an efficient use of time. This method allows anonymity for the respondents and increases the possibility of a high return and questions can be standardized. In designing the questionnaire consideration needed to be given to the purpose of the study. Only the most appropriate and relevant questions were included, for example those that would help to find out more about the problem of African-Caribbean boys underachievement (Munn and Drever, 1999).

Teachers were able to take the questionnaires away and complete it in their own time. As they were not asked to give their names on the questionnaire it was hoped that they would be honest and give their true opinions, which would reduce concerns regarding reliability and validity. The questionnaires were to be collected from participants or

left at a central point where it was easy to collect. **(See Appendix five – sample questionnaires – teachers).**

4.29 Designing the questionnaire:

Initially questions were chosen with multiple choice answers, rating scales and open ended and closed questions with additional comment lines allowing participants the opportunity to have a personal input. This method provided a set of qualitative and quantitative data about the opinions, perceptions and attitudes of participants. When the pilot study began, it soon became clear that some participants needed more clarification because they found some of the questions confusing. It was therefore necessary to review and redesign the questionnaire for boys and for teachers so as to focus on the research questions. The questionnaire was designed to look attractive but brief and easy to understand and reasonably quick to complete (Munn and Drever, 1999)

The literature review, IFS and pilot study assisted in drafting the questions. It was also necessary to give careful consideration to the number of questions to ask. Munn and Drever (1999) argue that drafting the questions is an enjoyable, interesting and frustrating process. However in doing small scale research colleagues are readily available to argue the merits of the wording of the questions.

Consideration also had to be given to the number of questions to ask to keep the design simple and easy to understand. I also had to ensure that I was keeping the questions focused on the research question.

It was necessary to ensure that the right level of language was used for both students and teachers and statements were made clear and unambiguous and that questions were kept simple and easy to understand.

The first question was an open question and was designed to be easy and straightforward for participant to answer without feeling intimidated. I also ended the questionnaire with a comment box for participants to add any additional information

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The design and layout of the questions was made straightforward and attractive, including title, name of the person to whom they should be returned and a deadline date for returning completed questionnaires.

4.30 Designing the semi-structured interviews

In designing the semi-structured interview it was important to consider what Drever (1995) says: "nothing is more important than having a good interview schedule". The theorist argues that the starting point should be the research question which should guide the research and the types of information required.

The preamble was designed to remind the participants of what was agreed and to tell them what the interview is about. This was to allow any misunderstanding to be addressed (Drever, 1995).

It was decided that the first question should be a rapport building question, giving participants the opportunity to relax. Thereafter the interview was designed to find out African-Caribbean boys' views about school, learning, teachers and subcultures and to find out the headteacher's view about this.

Drever (1995) suggests that questions should be ordered in sequence. I gave very careful consideration to how each question was to be sequenced to ensure the flow during the interview and to make it easy for participants to understand. The final question was an "open sweeper" (Drever, 1995) that was to ensure that participant got the chance to answer further questions or to seek clarification to questions or add anything else. I also liaised with participants (students), and the headteacher, parents and Brunel University in order to address issues of ethics and to conform to the university's policies in terms of appropriate designs of questions. It was also necessary to plan a schedule of interviews which would not affect participants learning. Consideration was also given to how participants would be treated if they decided they did not want to participate to ensure fairness and ethical issues.

Careful consideration was given to the wording of the interview in order to ensure that questions were clear, contained appropriate language and avoided leading the respondents. Interviews would take place in a private and comfortable area for the

participants where there would be no disturbance. Interviews would be tape recorded (with the consent of the participant) to ensure reliable and accurate recording of data.

4.31 Methods of data collection

Yin (1993) suggests that the richness of data means that the study cannot rely on a single data collection method but will need to use multiple sources of evidence and that even if all the relevant variables are quantitative, distinctive strategies will be needed for research design and for analysis.

For the purpose of this study a questionnaire survey was chosen to measure the attitude of the participants to school and socialising. This involved looking at the research question to draw up a set of statements to establish students' attitude to teaching, learning and the subcultures they develop and also teachers' views of African-Caribbean boys in the school. It was necessary to ensure that the statements had a logical link to the research problem and that they were systematic and clearly structured so that the participants could understand

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) suggest that: if enough data is collected without having preconceived notions about the significance and orientation we are able to maintain objectivity, therefore inherent relationships from the case are able to emerge. I disagree with this view as it is sometimes difficult to maintain objectivity as a researcher or to remain dispassionate about a subject of real interest to us, as could be the case in my study of African-Caribbean boys. It is recognised that research in social science is open to accusations of subjectivity. However, arguably, using a scientific approach to research can go a long way in eliminating bias as data can be measured and tested. Steps have been taken to separate my position as a researcher from my professional employment as a teacher in the school. It was also explained to the students and teachers in the sample, the purpose of the study and how the data collected from them was being used for research purposes and not something directly related to the running of the school.

It was important that my personal beliefs and commitments were kept separate from my role as researcher and for me to have ensured that some of my own pre-conceived ideas did not slip through in the study and where they did, to be prepared to acknowledge and discuss these.

Though the data collected will be mostly qualitative, there will be some data of a numerical nature. For example, the results from the attitudinal survey will be analysed in the form of text, numbers, charts and graphs using a software package designed for this purpose. An excel spreadsheet package will be used to display the results in graphs and charts.

Bassey (2000) argues that enough data needs to be collected so that the researcher is able to explore important features of the case and create plausible interpretation of what is found in order to test for trustworthiness of these interpretations. This enables the researcher to construct a powerful argument or story relating to relevant research in the literature and to convey convincingly to an audience this argument or story, whilst providing an audit trail which allows other researchers to validate or challenge the findings and construct alternative arguments. Issues of validity will be discussed further later in this study.

4.32 Actual study – data collection methods used

Data was collected using three methods: interviews, questionnaires and a sociogram. According to Bassey (2000), empirical research involves asking questions of people, observing events and then describing artefacts. The researcher uses inbuilt senses to collect data and their intelligence to ensure that it is done systematically by trustworthy procedures. The data is then critically analysed and wisely interpreted, allowing fair conclusions to be made. The ontological assumptions in this study ask questions as to reality as seen by the participants and is subjective. The epistemological stance raises questions as to my relationship as a researcher, to what is being researched and the interactions with the participants.

4.33 Sociogram

A sociogram is a graphic representation of social links that a person has. The sociogram is also known as a friendship chart and it allows teachers to analyse the social makeup of a class and can be drawn on the basis of many different criteria, for example, students' social relationships, their channels of influence and lines of communication.   In other words, the sociogram became a chart or tool to measure the boys' social space (Sherman, 2005).

The sociogram was used as a prelude and warm up exercise leading to the interviews with African-Caribbean boys. This method is intended to make the boys feel relaxed and also to get information about their socialisation, important people in their lives and to get an idea of what their parents did. The sociogram is discussed further later in this chapter. The sociogram was always intended as a 'warm up' to the interviews and it was a way of making the boys feel relaxed for the interviews.

4.34 Interviews

Interviews played a central role in this research. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) the qualitative researcher moves away from the pre-structured, standardized form of interviews, towards open ended interviews because this allows respondents to project their own ways of defining the world. It also permits flexibility of sequence of discussions and allows the participants to raise and pursue issues and matters that may not have been in a pre devised schedule.

The interview data collection method is the most appropriate for a study of how participants see their world. It also allows the flexibility of discussion. It was easy to arrange the interviews and, arrange for a room to conduct the interview to ensure the privacy of the participant and allow an environment where they felt comfortable and could speak freely without feeling intimidated or threatened. (Cohen et al, 2003).

Focus group and observation methods were also considered, but deemed insufficient because of the need to hear the points of view of the students in order to try to understand their opinions. The focus group interview relies on group responses to a topic given by the researcher and although this method saves time, data can be

jumbled and difficult to transcribe and may not totally focus on the research question. Observation also has particular limitations as a research method. In the case study methodology chosen it would not be possible to get all of the participants in the context of their school settings to observe them as each student would be in their individual lessons. Also observing a class in this situation where they are students from other racial background would not facilitate fully the focus on African-Caribbean boys which this study is about. (Sapford and Jupp, 1998).

In order to conduct interviews with students, a set of pre-defined questions, were drawn up which related to the research problem. This enabled me to ask supplementary questions during the interview, to prompt students and encourage them to talk about the topic. The literature review and the pilot interview with Jason and Shane was used as a springboard to get a greater understanding of African-Caribbean boys' attitudes to education, beliefs, their social interactions and their subcultures in school. This helped in finalising the exact questions to ask the African-Caribbean boys in the interviews. This approach appeared to be justified by the fact that the boys talked freely about what they thought of school and qualification and how they behaved in the classroom and in the playground. They were very willing participants and freely expressed their views without any hesitation.

Once the interview questions were drawn up I tested them on two African-Caribbean boys in Year 10 in the Inner London School - their answers were used to refine the questions so that they could be more easily understood and more interesting for the respondents.

According to Bell (2000) the major advantage of the interview is its adaptability. A skilful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings, which the questionnaire can never do. Drever (1995) is of the view that the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to gather factual information about people's circumstances, collect statements of their preferences and opinions, and explore in some depth their experiences, motivations and reasoning. According to Drever (1995) interviews provide high quality data. Drever (1995) argues that most people who are approached properly will agree to be interviewed and the researcher

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can expect participants to treat the interview seriously and answer all the questions. Interviews also allow the researcher to explain any ambiguity, correct any misunderstandings about the questions and allow them to ask for clarification when they are uncertain about the answers given. Thus we can expect a 'high quality' data output from all interviewees for all of the questions.

This method of data collection suits the case study methodology, as it allows direct access to the participants under one location. The researcher can easily arrange interviews to gather the data and create a comfortable interview environment - where the participants can be prompted, asked questions, and provide more detailed explanations.

4.35 Analysing data

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) once data from the interview have been collected, the next stage involves analysing it, often by some form of coding or scoring. Using qualitative data analysis is almost inevitably interpretive hence the data analysis is less of a completely accurate representation as in the quantitative, positivist tradition but more of a reflexive, reactive interaction between the researcher and the de-contextualised data that is already an interpretation of a social encounter.

The view held by Cohen et al (2003) is that the greatest tension in data analysis is between maintaining a sense of the holism of the interview and the tendency for analysis to atomize and fragment the data – to separate them into constituent elements, thereby losing the synergy of the whole. The view is that in the interview the whole is often greater than the sum of the parts. The view is that there are several stages in analysis for example: generating natural units of meaning; classifying, categorising and ordering these units of meaning; structuring the narratives to describe the interview contents; and interpreting the interview data

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest thirteen tactics for generating meaning from transcribed and interview data. The tactics which have been adopted for this study are to ensure that the frequency of occurrences of ideas, themes, pieces of data, words

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were grouped, noting patterns and which stemmed from repeated patterns; clustering and setting into categories, and building a logical chain of events.

4.36 Using the sociogram

The sociogram was used as a prelude to, and a warm up exercise for the interviews. In the exercise, the boys were asked to write about their leisure time, their parents' work background and who the closest people in their lives were. As well as helping to find out a bit more about the boys, how they socialise and their social class background, the sociogram helped them to feel more relaxed and ready for the interviews. **(See Appendix two - sample sociogram form)**

4.37 Designing the interview questions for the headteacher

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the pilot interviews with Jason and Shane, the Year 10 ILS boys and the interview with Coard (2004), helped to identify and construct a series of questions for the interview with the headteacher. In formulating these questions, careful consideration was given to the issues identified in Chapter Two and Three. It was important to hear from the headteacher and record her views about the problem of underachievement amongst African-Caribbean boys. The interview would be the most appropriate way of doing this, as it would enable the use of a set of formulated questions, and provide an opportunity to ask sub-questions as they arose. **(See Appendix three – interview questions – headteacher)**

4.38 Questionnaire – students

In addition to structured interviews, questionnaires were used with African-Caribbean boys and teachers. These were in the form of an attitudinal survey. There are three major types of attitudinal scales which are Likert, Thurstone or the Gutman scale (Kumar, 1999). For this study the Likert scale was chosen because this method is based on the assumption that each statement has equal attitudinal value. In other words the same importance or weight (Kumar, 1999). This type of scale illustrates the strengths of one individual's answers towards an issue in relation to another. In constructing the scale careful consideration was given to classifying the questions. I

used a positive, negative and neutral/no comment scale to study the sample of African-Caribbean boys in order to come to valid and reliable conclusions. The surveys provided a scale of the boys' responses to statements. For example, one on the scale represented strongly disagree, two disagree, three neither agree nor disagree, four agree and five strongly agree. The scale allowed me to determine each boy's viewpoint in terms of their rating for each question. Consideration also had to be given as to how the study could be best expressed - categorically or numerically. For the purpose of this study a 5 point scoring (1 to 5) was used. In this type of research method the respondent is asked to select the statement best suited to them. For example, that they agree, strongly agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. If a respondent ticks strongly agrees this indicates a more positive attitude than a respondent who ticks agree. The person with the most positives responses will get the highest score (5) and the person with the most negative responses will score the lowest (1). (Kumar, 1999). **(Appendix number four – sample questionnaire – students).**

The results of the study would later be tabulated to determine what students did in their leisure time, their parents' background, their friendship groups and identifying significant others in their lives. This information would be used to graphically plot boys' responses. This is important because the literature indicated that students' social class background, social groups, attitudes and subcultures are significant factors in the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys (see Chapter Two).

4.39 Analytic method chosen for the numerical aspect of the questionnaires

Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2003) state that: 'the prepared researcher will need to consider the mode of data analysis to be employed.' For this study the SPSS (2006) software package was used to analyse both sets of questionnaires. This software package is an appropriate method for analysing the students' and teachers' responses from the questionnaire as it provides an appropriate and efficient means of analysis to compare responses between boys from all years.

With the help of Doctor Ashley of Brunel University, I was able to use an SPSS package to input and analyse the data from the study of African-Caribbean boys. She showed me how to code and input the data, how to access the tool bars and menus and how to begin to use the package. The package provided a powerful statistical analysis and data management system in a graphical environment using simple dialogue boxes to do most of the work by clicking the mouse.

SPSS is menu driven and has a variety of pull down menus available. Doctor Ashley also helped me in the analysis of the data which I was then able to put into themes. The training enabled me to define the variables and to label them on the work sheet for each Year group.

The SPSS provided an analysis which provided the range of responses for each questions, the mead and standard deviation for each question. It also provided a frequency table of percentage responses for each question and a cumulative percentage for each question. With this data I was able to use the EXCEL spreadsheet to convert the analysis into charts.

4.40 Analysing questionnaires

The questionnaires were analysed using the SPSS software. The analysis from the SPSS software was entered into an EXCEL spreadsheet to illustrate the finding in the form of simple frequency distribution with percentages of response or narratives. This was to show the data graphically and in a simplified form.

4.41 Qualitative analysis of the questionnaires

I used content analysis to interpret the qualitative aspect of the student and teacher questionnaires. The questionnaires were photocopied and using scissors and glue the responses were put into themes and patterns as they emerged. This process assisted in grouping the themes. An excel spreadsheet was used to put the data into themes for each year group looking for patterns and themes which made it easier to look for such patterns and themes.

4.42 Analysis of semi-structured interviews

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) once data from the interview have been collected, the next stage involves analysing it, often by some form of coding or scoring. The interviews were taped and later transcribed and coded line by line. I then attempted to put the data into themes, looking for frequencies or occurrences of ideas and themes whilst noting these patterns and themes. The data was put into clusters and summarised by year groups, teachers and the Headteacher.

4.43 Analysing the sociogram

The sociogram was analysed using content analysis. This involved putting the data into themes and patterns and looking for frequency of occurrences and later summarising the findings.

4.44 Triangulation as a means of validation

Triangulation is a technique to improve validity and reliability of qualitative research. This is achieved by using more than one data collection method in the study of human behaviour (Burns, 2000; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) "triangulation is the process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation". Triangulation in this study is achieved in this study through the perceptions of the boys, teachers and the headteacher as well as following up on questionnaires and interviews with boys. Repeatability is not applicable in this research as I am using a case study of a particular school through the use of questionnaires and interviews and not observation. In this study the African-Caribbean boys view point was investigated to help understand their underachievement. Scott and Usher (1999) also assert that the use of different forms of data can increase the credibility of the qualitative study. Triangulation essentially means combining two or more views, approaches or methods in an investigation in order to get a more accurate picture of the phenomena (Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins 2005).

The case study in this research used data collection methods such as questionnaires, a sociogram and interviews. Yin (2009) is of the view that case study methodology can

combine different research methods and gives opportunities for triangulation, which in turn can increase its validity and reliability.

According to Creswell (1994) the idea of combining qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study owes much to linking paradigms to methods and combining research designs in all phases of a study. He goes on to argue that the concept of triangulation was based on the assumption that any bias inherent in particular data sources, investigator, and method would be neutralised when used in conjunction with other data sources, investigators and methods. I do not agree. Bias may be heightened because of the different views of participants. Triangulation, in the classic sense is a way of seeking convergence of results and is complimentary and overlapping in assisting to find out the different facets of a phenomenon. I do not agree with this because triangulation may not necessarily assist in establishing emerging facets of the phenomenon and a further method of validation such as respondent validation may be necessary to validate. For example the headteacher or students can look at the transcript of interviews to confirm what was said. Mason (2004) argues the logic of triangulation means different research methods or data sources can be used to investigate the same phenomena; and in the process the efficacy or validity can be judged about the different methods and sources by comparing the products. Mason (2004) goes on to say that if you measure the same phenomenon from different angles or positions, you will get an accurate reading or measurement of it. According to Mason (2004) this can be problematic because, different methods and data sources are likely to throw light on different social or ontological phenomena or research questions (or provide different versions or levels of answer). The author also suggests this implies that in the social world there is one, objective and knowable social reality, and all that social researchers have to do, is to work out what are the most appropriate triangulation points to measure it by. Mason (2004) asserts "this is a view with which many researchers in the qualitative tradition would of course take issue" (p.190).

The view of Mason (2004) is that it is not straight forward to use the products of different methods or sources to corroborate each other. Triangulation in this sense is likely to become very confused about matters of validity because there will be more

than one data set which may seem to be pointing in different directions, Mason (2004) asserts though, that the concept of triangulation – conceived as multiple methods – encourages the researcher to approach their research questions from different angles, and to explore their intellectual puzzle in a rounded and multi-faceted way. This she argues does enhance validly in the sense that it suggests that social phenomena are a little more than one-dimensional and that a study has accordingly managed to grasp more than one of those dimensions. To conclude, Mason (2004) suggests that the general message is that you should not expect the use of multiple methods or triangulation to provide an easy or well trodden route to the demonstration of validity of methods.

The view held by Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) is that natural science findings are validated by their repeated replication. The authors assert that if a second investigator cannot replicate the findings when they repeat the experiment then the original results are questioned. The view is that if the research cannot be replicated then the original results are deemed flawed and invalid. According to Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) in social research there are two problems. First there is no widespread agreement about whether there can be any procedures that ensure research and analysis produces the right answers. Secondly, the problem with qualitative research is that replication is seldom possible and in most cases does not make much sense. This is because respondents in qualitative research will rarely say or do exactly the same thing twice. Therefore whether results have been successfully replicated is always a matter of interpretation. I have discussed the steps taken to validate the findings of this study in Chapter Six.

4.45 Validity and reliability

The view held by Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) is that validity refers to the idea that the account truly reflects what actually happened, or put simply that it is accurate.

According to Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) reliability means that the results of the analysis would also be obtained if different researchers repeated the research and analysis on another occasion. The respondents or participants involved may be

different from those in the original research though they will be similar and be doing similar things.

As researchers it is important to persuade audiences that the findings of enquiries are worth taking account of. Consideration also needs to be given to what it is that makes the study believable or trustworthy and the kinds of arguments that have been used. Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really what they appear to be about. Whereas generalisation refers to the extent to which the findings of the enquiry are more generally applicable outside the specifics of the situations studied.

It is important for example, to establish trustworthiness in fixed design research and ask questions such as: Have we done a good, thorough and honest job? We must also consider whether we have tried to explore, describe or explain in an open and unbiased way or whether we are more concerned with delivering the required answers or selecting the evidence to support a case. If these questions cannot be answered then in effect our research is worthless. Validity refers to the accuracy of a result. We need to ask question as to whether or not the findings really correspond to or adequately capture the actual state of affairs and whether any relationships established in the findings are true or due to the effect of something else. 'Generalisability' refers to the extent to which the findings of the enquiry are more generally applicable; for example, in other contexts, situations or times, or to persons other than those directly involved.

Robson (2003) says: Reliability is the consistency or stability of a measure. For example if we were to repeat the exercise, whether we would get the same results. Reliability is the stability or consistency with which we measure something; for example, how are we going to assess educational achievement? It might include a formal achievement test administered at the end of the primary stage of schooling. Unless a measure is reliable, it cannot be valid and may not be sufficient to ensure validity. Unreliability may have various causes one of which is participant error. For example, pupils' performance might fluctuate widely from occasion to occasion on a more or less random basis. This could be due to tiredness from too many late nights which could produce changes for different times of the day, or pre menstrual tension

in girls or hay fever across genders. There are strategies which can be used to ensure that these kinds of fluctuations do not influence the findings, for example not testing participants during hay fever seasonal times. The actions of the participants can also affect validity i.e. pupils may seek to please the teacher knowing the importance of good results.

In contrast, with construct validity, one looks for what seems reasonable, (fact validity) or looks at possible links between scores on a test and then measure pupils actual educational achievement in their later life.

As situations change and because students move on, the most reliable form of validation used for this study was to use a teacher colleague, Dr. Allen to cross check the questions to the responses given by students in the study. This individual was chosen because he has worked closely with me as a teacher and had knowledge of what the work was about, the process I had gone through and the instruments used in the study; therefore his validation confirmed the reliability of the study. The issues relating to validity in the study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers are discussed in Chapter Five.

The view held by Yin (2009) is that external validity is concerned with the ability to apply the findings in general. This means whether the results are generalisable beyond the immediate case. Validity refers to the quality of measurement. The view is that by using the same methodology repetitively the results of the study are the same and thus the research instrument is considered to be reliable and therefore consistency or repeatability can be maintained. (Bassey, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Mishler, 2000). For example Lincoln and Guba (1985) argues that trustworthiness is distinct from the standard experimental precedent of trying to show validity, soundness and significance and that the aim of trustworthiness is to support the argument that findings of the study are worth paying attention to. Mishler (2000) asserts that the idea of discovering truth through measures of reliability and validity is replaced by the idea of trustworthiness. In Chapter Six I discuss validity in relation to the study of African-Caribbean boys.

It is important to decide how to test or maximise the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of a study. Bassey (1999) suggests that the researcher asks themselves eight questions as a checklist to demonstrate trustworthiness of the research

1) Has there been prolonged relative engagement with the data source.
   In this study this is so, the study was conducted with groups of year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students, their teachers and the headteacher over a period of one year.

2) Has there been persistent observation of emerging issues?
   − in this study observation was not used as a method of collecting data. However the emerging issues in this study is related to policies, racism, underachievement and gender gap.

3) Has raw data been adequately checked with their sources?
   The boys and their teacher had the opportunity to check the interview transcripts to verify them.

4) Has there been sufficient triangulation of raw data leading to analytical statements?
   The issue of triangulation was discussed earlier in this section in 4.44.

5) Has the working hypothesis, or evaluation or emerging story been systematically tested against the analytical statement?
   The working hypothesis and emerging statements was tested against the responses/answers of the respondents.

6) Has a critical friend thoroughly tried to challenge the findings?
   I have discussed the contribution of my critical friend in Chapter Six and in the appendices.
   Also both my supervisors continually reviewed the research at different stages and provided constructive criticism.

7) Is the account of the research sufficiently detailed to give the reader confidence in the findings? In Chapter Five and Six, I have provided a full account of the study to give readers confidence in the study.

8) Does the case record provide an adequate audit trail

Taped interviews, transcripts, questionnaire analysis and summaries are available.

4.46 Ethical issues in conducting research with participants

According to Burgess (1989) all human research has ethnical dimensions; decision-oriented human research most of all. In case study, which features social life in all its particularity, ethical issues are inescapable.

As researchers we have a moral duty to ensure that the basic ethical principles governing data collection are observed and to ensure that no harm is caused to participants as a result of them taking part in the study. For example an interview may have to be abandoned if a student feels uncomfortable, uneasy or intimidated and wants to pull out (Oppenheim, 2000).

It is also the duty of the researcher to ensure that participants are treated fairly and to ensure their right to confidentiality, anonymity and care is honoured at all times. As a researcher it was essential to recognise and understand that participants' have rights. In conducting research with children or minors the researcher must seek the permission of the school, parents/guardians as well as the child. Participants also have a right to view any data written about them if they wish to and it must be recognised that some participants may want to be identified in such reports (BERA, 2004). In this study I worked closely with the BERA (2004) ethical guidelines in order to ensure that participants were treated fairly and with care.

As part of Brunel University ethical guidelines, I completed and submitted an application to the ethics council of the university outlining the nature of the research, the participants involved, the type of research they would participate in and the ethical consideration I had given to the study. This application was approved by the university.

In planning the data collection consideration was given as to how to get the prior written consent of participants'. Gaining access is an important first stage in planning any educational research. Such negotiation with participants is normally underpinned by the key principle of informed consent, and the negotiation of ground rules for

access to and the use of data. These include confidentiality and publication agreements (Simon and Usher, 2000). Letters containing the details of the study together with consent forms were given to each participant well in advance of the study so they could sign to signify their agreement to participate in the research**.**

Participants in this study were reassured that they would remain anonymous and the information which they provided would be treated with the strictest confidence. All participants were treated with utmost respect and their wishes honoured at all times. In any study using human participants the researcher needs to give careful consideration of the human rights issues and must treat participants with care, respect and allow them the privacy and confidentiality they deserve. According to Cohen *et al.,* (2003) ethical issues may stem from the kinds of problem investigated by social scientists and the methods they use to obtain valid and reliable data. They state that much social research necessitates obtaining the consent and co-operation of subjects who are to assist in investigations and of significant others in the institutions or organisations providing the research facilities.

The British Education Research Association (2004) states that: 'the confidential and anonymous treatment of participants' data is considered the norm for the conduct of research. Researchers must recognise the participants' entitlement to privacy and must accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, unless they or their guardians or responsible others, specifically willingly waive that right. In such circumstances it is in the researchers' interest to have such a waiver in writing. Conversely the researcher must also recognise participants' rights to be identified with any publication of their original work or other inputs, if they so wish. In some contexts it will be the expectation of participants to be so identified.

As well as obtaining approval from the Brunel ethics board it was also necessary to obtain the permission of the headteacher of the ILS to conduct the study and I also obtained consent from the parents of the boys.

A consent letter was designed for each group of participants together with a consent form for them to complete giving their agreement to participate in the study**. (See**

Appendix six – sample consent forms, students, teachers, headteacher and parents)

Letters were sent home to each parent of a child who had agreed to participate in the study so as to ensure that their parents knew what the research was about, what role their child took in participating in the study and requesting written consent for their child to participate in the study.

The view taken by Walford (1991) is that 'access in the sense of trust only develops slowly in research, as it does in any relationship'. Therefore it is vital in these situations that, right from the outset, participants know what is expected of them, what the research is about and its purposes so that they have a choice as to whether to participate or not. Participants who willingly participate are more likely to be open and honest and develop a workable relationship with the researcher.

Watt (1999) argues that teachers doing small scale research studies for their own interest have many matters to think about such as the ethical issues and relationships with others involved in the study and these are not always obvious. The view is that ethical issues in education research should be given a high profile and that there are common ethical questions we have to face as researchers. This is especially so, in the case of the teacher researcher where it is vital to share with other researchers the obligation to recognize and meet ethical standards at every stage of the work.

As a teacher/researcher in the school it was vital to explain the purpose of the study in full to all participants and also explain the implications of the findings. The consent of all participants was obtained.

During the research it was necessary to ensure that participants did not feel anxious, worried, depressed, puzzled or intimidated in any way by the research and that their studies or work were not unduly disrupted.

4.47 Summary

This chapter provides a discussion of philosophical issues in educational research and the methodological approach adopted. There is also a review of the data collection

methods used in the study and a comprehensive breakdown of the participants. Finally, ethical issues about what needs to be taken into consideration in using human participants have been addressed.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

To address the research questions, a case study of one Inner London Secondary School was used. In addition, documentation about school policies and procedures were investigated as discussed in Chapter Three. The study comprised of questionnaires with 15 students from Year 10, 15 students from Year 11 and 5 students from both Year 12 and Year 13. The student interviews consisted of 5 boys from Year 10, 5 from Year 11, 2 from Year 12 and 2 from Year 13. A questionnaire was used to survey 30 teachers randomly (but it did not cater for gender or race which would have been beneficial in hindsight). Only 26 teachers returned the questionnaire. An interview with the headteacher of the school was also conducted and documents and policy statements of the school were used to inform the study.

It is necessary here to restate the research question: How do African-Caribbean boys perceive school and learning?

Questions asked of the African-Caribbean boys are grouped in two sections and around two particular themes later in this chapter.

1. What are African-Caribbean boys' attitudes to school and qualifications?

   a) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of education?

   b) How do African-Caribbean boys view the importance of learning?

   c) How do African-Caribbean boys view their teachers?

2. What are African-Caribbean boys' views of their contact with peers in relation to learning?

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a) How are African-Caribbean boys affected by subcultures?

b) Why do these subcultures develop and what function/role do they perform for these boys?

c) What strategies can be developed to create positive and supportive learning cultures for the boys?

Research questions for teachers have also been divided into sub-sections later on in this chapter.

3. How do teachers perceive the attitudes of African-Caribbean boys towards learning?

a) How do teachers perceive these boys subcultures and socialisation in school?

b) What do teachers think are the necessary policy implications for changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving?

5.2 The responses to the research questions

Transcripts and analysis of the student and teacher responses are included below. Additional material is included in the appendices

5.2a Figure 13 – Students responses to questions about learning and qualifications

Table Key - 1 = strongly disagree 2= disagree 3 neither Agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Question No	Year 10 (15)	Year11 (15)	Year 12 (4)	Year 13 (2)
	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
	(Responses Below in %)	(Responses Below in %)	(Responses Below in %)	(Responses Below in %)

Q1 It is important to go to university and get a degree	- - - 73 27	- - 13 47 40	- 25 - - 75	- - - - 100
Q2 I don't need university qualifications	13 34 20 13 20	13 13 20 54 -	25 25 - 50 -	- 50 - 50 -
Q3 It's Cool to learn	- - - 80 20	- - - 40 60	- - - 50 50	- - - 100 -

5.2b Figures 14, 15, 16 and 17 - Analysis of responses to question 1 - It is important to go to university and get a degree

Year 10 - It is Important to go to University and get a Degree

27% Strongly Agree
73% Agree

Year 11 - It is Important to go to University and get a Degree

Neither Agree nor Disagree 13%
Agree 47%
Strongly Agree 40%

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Year 12 - It is Important to go to University and get a Degree

Disagree 25%
Strongly Agree 75%

Year 13 - It is Important to go to University and get a Degree
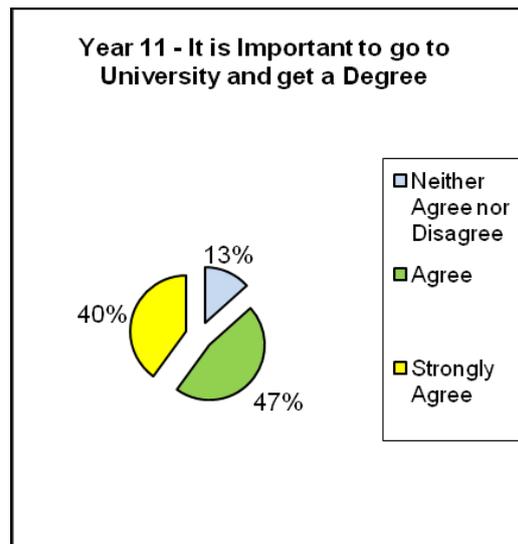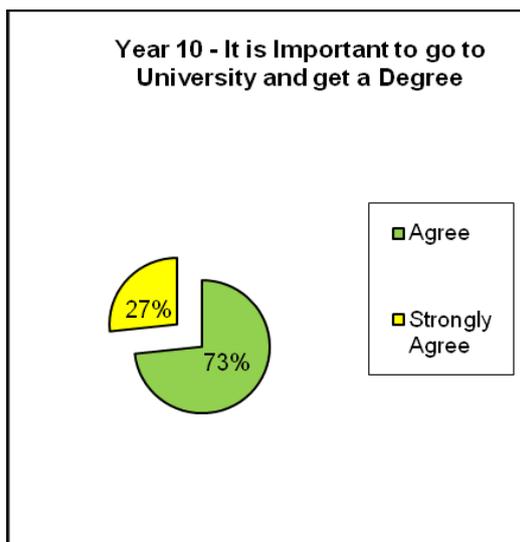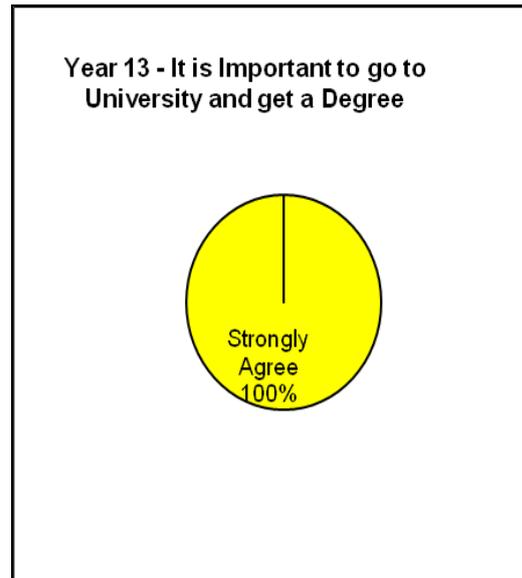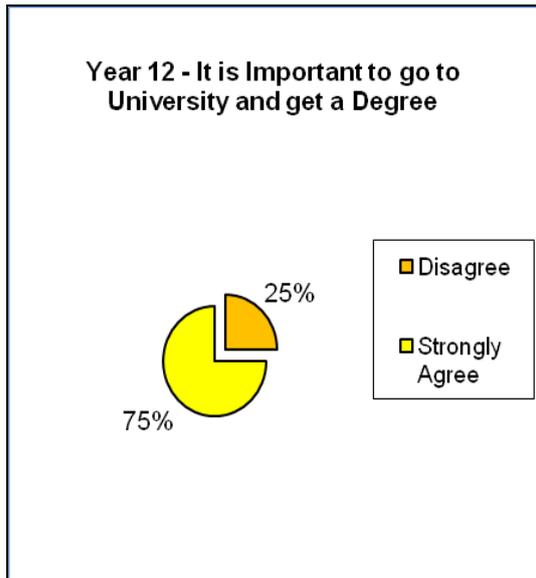
Strongly Agree 100%

In Year 10, 73% of boys agreed that it was important to go to university and get a degree and 27% strongly agreed. The findings of this cohort indicated that most felt it was important to have university qualifications and they aspired to go to university. Some considered it was a meaningful thing to do. In Year 11, 47% of students agreed and 40% strongly agreed. However, 13% neither agreed nor disagreed. In Year 11, a small proportion of boys neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and it could be that these boys did not want to form a view or that they did not think university was important. It could also be, that this group of boys felt they would not achieve the necessary qualification to get to university, they were too young to know, or had no idea what they wanted to do. In Year 11 one student was not sure about university now, but was focusing on college and another student said university was not important and he could get a good job with GCSEs.

In Year 12, 25% of the boys disagreed that university qualifications were important. It could be that the boys in Year 12 were struggling with studies and lacked confidence because they had not done well in GCSE examinations, were not focused on work, or did not have the ability to do A-level subjects required for further education. However, 75% agreed that a university qualification was important. In Year 13 all the boys strongly agreed that university qualifications were important. This is likely to be because these boys had succeeded in reaching the second year of their A-level courses.

The findings are that most boys in all years considered university qualification important and necessary.

5.2c Question number 2 – I don't need university qualifications. I can make money by working or doing other things.

In Year 10 33% of boys agreed with the statement which indicated that they felt they did not need university qualifications. However, 47% disagreed and strongly disagreed which indicates that they thought university qualifications were important. 20% of boys neither agreed nor disagreed. This indicated that fewer than 33% of boys felt that they needed university qualifications but there were those who considered them not important. Most boys saw value in university qualifications. It could be that the one third of boys who agreed with the statement may still have not considered the value of qualifications at their age and it is at this stage they may need career guidance and advice from the ILS's career services.

In Year 11, 54% agreed with the statement but 26% said they needed university qualifications and 20% neither agreed nor disagreed – a larger percentage than in Year 10. However, it is pertinent to add that one student said "no university qualifications = post man lols" (pay). **(See Appendix seven).** What this boy is saying is that the more you learn, the more you earn. This is a good concept. ("Postman lols" is poor pay). The 54% of Year 11 boys who considered that they did not need university qualification may not be able to relate university qualification to the world of work and career and may also need career advice and guidance at this crucial stage of their education when they are taking GCSE examination and having to think about A-level or other study options. Three students said that university qualifications were not needed but others said that qualifications were good if you got them and it was important to educate yourself. One said "if you want grief in your life then qualification was not important". What this boy is saying is that he had to learn and get qualifications if he wanted a secure future where he did not have to worry and if he did not have a career he would suffer from little or no money. Some students felt that at this stage of life, qualifications were not important and university was not for everyone. However in summary 50% of boys considered qualifications as essential.

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However, in Year 10 and Year 11 a need has been identified for career advice and guidance for some boys.

As figure thirteen above shows, a number of boys said they needed university qualifications but equally a large number said they did not. Some boys understood and expressed their views about the consequences of not having a good education and gaining qualifications. One Year 11 boy said he could make money by working but he did add that qualifications were good. In the interview this boy said that he was struggling with school work and maybe felt he could not achieve qualifications for this reason. The findings indicated that Year 10 and 11 students felt qualifications were important and some said it gave them chances for jobs and something to fall back on. In Year 12, 50% of boys disagreed with the statement which meant that they did not think they needed university qualifications. However, 25% disagreed and strongly disagreed and 25% agreed that they did not need university qualifications. As the table indicates a large number of boys wanted university qualifications and saw value in them.

In Year 13 boys were evenly divided about the importance of a degree with 50% strongly agreeing that they did not need university qualification and 50% agreeing that they did. The findings indicated that half the Year 13 students said they needed qualifications. However in Year 12 the majority of boys agreed that they did not need qualifications. In the interview, some Year 12 boys said that they struggled in school and that they felt let down by teachers. The contradictions between boys in Year 10 and 11 and Year 13 could simply be that by the time they got to Year 12 they began to think that they could not achieve qualifications to go to university and at this stage they would naturally disassociate themselves as they had little chances of going to university. This is in line with the findings in Chapter Three (the IFS) where it was found that there were few African-Caribbean boys in the Sixth Form.

5.2d Figures 18, 19, 20 and 21 - Analysis of responses to question 3 - It's cool to learn and achieve a good secondary education such as GCSE's and A-levels.
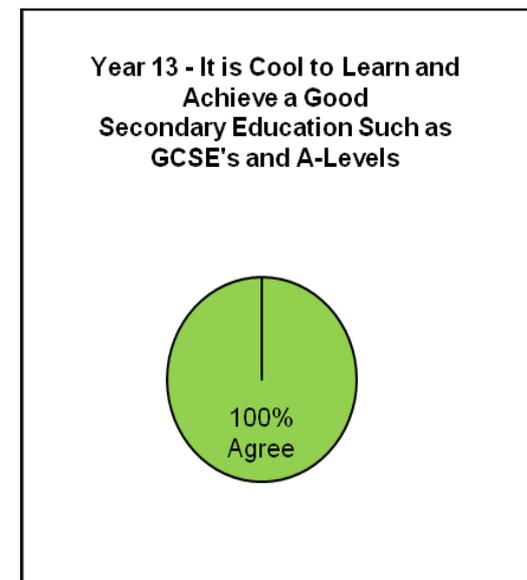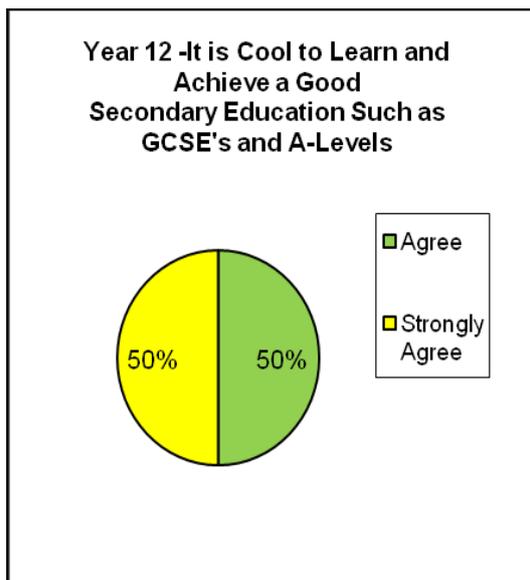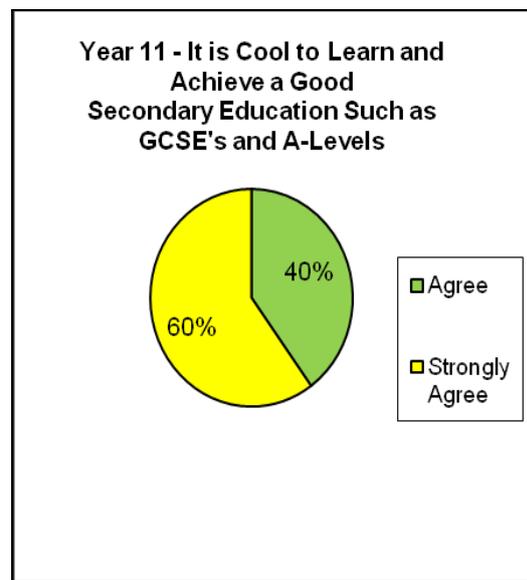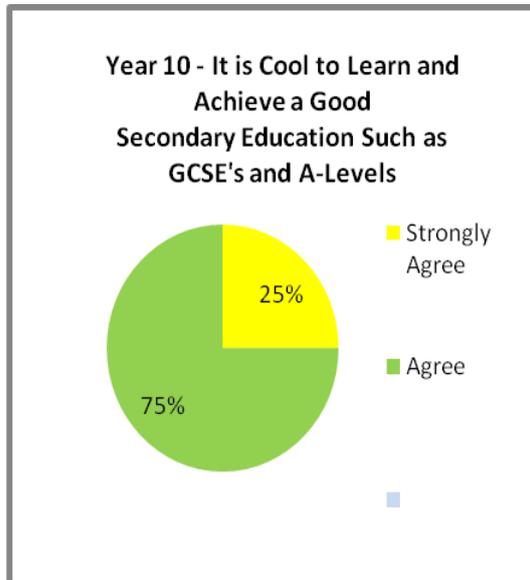
The findings reveal that all the African-Caribbean boys across all year groups felt it was good (cool) to learn and get a good secondary education. One student in Year 10 considered it good to learn and was working towards achieving good results. In my view this student was focused on learning because he understood the value of education.

All of the students in Year 11, who responded to this statement, said it was good to learn. They made comments such as: "must achieve and get qualifications", "the ones who think it is cool to mess around are the ones that will fail at the end of the day". **(See Appendix eight).** Another said "it builds you up for what's to come" such as a great life". Another student also commented that it was the right track for a good job and added, that he loved school and did not care what others thought but would do what he wanted to and learn and that GCSE and advanced level (A-level) qualifications were crucial for the future. In Year 12 a student said it was only cool to learn if teachers gave the right information. This student may have found school difficult and felt let down by his teachers. This could be because of inconsistent or inefficient teaching. In Year 13 the view was that learning was good and necessary for a good job. On the whole, most students saw the value of education and its importance to their future careers. They related good qualification to good jobs and enriched lives.

The evidence shows that most boys thought it was good to learn and most of them aspired to do well. Also, most boys made positive responses relating to their learning and personal development. In Year 10 a student said that he wanted to take education 'further than the average black man'. This student recognised that most black males do not do well and he wanted to be different. One boy said that boys must train themselves to be more focused. One boy said he had learnt to take responsibility for his learning.

The additional comments boys made in relation to question three showed that some boys, despite wanting to learn, did find school boring and felt it did not meet their needs. A student in Year 11 said teachers should make lessons more interesting and understand that everyone has different needs. Another said that school should be a place of fun and learning. However, there was one student who felt he got value from education and that education was going well for him because he was getting support from friends and family who pushed him to achieve a high grade. Another student said the education he was getting was reasonable and his teachers were fine. However, one felt that his education was fine until he met two black teachers who were "bald heads" and "wears wigs" in Year 10. (These are two teachers who are

considered disciplinarians). The view of one student was that teachers helped to a satisfactory level and that the problem was the mentality of students towards learning. One boy said he enjoyed the mixture of cultures in school and found everyone helpful. Students said they got on with some teachers, they found some difficult but enjoyed the diverse cultures in school but saw some teachers as unreasonable (including some African-Caribbean teachers). Boys wanted more interesting lessons. Some boys had mixed views about the education they were getting but in general felt they got value from teaching. They appeared to like school and some did get support from their teachers but some needed help and did not get it from teachers and used outside networking for support.

Some boys also blamed themselves for not achieving. However, some blamed their teachers or felt school was boring and did not relate to society enough. In Year 12 a student said that it was better if you were willing to learn or if the teacher let you or "cut you some slack" (meaning they are too hard). Another student felt that "school could be made more interesting and offer more relevant lessons such as the dangers on the streets - and I don't mean crossing the road". He felt that teachers should relate school to the outside world, to make it a better place for all races. He also felt that there was too much segregation in his community with African-Caribbean people in one area, Asians in another and whites somewhere else - and that racism should be a thing of the past. If the government would not help, it was the responsibility of schools and there should be fewer suspensions because this made students worse when they returned to school. This boy is saying that the school does not cater for diversity nor teach children how to mix as one community and boys should not be excluded from schools as they get exposed to danger on the streets.

The response from some boys indicated a need for PSHE and Citizenship which related to what is happening in society and the dangers on the street. Some boys were against exclusion and at least one (Year 12) felt it exposed them to the dangers on the streets.

In Year 13 one boy said that education should be enjoyable and students needed to take time to 'be good' so they would get better and achieve. This boy said "I am taking responsibility for my own learning which is a key to my success".

5.2e Figure 22 - Students responses to the questions about friends and peer groups

Table Key - 1 = strongly disagree 2= disagree 3 neither Agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Question No	Year 10 (15) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 11 (15) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 12 (4) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 13 (2) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)
Q4 Pressures from friends stop boys from learning	- 20 27 33 20	- 13 20 27 40	- - 100 - -	- - 50 50 -
Q5 It is cool to be part of a group such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist crew	- 20 34 33 13	6 7 60 27 -	- 25 25 50 -	- 50 50 - - -
Q6 It is cool to be wedged or tonked (i.e. have a six pack muscles) and wear designer clothes	- 7 40 27 26	- - 47 40 13	- - 50 25 25	- - 50 50 -

5.2f Analysis of responses to question 4 – Pressures from friends stop boys from learning?

A large proportion of boys in Year 10 (53%) and Year 11 (67%) said they were affected by friends who stopped them learning. The 20% of Year 10 boys who disagreed and the 13% in Year 11 may have been more resilient or disciplined and could move freely between friends and school work. Boys seem to change as they got

to Year 12 with all of the participants responding as 'neither agreed nor disagreed'. (There were no boys across all year groups who strongly disagreed). The evidence suggested that when boys got into Year 12 and 13, they were less affected by friends. In Year 13, 50% of boys agreed and 50% neither agreed nor disagreed.

In Year 10 most boys said that their friends stopped them learning but one said that "this happened only if you allowed it". From what boys said it transpired that most were affected by their friends but some go on to learn anyway. Some boys said this was because they were able to separate out friendship and learning

Most Year 11 students got benefits from hanging around with friends, but one said that "I joined in or got picked on", and another said that "friends stop girls learning too". The view of two students was that it depended on who you hung around with and that they followed friends around for status. Another said "there is safety in hanging around with friends", (what he is implying is that on his own he may be attacked on the streets).

The view of one Year 11 boy was that "you either choose to go with the crowd or we can dare to be different and go it alone by working hard for a good future." This boy is saying that he had a choice to learn at school and not go with what the crowd does. **(See Appendix nine).** One said that friends could be a bad influence but another that "you must be your own person" and that his friends did not stop him learning. In Year 12 one student was of the view that his friends did not stop him learning. One Year 13 boy said that some friends could affect your learning but they could also help you to learn. The boys in Year 12 and 13 responded positively because they said they had become more mature, better focused on their learning and wanted to do well.

The findings indicate that boys in Year 10 and Year 11 were affected by pressures from friends. It was also found that boys in Year 12 and 13 were more focused in comparison with boys in Years 10 and 11, because they were more concerned about getting qualifications for university. However, these are the few boys who made it to the Sixth Form. This is discussed in Chapter Three in more detail.

Most students in Year 10 said they got distracted by other students in class, but also joined in. One said "other students talk and distract me, but the classroom is sometimes too hot and when it got like that students could not be quiet". Another student said "I talk a lot in maths and because of noise I can't concentrate". Another said that some teachers stopped him from learning. The findings indicated that most boys in Year 10 and Year 11 were distracted by peers who stop them learning but one boy in Year 10 said: "dem man won't give you money when you don't do well". He added "I don't care if other students don't talk to me". What this boy is saying is that he is going to study regardless of whether he is ostracised or not as his friends will not provide money for him when he does not do well. One said "I aint no geek but I want to do well". The findings are that some Year 10 and Year 11 students did not allow their peers to distract them from learning and they wanted to do well, even though one admitted he did not want to be seen to be a geek. But quite a few were distracted.

One student in Year 11 said "my friends distract me which affects my learning and the school environment is not good". He also said "students are false and pretend to be 'hard' but it is just a show". Another admitted that he stopped himself from learning because he got bored and also talked to peers in lessons. One student admitted that other students stopped him learning as they talked to him and distracted him from learning. He said he did not want to be one of the lads and wanted to learn. He added that when his head was in his books, other students followed - but also admitted that disruption from peers stopped him learning and that it was sometimes hard to keep up the study routine and remain motivated even when friends tried to distract him he remained focused. The findings reveal that students in Year 11 had different views about this. Year 11 students either felt that friends affected their learning or that some pretended to be hard but it was just a show and they stopped themselves from learning and distracted other students. In this respect their underachievement had nothing to do with being 'hidden' or needs not being met. But in fact some were 'their own worst enemies'.

In Year 12 boys said their friends sometimes stopped them from learning. One Year 13 student said that he sometimes stopped himself from learning. He said "not having a study area in the school and other poor facilities stop me and my friends from

learning". The other student said that he did not take on peer group pressures and said "I have a strong will power, but some of my friends think it is cool not to learn". The findings indicate that most Year 10, 11 and 12 boys put themselves and their friends first before their studies and that these boys were not disciplined nor did they accept responsibility for putting their own study first. The findings recurred throughout the year groups. From what the boys have said, it appears that there are issues of self-discipline here with some boys being anti-learning because they valued the social space they develop with friends in school. The younger boys were more dependent on group allegiances. Whereas the on-task serious scholars in Years 12 and 13 still shared positive thoughts about group allegiances despite being set apart and in a minority. It is only in Year 13 however that boys really took responsibility for their learning but were still distracted.

5.2g Figures 23, 24, 25 and 26 - Analysis of responses to question five - It is cool to be part of a group (such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist crew).

Year 12 - It is Cool to be Part of a Group Such as the MC Crew, the Tough Group and the Girlist Crew

- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree

25% 25% 50%

Year 13 - It is Cool to be Part of a Group Such as the MC Crew, the Tough Group and the Girlist Crew

- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree

50% 50%
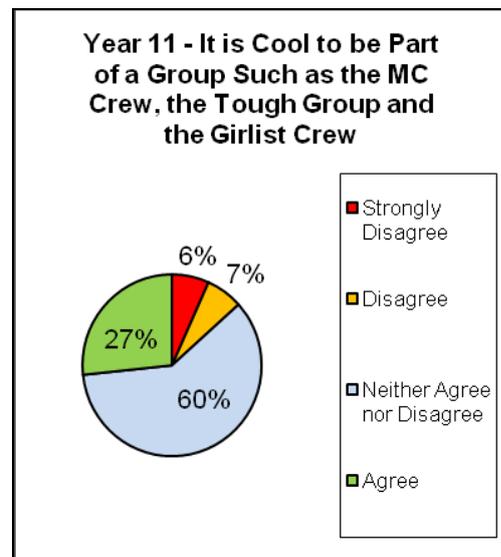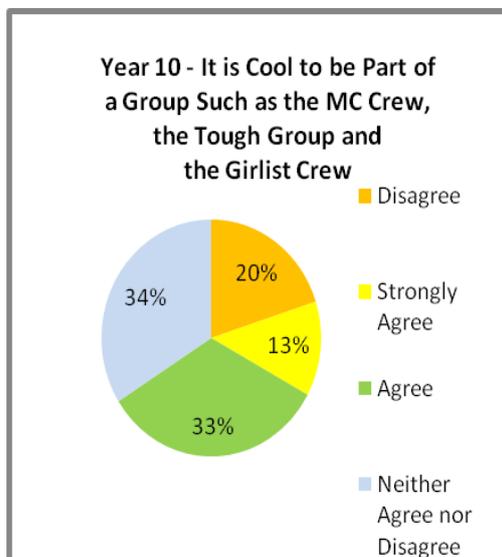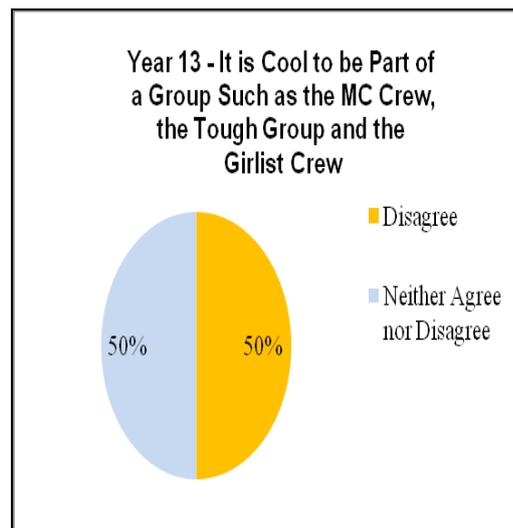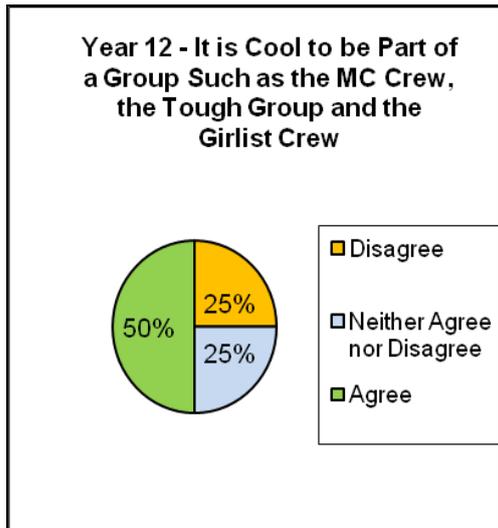
The context of this question was to find out the impact of subculture membership within school. In Year 10, a large proportion of boys agreed and strongly agreed that it was cool to be part of a group such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist crew. One third neither agreed nor disagreed. Two students strongly disagreed. In Year 11, one student said that although he was not part of a gang, for teenagers it was cool to be so. Another said that if you made enough money (illegally) and enjoy it, it's cool. One other student said: "you just got to get the gals them so you hang around with a group". Other boys said you have to have some fun but that it was up to the individual and their emotional state and that you had to be true to yourself. Another student agreed that it was not cool to be part of a group. One boy replied saying "bang" (twice) "brap" (twice) "bullet" (three times). What this boy is saying is that if you are part of a gang you may become involved in gun fights and may die. **(See Appendix ten).**

In Year 11 as a whole, boys had mixed views, with some saying it was cool to be part of a group and some did think it was because they needed to mix with friends. However, some boys saw the streets where they meet friends as dangerous. What they mean is that they could get involved in crimes, get arrested, wounded or killed.

In Year 12 boys thought it was cool to be part of a group, and one said "even though they suck" (meaning that they are rubbish). Another boy admitted that being part of a group gave protection as others looked out for you, but said that "friends could be

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your worst enemy and you had to be ready for anything". This boy is saying that the subculture might let him down.

A large proportion of Year 11 students considered it cool to be part of a group. These boys wanted to be 'one of the lads'. They shared the same type of music preference and wanted to think they could pull the girls (this is noticed in my own 15 year old nephew). In Year 12 one boy agreed. However, in Year 13 one boy disagreed with that statement and the other neither agreed nor disagreed. In Year 13 these boys were focused on achieving A-level qualifications and they had a more balanced view about being in a group, an MC crew and having girlfriends. This is largely consistent with Year 13 responses to the previous questions about university and qualifications.

5.2h Analysis of response to question number 6 – It is cool to be wedged or tonked (i.e. have six pack muscles) and wear designer clothes

This question related to issues of masculinity as discussed in Chapter Three. A large proportion of boys in Year 10, 53% agreed and in Year 11, 53% also agreed and felt that it was important to have muscles and wear designer clothes. In Year 10, 40% neither agreed nor disagreed and in Year 10, 46% neither agreed nor disagreed. Half the boys in Year 12 and 13 agreed that it was important and half neither agreed nor disagreed. This shows that as boys got older, they also felt strongly about being well presented and having girlfriends and designer clothes and they could still balance this with school and learning.

The majority of boys felt it was cool to be 'tonked', wedged and wear designer clothes but there were some boys who said it was not important. A Year 10 boy said, not everyone could afford to be fashionable and have gym membership to get muscles. This suggests that the boys who could not afford these things were from lower income families and found it difficult to afford to be trendy or go to the gym. However another said "when you are fit you get the girls." I interpret this to mean that having muscles and being fit was mostly about getting girlfriends because that was what girls liked. In Year 11 one said "at the end of the day it's all about the person." He added "let them do it." This boy is saying that he is not bothered about being fit and that his friends could do it if they wanted to but he will not.

Other Year 11 students said it was good to have a good appearance and another said "definitely"; and added that "the girls loved it". He went on to say that "it's nice but not necessary" and "for some it was important to look and feel good about themselves". Another boy said "looks does matter and style is key", meaning that it was very important to be stylish. He added that being tonked did not give advantages with girls. One student said he had muscles because he worked lifting sofas and that it was alright because it looked presentable. This boy got his muscles through working. In Year 12 one boy's view was that having six packs was not cool, but another Year 12 boy said "only when you wanna attract attention of girls – like in the summer boys come out topless or because you wanna be stronger". **(See Appendix eleven).** A Year 13 student felt that it was important to keep fit but he did not place great emphasis on looks. Pursuing these traits is part of a general social context and should not impact on school and learning.

A large number of boys thought it was cool to be tonked, have six-pack muscles and wear designer clothes. These boys wanted to wear designer clothes and to be seen to be trendy, have a girlfriend and be one of the lads. Doing this does not necessarily affect their achievement and may make them feel part of the 'crew' and be happy individuals who can focus on learning rather than wondering how they can keep up with trends. Boys may also be concerned with how they are treated by peers if they do not conform to what is considered the norm and this could have a negative impact on their learning as boys may want to conform with others who think it is not cool to learn but cool to be tonked, have six-pack and wear designer clothes rather than focus on learning. This contributes towards the formation of the subcultures discussed in Chapter One and Chapter Two.

5.2i Figure 27 - students' responses to the questions about teachers

Key 1 = strongly disagree 2= disagree 3 neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5 = strongly agree

Question No	Year 10 (15) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 11 (15) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 12 (4) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)	Year 13 (2) 1 2 3 4 5 (Responses in %)
Q7 Mentors supporting students in school is a good thing	- 6 - 54 40	- 6 6 60 28	- - - 100 -	- - - 50 50
Q8 Mentors help keep students focused on learning	6 - 6 60 28	- - 13 60 27	- - 25 50 25	- - - 100 -
Q9 My teachers understand me	7 20 40 20 13	- 13 40 40 7	25 - 75 - -	- - 50 50 -
Q10 My teachers understand my culture	20 - 46 27 7	13 13 34 33 7	25 - 25 50 -	- - 100 - -
Q12 I think school could do more to make learning a more enjoyable experience	- - 7 53 40	- - 7 46 47	- - - 25 75	- - - 100 -
Q13 I can relate to the black teachers in my school	- - 33 54 13	- 6 40 27 27	- - 50 50 -	- - 50 50 -
Q14 – I can relate to the white teachers in my school	20 7 46 27 -	7 7 53 26 7	- 25 50 25 -	- - 100 - -

N.B. In numbering of questions number 11 was omitted in error.

5.2j Figures 28, 29, 30 and 31 - Analysis of responses to question seven - mentors supporting students in schools are a good thing

Year 10 - Mentors Supporting Students in School is a Good Thing

Disagree 9%
Neither Agree nor Disagree 8%
Agree 83%

Year 11 - Mentors Supporting Students in School is a Good Thing

Disagree 6%
Neither Agree nor Disagree 6%
Agree 60%
Strongly Agree 28%

Year 12 - Mentors Supporting Students in School is a Good Thing

Agree 100%

Year 13 - Mentors Supporting Students in School is a Good Thing

Agree 50%
Strongly Agree 50%

The majority of boys in Year 10 and 11 said the mentors supporting students in school were good.   All boys in Year 12 and 13 agreed and strongly agreed. This could be that in the latter part of their school lives boys took work and learning seriously and welcomed additional help to support learning. The findings revealed that most boys in Year 10, 11 and 12 thought that mentors in school helped students focus on learning. This indicates an overwhelming majority in favour of mentors. Only a small

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percentage disagreed (9% in Year 10 and 6% in Year 11). The boys need for mentoring must be more adequately addressed by the school.

5.2k Mentors help to keep students focused on learning

In Year 10, 88% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that mentors helped to keep students focused on learning. In Year 11, 87% also agreed and strongly agreed. However, one Year 10 boy said that some mentors were rubbish and he did not know how they helped to focus students. I interpret this to mean that this boy did not get value from mentors or did not consider that they helped him.   In Year 12, 75% of students agreed and strongly agreed and in Year 13, 100% agreed. One boy in Year 12 said that mentors were good but he did not get the opportunity to have one. It was clear boys saw the value in having mentors.

The majority of boys from all years agreed that mentors supporting students in school helped them focus on learning. This indicates that boys knew they needed help to do well in school and appreciated mentors who supported and expressed interest in them helping to develop their learning. The 6% of boys in Year 10 who disagreed with the statement may have felt they did not need support or were disinterested in learning.

5.2l Figures - 32, 33, 34, and 35 - Analysis of responses to question nine – my teachers understand me

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Year 12 - My Teachers Understand Me

25% — Strongly Disagree

75% — Neighther Agree no Disagree

Year 13 - My Teachers Understand Me

50% — Neither agree nor disagree

50% — Agree
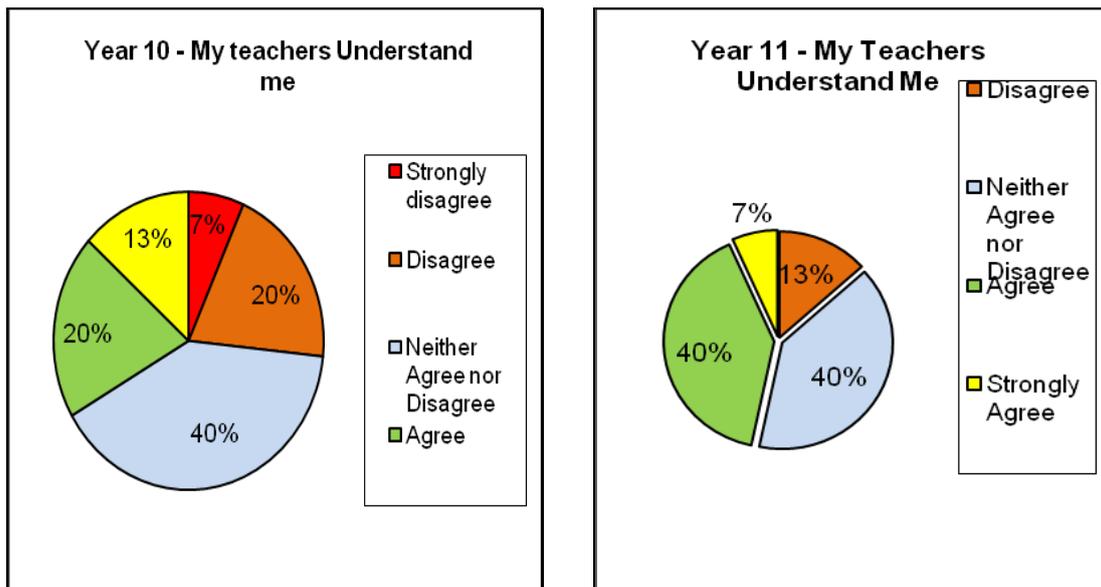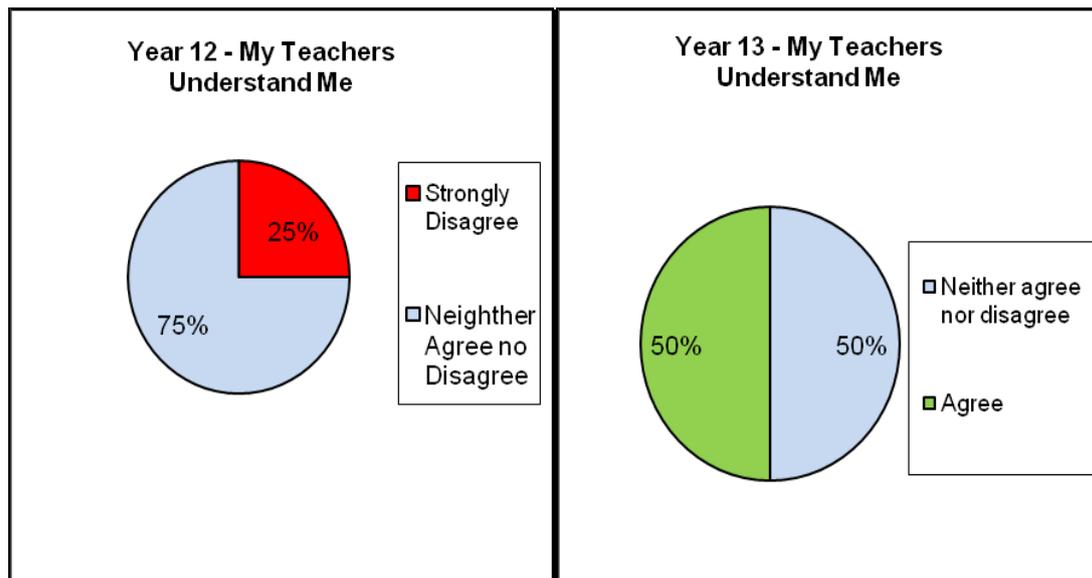
Across all year groups the majority (50%) of participants were indecisive. For example they saw good and bad aspects of teachers understanding of them. In every year group, less than one quarter of respondents felt teachers did not understand them. However, in Year 11 there was a 47% agreement.

It could be that boys' attitude and behaviour affected their relationship with teachers. The onus then, is on the boys to want to learn and try to get on with their teachers. Whereas in Years 12 and 13, boys were more focused and their perception of their teachers changed as they had built up a good working relationship and learnt to be more disciplined in their behaviour. The issue of behaviour is discussed in Chapter Two and Three.

In Year 10 and 11 students said that some of their teachers understood them and did their best, but others said that some teachers were unreasonable. The findings are that the boys are open-minded about their teachers and saw value in the relationship with some. However, a number of boys did not. In fact, one Year 11 boys said "this is far from the truth and not all the time". This boy felt that his teachers did not always understand him and "when they did it was not all the time". In Year 12 one student said "not all teachers understood me" and another said "teachers are not bothered". This may be manifested in the boys' attitude to work, feeling let down by teachers and being unable to cope with workload. In Year 13 a student said not all teachers

understood him, but one said he was focused on his studies and got on well with teachers. This may be because in Year 13 the few boys who made it to that year were self motivated, hard working and wanted to succeed. This indicates that teachers' perception of African-Caribbean boys affected their learning. This may lead to the boys underachieving.

In Year 10, 27% and in Year 11, 13% felt that their teachers did not understand them and at this particular stage (KS4) of learning positive teacher/student relationship was a key to learning and achieving. Most Years 12 and 13 boys thought teachers understood them. These are the few boys who have made it to the Sixth Form as the others had left the school at the end of compulsory education. These boys became more focused on learning and formed positive relationships with teachers. In Year 10 and 11 boys may be perceived by their teachers as having behavioural problems that affected teacher/student relationships.

5.2m Analysis of responses to question number 10 - my teachers understand my culture

As shown Figure 27, in Year 10 34% of boys agreed and strongly agreed that their teachers understood their culture and 46% neither agreed nor disagreed and in Year 11, 40% agreed and strongly agreed. However, 34% neither agreed nor disagreed. One Year 11 student said "teachers don't get involved" and another said "some, but a very small amount". What the boys are saying is that teachers do not understand their culture or did not want to know about it. The findings indicated that a large percentage of boys felt their teachers did not understand their culture or that they did not want to form a view. All students in Year 13 neither agreed nor disagreed. This indicates that there is a need for more teachers who have understanding of the boys' culture. Half the boys in Year 12 neither agreed nor disagreed or strongly disagreed and one Year 12 boy said "not all my teachers". This indicated that boys in those years felt that their teachers did not fully understand their culture. In Year 13 boys were focused on learning and achieving good results and to them it was not about culture but about learning and achieving. From the written comments on the

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questionnaire, some boys felt that teachers were racist or simply did not understand their culture.

In Year 11, three out of eight students said that some teachers understood their culture. Two said their teachers did not understand. One student said teachers did not get involved with them and that everyone should be treated the same. From the findings I found that most boys did not think their teachers understood their culture.

The boy who said he is not cultured could mean that he mixes with everyone and that culture did not come into play and he had gained a good understanding of diversity and mixed with the different races well. In Year 12 one student admitted that his teachers did understand his culture. The boys who said their teachers understood their culture had positive teacher/student relationship but it did not necessarily mean that the teachers understood their culture. It could be that boys in Year 12 and 13 were able to distance themselves from their teachers' perception of them and were more focused on learning so did not consider culture as an issue. However, in Year 11 boys were less mature, could have behavioural problems and may see their teachers as racist, when they tried to manage behaviour and blamed their culture for teacher intervention.

Many boys felt that their teachers did not understand their culture and in my view these boys had teachers they could not relate to and maybe more African-Caribbean teachers are required who these boys can relate to. There were boys who felt their teachers understood their culture

The largest percentage of boys were non committal, thereafter the other boys said teachers understood their cultures. The minority felt teachers did not understand their culture. It could be that the boys all had different definition of what culture is which is reflected in these findings. This issue is discussed further in Chapter Six.

5.2n Figures 36, 37, 38 and 39 – Analysis of responses to question 12 - I think school could do more to make learning more interesting.

Year 10 - I Think School Could do More to Make Learning a More Enjoyable Experience

Neither Agree nor Disagree — 7%
Agree — 53%
Strongly Agree — 40%

Year 11 - I Think School Could do More to Make Learning a More Enjoyable Experience

Agree — 46%
Strongly Agree — 47%
Neither Agree nor Disagree — 7%

Year 12 - I Think School Could do More to Make Learning a More Enjoyable Experience

Agree — 25%
Strongly Agree — 75%

Year 13 - I Think School Could do More to Make Learning a More Enjoyable Experience

100% Agree

In Year 10 and 11, the majority of boys agreed or strongly agreed that school could do more to make learning a more enjoyable experience. The gap widened in Year 12 and 13 with a larger proportion agreeing. Most boys felt school was boring and learning could be made more fun. In Year 12 and 13 boys would be more mature and more focused and their views would be more concerned with improving learning, than the boys in Year 10 and 11.

The majority of boys in Year 10 were quite open minded and said that most teachers did their best. However, they said that school was boring. In the additional comments one Year 10 boy said that learning could be made more interesting and support should be provided for students but that students should manage their own behaviour in school and have extra lesson. One boy also recognised the need for additional support lessons not currently available.

Out of the eight boys in Year 11 who responded to this statement, seven agreed that school should make learning more interesting and they made comments such as, "know dat" **(see Appendix twelve).** "They should have more fun activities" that "they should change the atmosphere, have stricter punishment and have more interactive learning" and that "school was dull and boring". What is being said is that school is boring and teachers are not strict enough. A Year 11 student said that school was already enjoyable and that it was up to the individual. The evidence suggests that the majority of boys found school boring and felt that more could be done to make learning interesting such as having more interactive learning, relating teaching to real life, more visits to business organisations, better technology and bring in elements of fun activities into the lessons.

The findings indicated that most boys felt that schools could do more to make learning enjoyable and that on the whole school was boring and that they needed more interactive learning. This is because students in the twenty first century learn in and out of school and are more technologically stimulated outside of school and could expect more entertaining learning and more interactive lessons.

5.2o Analysis of responses to question 13 – I can relate to the black teachers in my school

In Year 10, 67% of boys either agreed or strongly agreed that they could relate to their black teachers and 33% neither agreed nor disagreed. One Year 10 student said he did not want to comment, but another said he could only relate to some black teachers. In Year 11, 54% of students either agreed or strongly agreed and 40% neither agreed nor disagreed. One student said he found it difficult to relate to black teachers and said they were mostly African. From hearing the boys' views, it was evident that there

may be cultural issues with African teachers and African-Caribbean boys. One Year 11 student said he could definitely relate to black teachers except two female senior black teachers (African-Caribbean) and added that one was a bounty (similar to the chocolate bar 'bounty' black chocolate on the outside and white coconut inside) and they hated him. From what boys said, these teachers had educational values which were out of touch with today's modern children and did not try to form positive relationships with these boys and saw discipline as the way to keep them in line, but behind their backs the boys detested them. As a teacher/researcher in the school, with knowledge of the two teachers who were considered strict disciplinarians, I understood why these boys found them difficult. Some students said they could relate to their black teachers and that colour was not an issue; and they get along with everyone. However, the view of boys is that teachers were old-fashioned. This would be an issue if boys are looking for school to change with more interactive, fun and interesting lessons. They needed teachers they could relate to and work positively with. In this sense, these teachers may for example be too strict, unreasonable, and have not bothered to form positive relationship with students. The boys had a point. The focus should be on teaching not picking on them. It could also be that the boys' perception of these teachers may be wrong as they may see discipline as picking on them.

One Year 11 boy said that he saw where they were coming from, and another said that some black teachers did not understand the struggle of a black boy. This indicated that even though some teachers were black they did not try to understand the problems African-Caribbean boys faced in school and on the streets. One student in Year 11 said Ms J stopped him learning and he felt she did not like students. Another student said he did not like Ms P and Ms J (senior black teachers) because they were strict. In Year 12, 50% of students said they could relate to their black teachers and 50% neither agreed nor disagreed and in Year 13 the response was the same with 50% saying that they agreed and 50% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. In Year 12 a student suggested colour did not come into it. Boys were fair in their judgments and were saying that it was not all to do with race because it could be difficult to form positive relationships with some black teachers - as they did not always understand

the difficulties black boys faced. This has huge implications. However, some boys did see some non-black teachers as racists as reported earlier under 'my teachers' section of this chapter. It is important to say that not all black teachers are typical of these two senior teachers.

In Year 10 and 11 some boys could relate to most of their black teachers because these teachers may have attempted to form positive relationships with them. One student in Year 12 said that "colour is not an issue".

5.2p Analysis of responses to question 14 – I can relate to the white teachers in my school

In Year 10 27% of boys said they could relate to their white teachers and 46% neither agreed nor disagreed and 20% disagreed. In Year 11, 33% agreed and 46% neither agreed nor disagreed and in Year 12, 25% agreed and 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. In Year 13 100% of boys neither agreed nor disagreed. A minority of African-Caribbean boys in Years 10 and 11 found it harder to relate to their white teachers. They said that some white teachers were racists or did not understand them. In Year 10 one boy said that he could relate to all his teachers and that it was about having good relationships. From what this boy said, he appeared to have formed positive relationships with most teachers because he was focused on learning. The response from one Year 11 was that "I can relate to anyone, including my teachers". The majority of Year 11 students said they could relate to some white teachers but very few and that some teachers discriminated. Other Year 11 students said "I don't like my white teachers and I cannot relate to them", but one Year 11 student said "colour is not an issue". What the boys are indicating that good teaching is more important than the colour of the teacher. In Year 11 most boys could get on with their white teachers but some saw a few of them as racist and said they discriminated against them because they were black. In Year 12, 75% of boys could not relate to white teachers or did not want to comment. In Year 13 boys neither agreed nor disagreed. This could mean that the boys who neither agreed nor disagreed did not want to comment or that they could not relate to their white teacher or did not consider race an issue as they were focused on learning and achieving.

5.3 Analysis of the student interview responses

5.3a What I think of school

All students in Year 10 said school was about learning and work, one boy said "school is fun, about socialising and seeing my friends". It was also about play as well as work and another student agreed that "school is about getting a good job to help my mum".

In Year 11 one student said he did not want to go to school but had to. Another student said that "school is about having to wake up early and see Ms P and Ms J" (senior black teachers) when he did not want to. He also said "I like school lunches and seeing some of my friends but not others because of the way they acted and dressed". He said, "I look great in my uniform and I am just too cool". He saw himself as a leader and others followed wherever he went, that he was liked and looked up to at school and that made him happy at school. This boy asserted that he was an enthusiastic sports person and was in the school's football and basketball teams and participated in school plays. One Year 11 boy said "school is what is laid out there in the future". This boy saw school as giving him the necessary education and qualification for society. From the way this previous boy responded he demonstrated self confidence, self-esteem, intellectual and leadership qualities. He also participated well in extra-curricular activities and said that he was a role model to students. It is worth mentioning that this boy left Year 11 with excellent GCSE results and went on to college. (It would be interesting to find out what happened to the other boys). He felt proud to wear the school uniform and mentioned that others did not which demonstrated the masculine priorities of these other boys to go against the norm and for example wear trainers.

In Year 12 students said that school was about lessons and work but also about having friends and socialising. One Year 13 student said "when I think of school I think of fun, meeting friends and education", he also added that "football is a big part of my school life". The other said that before, it was about friends and fun, but after Year 11 it was just about hard work.

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At KS4 it was important to note that boys were not totally focused on learning but wanted to have fun in school. Even in Year 13 (KS5) boys still saw school as a place of fun and socialising and a major part of their lives. It was interesting to learn that boys enjoyed the social aspect of school. Most boys from all the years saw school as a place of learning. Boys in Year 13 became less focused on friends and more focused on learning. It is quite natural, that most boys did want to socialise at school but they appeared to move well between the main culture of the school and learning and their subculture which is part of being with their friends.

5.3b What school prepares me for

Year 10 students said that school prepared them for life and working with others. They felt that it was about making money and having a career.

Year 11 students felt that school prepared them for life and future jobs but one said students do not learn in school. Most said school prepared them for GCSEs, university, college and the outside world of work and money. Year 12 students linked academic success to the outside world and material wealth. However, one boy was more open minded and did not blame the school fully for his lack of achievement, but said "school and teachers partly failed me, as they did not teach me about society". In Year 12 one boy wanted more Physical Education lessons (PE) and felt that the outside world (society) was threatening and that doing PE would enable him to defend himself. A Year 12 student said "school does not prepare students for anything and I have to take responsibility for my learning and teach myself because school does not help me learn". This is the student who earlier said that he struggled with work. Some boys knew that they did not work enough but others blamed their teachers and also one boy felt that he needed to protect himself on the street. This showed that some boys were worried about what is happening in society.

Both Year 13 students felt that school prepared them for life in general and how to interact with people. One added that "school prepared me for university, jobs and career choices and that you learn new things every day". One can assume that students who made it to Sixth Form and A-level must be naturally motivated to want

to do well and succeed and understood the purpose of school in helping them to achieve, so they conformed, studied and worked hard.

5.3c The subjects I struggle with/subjects I like

Most students in year 10 said they did not struggle with anything at school. However, one Year 10 said "I don't struggle with subjects, I struggle with teachers, they did not like me and they put me in front of the class for no reason - which is irritating". Most students found school alright and they did not have major problems. However, the student who said he got put in the front of the class could have behavioural problems.

Two students in Year 10 said they struggled with English, reading and writing and found science a complex subject they did not like. One student found mathematics difficult at foundation level. Another said "I am good at mathematics and I like science". The evidence suggests that boys in Year 10 struggled with core subjects such as English, reading and writing and science which could relate to how they were taught or a number of other reasons such as other pupils distracting them, in their lessons. It could also be that the student were struggling with work or had poor attention spans and therefore could not focus on lessons. Some students who did not struggle with subjects might be boys with high ability. In Year 10 one student said that he would welcome after-school mathematics to raise his performance.

In Year 11 one student said "I lack focus and get easily distracted by other students". Another said "I struggle with work and lessons and just sometimes sit in class and daydream". One boy said "when I ask my teachers for help they say stuff not relating to work". He felt the reason he struggled at school was to do with teaching and resources rather than with subjects. What this student is saying is that he struggled because he did not get help from his teachers and there were insufficient resources. Another student said "it is my own fault because I don't like school, but I am slowly making progress in studying for my GCSEs". This indicated that the school has let this boy down as he is not doing well but says that he wants too. However, one boy said he did not struggle with anything in school. The mixed responses indicated that some students understood that they struggled in school because of friends who stopped them learning, but some realised it was their responsibility to study at school.

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Students also blamed inadequate teaching, lack of resources and lack of teacher support for them not learning. The student who did not struggle with anything clearly felt that all his needs were being met and this may be one of the boys who have not remained 'hidden' or marginalised in any way. This boy may be an exception or may be gifted and talented and less 'hidden' than others. Perhaps he may have accomplished this through being focused, getting parental support and through working well in the main school culture whilst moving between the subcultures without losing the ability to remain focused on the main culture of school and learning.

One student in Year 11 said "I'm more dedicated to some subjects than others" and another said "I don't like history". A third student said "I don't like English because I don't like my teacher and it affects my work". Another student struggled with mathematics because he simply found it difficult and the final student said he struggled sometimes with English and felt that the school could help more. One student said "I like all my subjects" and another said "I would welcome extra classes in English and mathematics". In Year 11, which is a crucial year when African-Caribbean boys are in the process of preparing for GCSE; the fact that they were saying that they are struggling with core subjects shows, to a degree that some blame can be apportioned on the school and teachers because they have not identified their needs at KS3. Some students felt that they were not getting adequate help from their teachers and that they were not offered additional support. However, some recognised that they were not focused enough and in this respect these students were 'their own worst enemies'.

Some students in Year 12 were struggling with school work. The findings revealed that boys formed better relationships with their black teachers who they could relate to and said these teachers cared. They said that other teachers taught them in a boring way without the personal touch, whereas black teachers talked to them about boys on the streets and how important it was to work and made them realise that black people can also achieve. This indicates that black teachers can act as role models to these boys apart from the two senior black teachers mentioned earlier in this study who the boys singled out as being problematic.

Students in Year 12 were worried about not achieving and feared not being taken back into school and only able to do courses they would not otherwise have chosen had they done well in GCSEs or continued to struggle at both Intermediate and A-level courses. One boy said "I feel inundated with coursework". This student said that assessment was unfair because he said "if I fail one unit I fail the whole course".

One Year 13 student said "I struggle with revision at school, but he admitted that "I am lazy and like to mess about sometimes". This indicated that the problem was with the boy and not school as he was not focused enough. Another said that "I struggle with maths and hate it, but with hard work I became good at it, but I struggle with English too and get lots of extra support from my teachers". I think the evidence suggests that even Year 13 boys were not totally focused and still struggled with subjects.

One student in Year 13 said that he would have benefited from more after school clubs and summer study programmes to help him with his A-level subjects.

5.3d What I will do in five to ten years time

One Year 10 student said "in ten years time I will be in a respectable job". He also said "I want a professional and highly paid job wearing a suit not those in the service industry serving in a shop or restaurant but working for example in office management jobs, solicitors, medicine and other similar professions". Another said "I will be in media and helping to direct movies". The other participant would either be working as a mechanical engineer with airplanes, or an electrical engineer and the final participant said he would be at college. Most students wanted good jobs and had high expectations for their future. Students were positive about what they wanted to do and this was either to be studying or working in a good job. Two Year 10 students said they would have a wife and family. Another student said "I will be working in retail earning maximum money". One had not thought about it yet. The findings indicate that the first student had not given any thought to the likelihood that retail work was low paid and that he was likely to earn a minimum wage. One student did not associate qualifications with jobs when he talked about working in "retail" and "earning maximum money". Some boys had not even given much thought to what

they will do in ten years time. In Year 10 it might be too early for boys to have decided what they would do in ten years time although some were quite clear about this now.

Although not all the students were realistic about timescales, most students in Year 11 were clear about what they wanted to do in five years time. One said "I am going to be a computer technician and also a musician playing the piano in churches". A second student stated that he would be "in court backing someone up as a lawyer", but he is also considering a career as a plumber as it paid well. He also has a dream to be a movie director. A third participant wanted to go to college to do electronics then get a job. The final participant said "I want to be a cartoonist and will be doing art at college", but he added that "my dad said I should think about other things too". Most students saw themselves in university, or in a good job; some had goals of being movie directors.

In ten years time one student in Year 11 said "I am going to be a pastor of my church", another said "in ten years time I would be working and married". It appears that most boys wanted to be married and have a family which is different to African-Caribbean men of the older generation. A third participant said "I will be working in sports as a referee, doing physiotherapy or working with a girls' football team". One participant said "I feel lost right now and I not sure at all". The findings indicated that boys in Year 11 did not have a realistic understanding of jobs and the qualifications needed. The findings also show that none of the cohort felt adequately prepared for the future.

In Year 12, one student saw music, played in his spare time, as his way to success. This is because he felt that he would not do well in his studies at school. One boy considered being an MC (rap artist) and also said "I think about doing negative things sometimes". He said that "on the street black boys got killed and you get drawn into it". The findings indicate that Year 12 felt let down by the school system, powerless in achieving academic qualification and therefore felt that school paralysed them and prevented their progress so they became detached, de-motivated and unable to overcome the odds against them. One boy in Year 12 opted for a career as a musician

and said "I want to be a famous drummer". One Year 13 boy said that "I can't say right now but the main thing is I will be working with computers". The other Year 13 student said that he would be in a law firm working his way up and becoming a "big fat brier" (a barrister). These boys appeared to be ambitious and had realistic goals which they were working towards.

The findings indicated that some African-Caribbean boys have become detached from school because they are underachieving and do not see education as the way to make a good living but rather that they would use their other talents to do so. This is a significant finding as it indicates that the National Curriculum is not fully meeting their needs because it is not motivating some African-Caribbean boys.

5.3e Learning, qualifications and university

One student in Year 10 said he wanted to settle down and study; another said "I am predicted A and B grades and I am not worried". One boy wanted to achieve A's and B's and was going to work hard. Another said "I am going to work hard and revise" and one student admitted that he sometimes studied.

Most students in Year 10 knew that good grades were needed to get to university. One student said "I am not going to university". This may have nothing to do with confidence but rather that this boy does not see value in university qualification but may find another route to success. In contrast, some boys were confident about their chances of achieving good qualifications and going to university. The evidence indicates that most boys in Year 11 valued their education and realised that it was one of the routes to a good career. There were two boys who did not see value in higher education or were unsure that they wanted to go to university.

One student in Year 11 said he was going to study hard for his GCSEs but one was sure that he would not do well in his examinations and admitted that he did not work and said that "reality only hit me in Year 11". Another participant said that he was predicted to achieve A*-C grades, but another student said "I am going to have to do a bit more work to pass". The final student said "I want to do well and I am working

hard to achieve good grades". When asked about A-levels, one student said he was staying on in school to do them and another said he might do A-levels in ICT and art.

The findings indicate that students in Year 11 were beginning to realise the importance of GCSEs and most said they needed to do some more work to get good grades. It is clear that in Year 11 reality sets in with the boys realising they needed to study and starting to associate GCSE qualifications with A-levels and university. Both boys in Year 12 said they did not do well in GCSEs. Year 12 boys lacked interest in higher education and it may be because they did not see it as a feasible option because they could not get the A-level requirements.

The findings revealed that even in Year 12 some boys found it difficult to cope with workload. This could be because they did not have the ability to do the course, but it could also be that they were not disciplined, lacked focus and therefore did not feel they could achieve academic qualifications.

In Year 13 one student said he did well in his GCSEs and got five C's and D grades while the second got all C grades because he pushed himself when teachers said he might not be able to come back into Sixth Form with poor grades. The boys said that they did well at GCSEs which enabled them to go on to A-levels at the school and therefore this gave them the opportunity to go on to higher education.

The first Year 13 boy said he was going to higher education (Brunel University) to study computing and the other said that he was going to Queen Mary University to do law. Both boys in Year 13 aspired to go to well known universities. However these were two of the few boys left in the Sixth Form as by Year 13 most had been siphoned out, as the ones who lost hope, and left school without qualifications at the end of Year 11 and in Year 12. This study has uncovered issues which the school has to address to help this 'hidden' population to achieve better results. It is worth mentioning that both Year 13 boys later went on to university to do law at St Mary and computing at Brunel Universities. The boy doing law would have achieved at least three B grades in A-levels and would have one AS-level qualification. The second would have achieved at least three C grades.

5.3f What I think of my teachers

One student in Year 10 said "I like my English and media teachers but don't like coursework and I get on with all my teachers". Another said "my black teacher is grumpy and does not listen", but said "my white teacher who is male makes me 'see hard' (meaning that he made him realise the importance of school and study) and put pressure on me to work". This shows that some teachers had high expectations of students. This boy also said "one teacher shouts at me". He admitted that another male, white teacher helped and understood him and did not try to control him. Another student said he got on with his science teacher and found the lesson interesting, mixed with experiments and learning, but he admitted he did not get on with his form tutor (South African). He said "she often threw me out of class and tutorial is boring and I would like more black images introduced into tutorials". One student said "some teachers pick on me and accuse me of interrupting the class when I ask questions". Another student said "I do well in drama and engineering because I can relate to one female teacher's personality" (black). But he said his head of year (white female) would "have your head, she wants to take off your hat, take your phone, she represents discipline." He went on the say that some teachers were rude and pushed you through doors. Most students had positive relationships with their teachers regardless of their race. There were some white and black teachers who students had very positive relationships with. However, there were two senior black teachers who they did not get on with. Some boys considered that a few teachers had 'attitude' towards them. It could be assumed that teachers were trying to manage bad behaviour which the boys may have seen as intrusive, or that teachers were too strict. The white and black teachers, they formed positive relationships with could be perceived as more caring, supportive and understanding of African-Caribbean boys.

One student in Year 11 said "my teachers encourage me to learn" and one said "I do well in art, but the teacher is racist and loads of students say so". He also said "I used to feel the same about a white male teacher who used the word Nigger a lot and sometimes it was unnecessary because everyone knew it was a bad thing and I felt hurt when the word was used". He also said that "one of my male teachers help and show concern for black youths in school and gave extra efforts as a black teacher".

The students said "my black female teacher goes overboard to help". However, another said that his teachers were all equal and he worked well with them all except the two senior black teachers who he did not get on with. He went on to say that "the reasons these teachers did not like me is because they were jealous as they did not have sons like me". He said that his other English teacher (white) is a good teacher and that one of the senior black female teachers is an Oreo biscuit (white on the inside black outside). One student said that his mathematics teacher should sit with him and explain more, but he added that he got a lot of support from his form tutor.

A number of students in Year 11 saw some of their teachers as racists, however they presented as being fair minded in saying that most of their teachers encouraged them and they even expressed dislike for some of their black teachers when there is an assumption that they would naturally relate to them because they are black and senior. They also considered some of their white teachers as very good at their job.

One boy in Year 12 said that "teachers gave too much work and I can't rely on them". He worked well with a black teacher and the school's counsellor because he said "they understood and tried to help". This boy said that he got little support from some teachers and struggled with work because it was too much. A Year 12 student said that teachers did not help and that they just assumed what teachers said was right. He also stated that they were not taught properly and that lessons were boring. As mentioned earlier the Year 12 boys who did not do well in their GCSE examination, were doing intermediate courses and struggling. They blamed their teachers because they felt school and teaching was inadequate. This indicates that these boys struggled with school and learning and had problems. One of them sought help from the school counsellor but the school may not have addressed his learning needs earlier on in his school life.

Both Year 12 boys said that some of the teachers stopped them learning. They made particular reference to two senior black teachers. Two boys said "I don't like these two teachers because they are too strict". The findings are that boys in Year 12 saw teachers as contributing to their lack of success in school and one said that "they do not listen to me".

The first Year 13 student said "I have no problems with my teachers". He added "I got to know them and then worked a bit harder". The other student said "because teachers said I would not get good GCSE grades and go on to Sixth Form, I worked really hard". He added "I worked well for my mathematics teacher who had high expectations of me and wanted nothing less than 100% and I am working hard because I want to make him proud". This indicates that teacher expectations of their students play an important part in helping them to achieve.

5.3g The scenario

African-Caribbean boys were given a scenario describing where the teacher leaves the room and two boys get into a play fight and break a computer. The teacher walks back into the room and shouts and the boys are sent to the head of year who suspends them. This aimed to find out the boys views about exclusions in light of the evidence from Chapter Two and Three where it is reported that African-Caribbean boys are more likely than any other group to be excluded from school.

Most students in Year 10 said that they would suspend the two students. One student said he would not shout; the two students would be excluded internally because of exams and work. One student would give a detention; another would also reprimand and ask them to pay for the damage. Three students said they would exclude them. Year 10 students dealt with the boys in the scenario by way of a short exclusion and by making the students pay for the damages.

One student in Year 11 said that he would hear both sides of the story and would suspend both students internally. Another said he would suspend them externally for two days, because some students misbehaved in order to be suspended as they wanted to come back and boast. Another said he would make both pay for the damage but suspend them internally. However a fourth student said he would not want to be a teacher who had to make that decision. It's too difficult teaching students he said, but added he would suspend them and investigate and ask the class to grass on them by offering them a merit as a reward. The fifth student said he would get the room cleaned up, send the boys to the office and then exclude them.

Boys in Year 12 said they would not exclude externally and would make the boys pay for the damage. One Year 13 said he would not shout like the teacher in the scenario, but would find out what happened. He said that he might suspend them.

The findings are that this cohort understood and respected rules and knew the consequences both short and long term of being excluded from school. The findings also indicate that boys understood the consequences of misbehaving in school and related misbehaving to punishment. Students' responses to the scenario indicated that participants realised that rules are important and there are consequences to bad behaviour.

5.3h In school role models – interview responses

Three students in Year 10 said they had no in school role models and one said "I look up to my black friends and we competed with each other". Another student said "I look up to my black female teacher and a white male teacher because they conversed with young people and understand because they have their own children". He added "my female white teacher gives me behaviour slips but my two black teachers talked to me". Two boys saw two black teachers who talked to them as good role models and saw some teachers as disciplinarians ready to hand out behaviour slips. This verifies that despite having some black teachers the boys still experienced a void in terms of role models in school. This is a very significant finding which will be discussed in Chapter Six.

One student in Year 11 said "God is my guide" and then added seriously, "it's Jermaine (pseudo) in my class he is a Christian and we have the same interest. He is from Trinidad we have the same faith in common." Another student said he looked up to a male (white teacher) because he supported him from Year 7. This student said that "he is a good teacher who is sensitive in how he speaks to students, whereas other teachers would ring your house if you did wrong".

Boys in Year 11 either had role models in school or classmates they looked up to. One said "I respect my teacher who is white and I've known him since coming to the school and admired him as he gives me time and is a good teacher. Whereas other

teachers did not take the time and rang home instead to complain". This may be a consequence of poor behaviour and the boy not taking responsibility for his own learning. Some Year 11 boys said they had good in-school role models and support from their peers. This indicated that some boys were not affected by peer group pressures and their friends helped them to learn. A boy said that "I look up to my friends and some teachers".

One boy in Year 12 said "I have no in school role models" He also said that "it would be useful if I had a male mentor who advised me how to achieve". This is in spite of the availability of black male and female teachers at the school as evidenced in the interview with the headteacher and discussed in Chapter Five. From what the boys say all role models do not have to be black or male as long as they were good, colour was not an issue.

One Year 13 student said "I look up to the black teaching staff because they had made it" (done well). The second student said "my maths teacher (black African) is a good role model and he inspires me and because he is strict he keeps me focused on success". This boy sees strict as good which contradicts what has been said earlier by the Year 10 and 11 boys about the two black senior teachers by the younger boys. He may also be challenging the African/African-Caribbean grouping.

5.3i Outside of school role models – interview responses.

One student in Year 10 said "I look up to my cousin who is a nerd". (Meaning he always had his head in a book). He said "all he had on his mind was learning and is always revising. This made me study too". Another student said "My mum is a good role model and I value her experiences and know that she does not want me to make the same mistakes as she did and that she takes me seriously". Another student said "my uncle is a role model because he has time for me and give me advice about college and mechanics", while another also said "my uncle and cousins are role models because they have good jobs, cars and kids and could provide for their wives and children and I want the same" as he saw them as successful. Another said "my friend Karl encourages me and tells me not to do bad things and explains the importance of getting a good job to make my parents proud". He told him not to steal

or get into trouble. It was clear that boys looked to their family and friends for role models as they trusted them and admired how they had achieved good careers. This is not unlike boys of any ethnicity.

One student in Year 11 said I look up to my cousin (male), who is in my church and I depend on the people in church. Another student said "my mum is a role model, she gets stressed but never gives up", a third student said "I have no one to look up to and rely on myself to get motivated". Another boy said "my aunt is a role model for me, she talks to me and tells me she did not do well in school but pushed herself and later got A-levels, went to university and now she works in Central London". He said that "she inspires me to want to do the same". The final participant said "my sister is a role model she did not do well in school but she got where she wanted to be through pushing herself and studying". The findings indicated that boys had support systems outside of school and they had family members who could help them with their work and advise them on the importance of learning and qualification. Clearly there is no absence of role models for these boys which contradicts what teachers say below in this chapter.

One boy in Year 12 said that his parents and friends in the church were role models. The other student said "I do not have anyone I can look up to as a role model". I found that what these boys were saying is that they could rely on their friends and family to inspire them to achieve but the findings also indicate that some boys did not have this support system outside of school.

One Year 13 student said "my dad is a role model he never had the opportunities to learn but still had a good job and provided for his family and took time to have fun as well, like going dancing". It would be interesting to find out why his dad did not have the opportunity. The other student said "my grandmother who is retired always motivates me to clear the final hurdles of education and she taught me the basics".

Most talked about cousins, mum, aunt, sisters (mostly female) as role models and some said they did not have anyone who could be a role model to them. This suggests that more male role models who these boys can look up to and aspire to be like are needed.

5.3j My hobbies

One boy in Year 10 said "my hobby is girls". He said "I like them and love them up", but said "I also enjoy cycling and going to the cinema". Another Year 10 student said "I liked watching television, going to the park and playing computer games". A third boy enjoyed sports, football, and basketball, ice skating and dancing. One said that he loved sports (but not cricket) so much that he would consider a career in it and wanted to learn how muscles worked. Another enjoyed basketball, football and baseball.

One student in Year 11 said "I don't deal in street-cultures because it is a waste of time standing on streets rapping and talking". He used his time in church or at home reading books or studying the word of God. He did not say when he found time to study. Another Year 10 student said "I read books about Louis Farrakhan and Marcus Garvey because they spoke the truth and told it like it was". Most boys showed a very keen interest in sports as part of their recreation, and also had interest in county, national and international sports.

Boys in Year 12 played music, games, saw friends and girlfriends. One said "I am not a girlist but tried to be". One Year 13 student said "I spent time with friends, playing football, basketball, skateboarding, ice-skating, swimming and going to the cinema, internet and video games" and the other goes to the cinema, hang around with friends, play sports and watches television. The boys appeared to be average, typical teenagers that had regular activities and interests and subcultures have not been made distinctive in these findings.

One boy in Year 12 said "I am trying to educate myself". This is because he felt that teachers did not teach him properly. (It is worth adding here that when he was filling out the questionnaire he asked me how to spell simple words) for example 'special'. This boy felt that he could not get the support from teachers to help him learn. He admitted that "basic qualifications are needed and it was essential to learn about society in order to be successful". By Year 12 his weaknesses could be attributed to behaviour, SEN or needs not being identified by the school at an early age.

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One student Year 12 said that "different races should integrate more and we should be all one community; people don't mix". He said "black people hustle", (making money on the streets). This student also said that "some white people also turn out bad but some still have nice cars, because they robbed the poor (selling drugs and committing crimes and get away with it) and took their money". This boy said "that black people needed to be aware and educate themselves and be open-minded, as an alternative to the gun violence going on". He said that "when Indian kids are three years old they can't talk, but blacks are intelligent, yet gradually as you grew up the Indians became academic and went up and our black ones went down". He also said that "some blacks have pride but some don't". The view of this Year 12 boy was that there would be more successful black people, if they were taught differently. This Year 12 boy said that "black students have the ability to achieve but teaching was not good". He felt that "blacks turn to the street to hustle and get wrapped up in the crimes that occur". But he added that "when white people did the same they profited".

One Year 13 student said that he wished he had studied more and the other said he did not get the subject choice of ICT, because of his GCSE grades and he regretted not working harder to achieve better grades. But he went on to study ICT at university.

In the additional comments of the questionnaire, the boys gave reasons outside of school in order to explain what is happening to black people in society and they raised issues of fairness in terms of white and black people. One Year 11 student said that "black people get caught up in the law whilst white people escape the law and profited". Even though this boy lived in a diverse area, as discussed in the IFS in Chapter Three, he still felt that "people are segregated and hardly mixed". This boy was not doing well at school and was fully aware of society and was fluent in expressing his views. Although this question was out of context it was interesting to hear the boy's point of view and it is significant to report as this boys was expressing awareness about society and different cultures and they intermingled. What the boys are saying is that there is not enough social mixing of the different races and life for black people in society is unfair and black people fall foul of the law - but when whites did wrong things they profited.

5.4 The analysis of the sociogram.

There were fourteen students who completed the sociogram five from Year 10 and 5 from year 11 and two from each of the Year 12 and 13.

5.4a My leisure

In their leisure time boys went to the cinema, spent time with friends and family. One boy said he helped in his church. Other students played football, watched television, played computer games, cycled or just chilled out.

There were two students who were Masters of Ceremonies (MC) and making music. One student did acting. There was one boy who said he played the piano. The findings revealed that boys had a good social life outside of school incorporating a range of interests and hobbies. Therefore the findings indicate that these boys are not bored, uninspired nor for example, looking for trouble but they do not say that they are studying in their spare time. They are actively participating in their subculture.

5.4b What my parents do

A total of 80% of boys either had one or both parent who worked. 20% of boys' parents did not work. Because the sociogram was a five minutes warm up activity it would have been too intrusive to ask more direct questions about what work their parents did. Therefore, it was not possible to identify what jobs parents did in order to identify children's social class background. This could be the subject of further research in the future.

5.4c Friendship

100% of boys just gathered with friends in their spare time. One said his friends were in his church. Other boys belonged to a social group or sports group and with friends from school. This indicate that socialising and friendship is important to most boys but in different contexts/settings. This is common to all ethnic groups and African-

Caribbean boys are not peculiar in this regard. The boys did not say if their friends were from other ethnic backgrounds.

5.4d Important people in my life

All boys who completed the sociogram said their mum was the most important person in their lives. 50% said their dad was also the most important person in their lives. A large percentage also said their aunties, grandparents, sisters, cousins, uncles were important in their lives. Other boys said church friends, friends and one said his teacher.

The above findings indicated that African-Caribbean boys do have support networks outside of school within the family, in some community groups and among friends. The findings are that at least 50% of boys had fathers as important people in their lives but not necessarily in the home. The other 50% did not name their dads as important people in their lives and they could come from single parent households. Boys named more females as important members of their families than male.

5.5 Teachers' responses to questionnaires

I have grouped the responses of teachers into three clusters. The first cluster addresses teachers' views about African-Caribbean boys and the second their views about the parents of African-Caribbean boys and the third cluster relates the policy implications.

5.5a Figure 40 – Cluster 1 - how do teachers perceive African-Caribbean boys' attitudes towards learning, subcultures and socialisation in school?

Table Code: 1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3 neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5= strongly agree

Question No	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %
1 - African-Caribbean boys develop subcultures	4	4	27	46	19

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which adversely affect their learning				
2 – Peer group pressures are a major reason why African-Caribbean boys underachieve	-	8	27	50	15
4 – African-Caribbean boys need support groups outside of school to help motivate them to learn	-	31	11	39	19

Please note that question number three can be found grouped with six, seven and eight which discusses policy issues.

5.5b Figure 41 - Question one – African-Caribbean boys develop subcultures which adversely affects their learning.
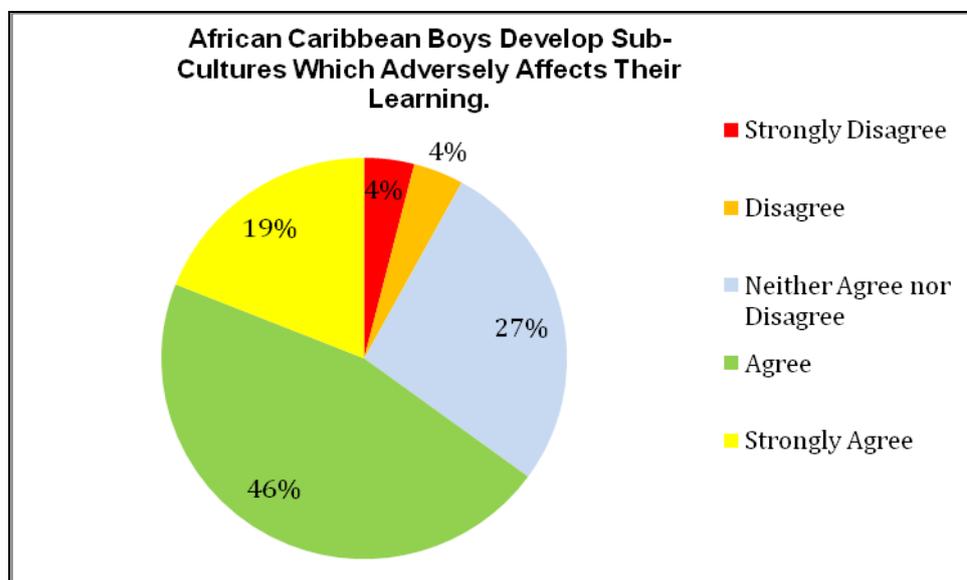
A large proportion of teachers (65%) felt that subcultures developed by African-Caribbean boys adversely affected their learning. Teachers may have developed negative or stereotyped attitudes towards the boys therefore their perception may be prejudiced or biased or they may have evidenced the impact of subculture on boys learning in the classroom. The 27% who neither agreed nor disagreed may simply not have wanted to form a view or want to comment. The findings do show however, that some teachers recognised that not all African-Caribbean boys were negatively influenced by peer pressure.

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One teacher said that subcultures were sometimes a culture of victimhood. What this teacher is saying is that often boys who developed subcultures become "their own worst enemies" and become victims as they developed anti-school and anti-learning attitudes while seeing little value in academic achievement. However, a teacher said that subcultures did not have to be negative and not all boys developed these. This was particularly not so at KS3 but more in KS4. The view of one teacher was that there should be role models who reflect successful material gain, such as rappers, boxers and sports celebrities to mentor. In my view there are other more prominent positive role models that could be used. 27% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed and this suggests they may not have wanted to comment or did not consider that subcultures affected learning. On the whole a large proportion of teachers felt that subcultures adversely affected learning,

5.5c Analysis of responses to question number two - peer group pressures are a major reason why African-Caribbean boys underachieve

The analysis revealed that 65% of teachers agreed that peer group pressure was a main factor in the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. Teachers would be in a position to make this judgment as they have daily contact with these boys and can see the impact of friends on learning. The small proportion (8%) of teachers who disagreed with this statement could be teaching boys who are focused towards learning and achieving and are not affected by friends. The teachers who neither agreed nor disagreed may not have wanted to say or did not have a view on this and were opting out. They may not have wanted to comment because they may consider African-Caribbean boys underachieve for different reasons or they may not know enough about this to comment.

Teachers considered that peer group pressures existed and said other issues affected boys learning such as having SEN or emotional and behavioural problems. One teacher said "peer group pressure could be positive as it created competitiveness among boys, encouraging them to do better than peers". They continued and said that "peer group pressures could be seen as negative", but one teacher said "negative attitudes carried the most voice". What this teacher meant is that even though peer

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group pressures are negative that students listened to what their peers said because they wanted to conform to group norms and to be part of a group. A teacher said "more positive male role models could help deal with peer pressures". This contradicts what the boys say as they have role models in their lives albeit mostly female ones. Teachers are saying that African-Caribbean boys need more positive role models who could help them to realise that peer group pressures could have a negative impact on their learning and achievement.

5.5d Figure 42 - Analysis of responses to question four – African-Caribbean boys need support group outside of school to help motivate them to learn.
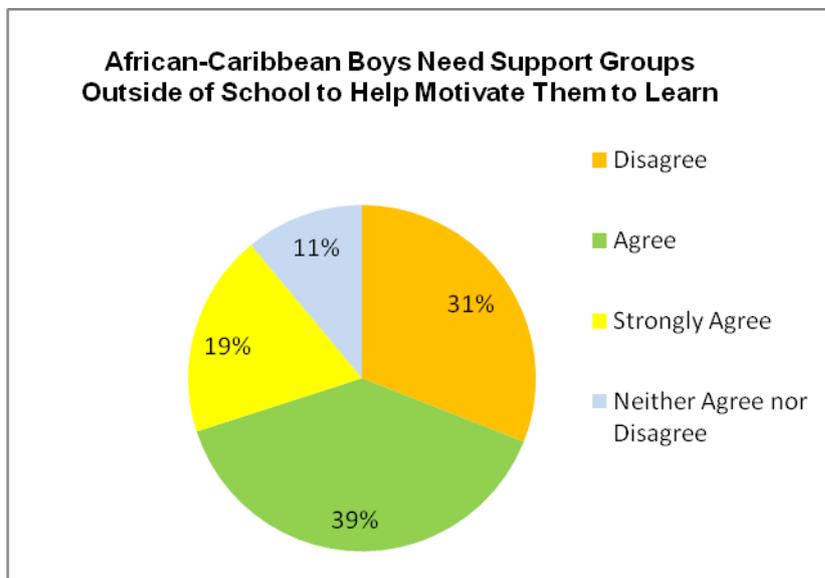
The finding shows that 58% of teachers said African-Caribbean boys needed support groups outside of school to help motivate them. The school systems are not adequate to support boys and they would benefit from outside bodies as a way of raising their aspirations. The findings show that 31% of teachers felt that African-Caribbean boys do not need outside support groups as they see the school as providing adequate support and resources to cater for their needs. Yet the boys continue to underachieve. In their written comments some teachers thought that African-Caribbean boys should not be given special consideration in relation to other groups of students.

Additional comments made by teachers were that positive role models were required from outside organisations such as 'Boys to Men' to boost students' confidence, but

there was also recognition that the needs of students varied. However in providing support it was recognised that it was necessary to ensure that the rest of the school's population was not alienated or that it was not perceived that African-Caribbean boys received special or preferential treatment. What this teacher was saying is that schools should not only focus on African-Caribbean boys and they should not be given special treatment. Another suggestion was that more youth centres were needed, linked to schools. This suggestion will be discussed further in Chapter Six

5.5e Figure 43 – Cluster 2 - what do teachers think about parental involvement in their children's education?

Table Code: 1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3 neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5= strongly agree

Question	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %
Q5 Most parents are actively involved in supporting their children's learning	-	15	38	35	12

5.5f Analysis of responses to question five - most parents are actively involved in supporting their children's learning.

A large proportion of teachers (38%) neither agreed nor disagreed that most parents were actively involved in supporting their children's learning. This could mean that most teachers considered parents could be more actively involved or that some parents left it to schools to educate their children, or some actually thought that some parents were not involved at all. It could also be that these teachers did not want to comment. Over 47% of teachers felt that parents are actively involved. However, only 15% of teachers considered that most parents are not actively involved. One teacher said "African-Caribbean boys are mainly brought up by single working mothers who had to get children ready for school and they were often late and travelled far from home to get to school which affected their schooling". This argument contradicts the evidence about catchment areas discussed in Chapter Two and Three. Another said

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"the prime cause of underachievement is determined by class and with African-Caribbean boys this was compounded by race and lack of family support". The view was that more support would help overcome barriers to success. The findings indicated that teachers were saying that there were a range of factors which contributed to African-Caribbean boys' underachievement such as their family background, race and social class. They also associated boys' underachievement with being brought up by single working mothers and lack of family support. These findings are in line with the arguments of Lupton (2005), Tomlinson (2005), Deforges and Abourchaar (2003) and Little (1983) also discussed in Chapter Two.

A teacher expressed the view "that underachievement is a self-fulfilling prophecy which assumed that these boys were victims". But the same teacher also added that "it could also be more about the lack of father figure in the home as often highlighted by media", but added that "it was not just the African-Caribbean community this exists in and it was more to do with subcultures". Another teacher said that some teachers almost made subconscious judgments about African-Caribbean students about the way they behaved and their subcultures. In other words, what this teacher is saying is that some teachers had preconceived views about these boys. In this respect teachers sometimes do not understand the boys and therefore find it difficult to form positive teacher/student relationship with them, resulting in the students demonstrating resentment, hostility and detachment.

5.5g Figure 44 – Cluster 3 - What do teachers think about the policy implications to changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving? (See Appendix number 5)

Table code: 1= strongly disagree 2= disagree 3=neither agree nor disagree 4 = agree 5= strongly agree

Question No	1 %	2 %	3 %	4 %	5 %
3 – Excluding African-Caribbean boys from school because of behavioural problems is not	12	4	15	38	31

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the most effective way to deal with this problem					
7 – The National Curriculum caters adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities in secondary education	19	27	-	50	4
8 - Schools provides quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children	4	31	34	27	4
9 – Sufficient emphasis is placed on extra-curricular activities to help African-Caribbean boys to achieve better results	8	46	31	11	4
10 – The current political party policies on education enhance diversity	12	27	57	4	-

N.B question number six did not form part of this study. This is discussed further in Chapter Six.

5.5h Figure 45 – Analysis of responses to question three – excluding African-Caribbean boys from school because of behavioural problems is not the most effective way to deal with this problem.
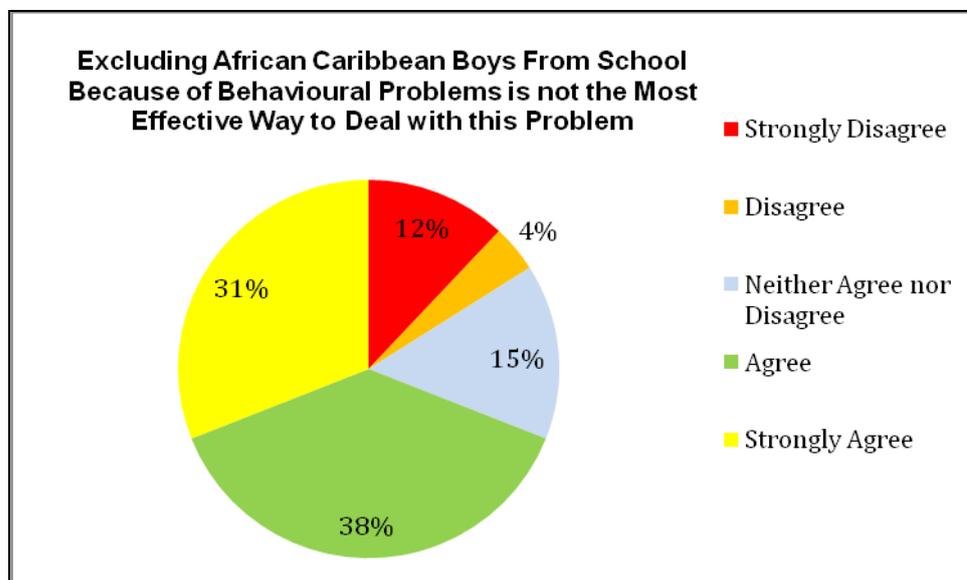
Most teachers agreed that exclusion was not an effective means of dealing with the behavioural problems associated with black boys. This indicates that teachers had positive attitudes towards including black boys in school to foster learning. A small

proportion of teachers who disagreed with this statement could be strict disciplinarians and may have felt that the boys disrupted others.

Teachers said that African-Caribbean boys were more likely to be excluded than all other groups. Some teachers said that exclusion from school did not address poor behaviour as boys were let loose on the streets and got into trouble and became entrenched in subcultures. One teacher said that "this negative activity could be seen as attractive among those excluded and does not help students to progress learning". One teacher thought that "exclusion is the answer for students who misbehaved and if bad behaviour is not addressed it results in reoccurrences". The issue of exclusion is discussed in Chapter Two and Three. The findings are that exclusion was not always the answer to address poor behaviour. One teacher said that "boys often became involved in street cultures which had a negative impact on their learning" although the same teacher added that "these activities may seem appealing to boys but it does not promote their learning".

5.5i Figure 46 – Analysis of responses to question number seven - the National Curriculum caters adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities in secondary education.
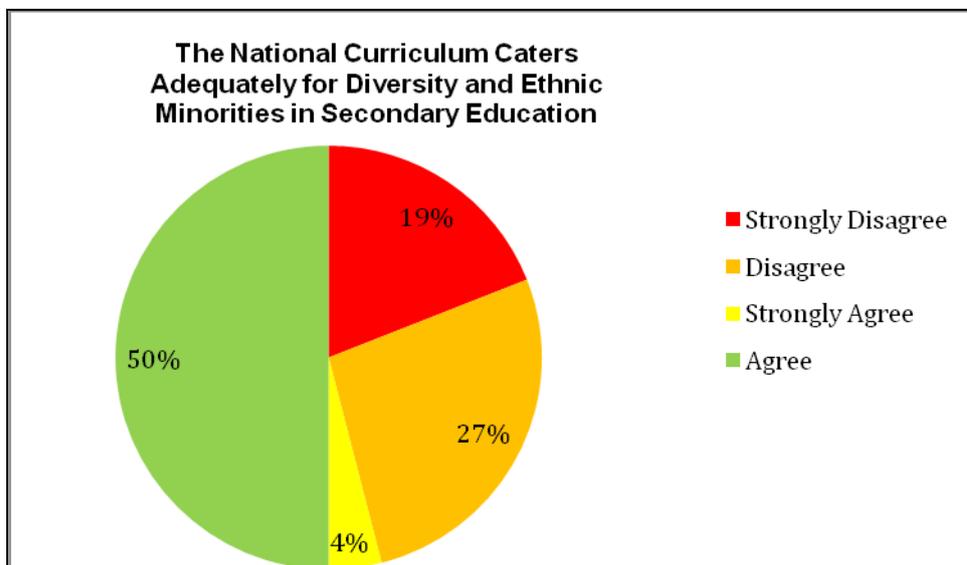
Over 54% of teachers agreed that the National Curriculum catered adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities. The findings indicate that these teachers are of the opinion that special provision should not be made for ethnic minority children and that all groups should be treated the same. The 46% of teachers who disagreed may believe that ethnic minority children were not given adequate consideration in the curriculum and that policies did not cater for their needs although they did not directly say so.

In the 'additional comments' from the questionnaire one teacher said that "the curriculum offered lots of inspirational topics in many subjects but it did not cater for social needs, abilities or aptitudes and only catered for middle to upper range abilities and children from advantaged backgrounds. Teachers agreed that the curriculum did not cater fully for students of low ability or students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although teacher training enables/prepares teachers to differentiate and the National Curriculum is a framework which teachers customise accordingly. Another teacher said that "the curriculum should reflect positive achievements of black people and their history". Although the National Curriculum does not restrict or prohibit this in its programme, it is not build into the curriculum to cater for diversity. It is the school and some teachers who may introduce black issues.

There were teachers who considered that the curriculum enabled a wide choice, especially English as a subject and what was important were resources and choices offered by the different subject areas within schools. One teacher said that "if the black community feels differently they should come up with a specific menu that provided diversity" **(see Appendix thirteen).** Another teacher said "the responsibility is with the black community and the curriculum should be for one and all students".

Some teachers did not consider that African-Caribbean boys should be specifically catered for in the curriculum. Some teachers said that "there was little targeted extra curriculum provision directed at African-Caribbean boys and they and other groups felt alienated from mainstream school". However one teacher said that "when attempts were made in the school to cater for boys in a particular year group there were accusations by some teachers of institutional racism because the majority of

students targeted for this were African-Caribbean". Speaking from the perspective of an insider (teacher/researcher) little evidence of targeted extra curriculum activities for African-Caribbean boys is seen. The interview with the headteacher also revealed that senior black teachers resented programmes for these boys accusing the school of racism for singling out black boys. The issue of institutional racism is discussed in Chapter Three.

5.5j Figure 47 – Analysis of responses to question eight – schools provides quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children
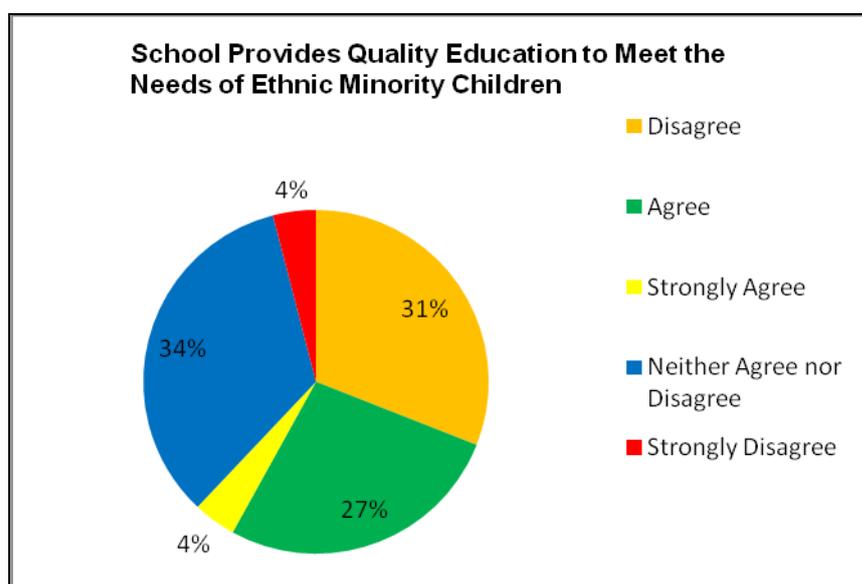
Of the teachers surveyed, 35% reported that schools did not provide quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children. 31% agreed that schools did meet children's needs. This could be a major reason why African-Caribbean boys underachieve as schools do not provide them with a quality education because they are 'hidden' or 'lost'. This is discussed in Chapter Three. However, 34% neither agreed nor disagreed. They may have considered that school did provide quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children or they may have considered that these children should not be given additional consideration.

In addition, most teachers agreed schools provided quality education, but some disagreed that they did and said that it depended on the school. One teacher said

"there are very few African-Caribbean boys who did A-level courses". Another teacher held the view, however that the curriculum was a "one size fit all".

One teacher pointed out that "African-Caribbean boys did well in primary school and I am not sure where things went wrong". This teacher suggested that it was more to do with hormonal changes. Another teacher said that "boys need to be encouraged in Year 7 and 8 and their achievement celebrated". The teacher suggested that "early intervention is required at KS3 to encourage and praise boys and help them stay on track", a view supported by Ainsworth (2006) and DA Vision (2004).

A teacher said that "a main factor in achievement is the perception of African-Caribbean boys' by teachers/schools; and there are schools where these boys achieved the same or better results than other ethnic groups". This signified that in some schools students achieved according to their teachers' expectations of them. What is being said is that not all African-Caribbean boys underachieved and it depended on the school and teaching. However, one teacher said that "students in Britain do not make the most of education as opposed to others in third world countries where students have a thirst to learn and work hard to achieve even though they had fewer opportunities". This teacher said "I blame the parents for their children's failure in school because they should educate their children about the importance of school".

5.5k Figure 48 - Analysis of responses to question nine– sufficient emphasis is placed on extra-curricular activities to help African-Caribbean boys to achieve better results.
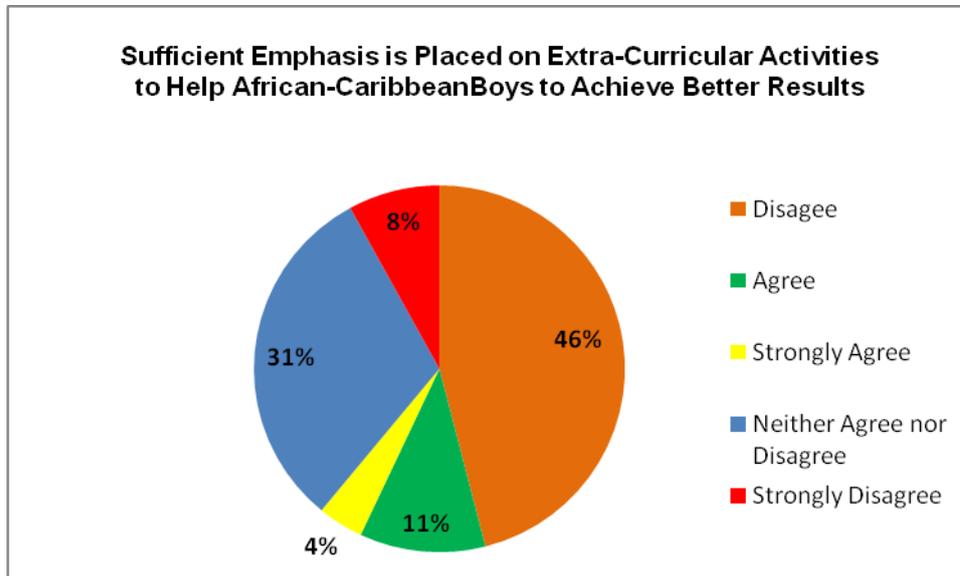
The findings reveal that 58% teachers did not think that the school met the extra-curricular needs of African-Caribbean boys. A large proportion (31%) did not form a view or did not want to say. It could be that these teachers did not think that African-Caribbean boys should be given preferential treatment or that the curriculum was sufficient to meet the needs of these boys. This finding indicates that there is a need for more activities to help boys to achieve better results and that the school is not currently catering for such needs. Extra curricular activities rely upon volunteers. Teachers themselves can impact/contribute to this shortfall.

5.5l Figure 49 – Analysis of responses to question ten – the current political party policies on education enhances diversity.
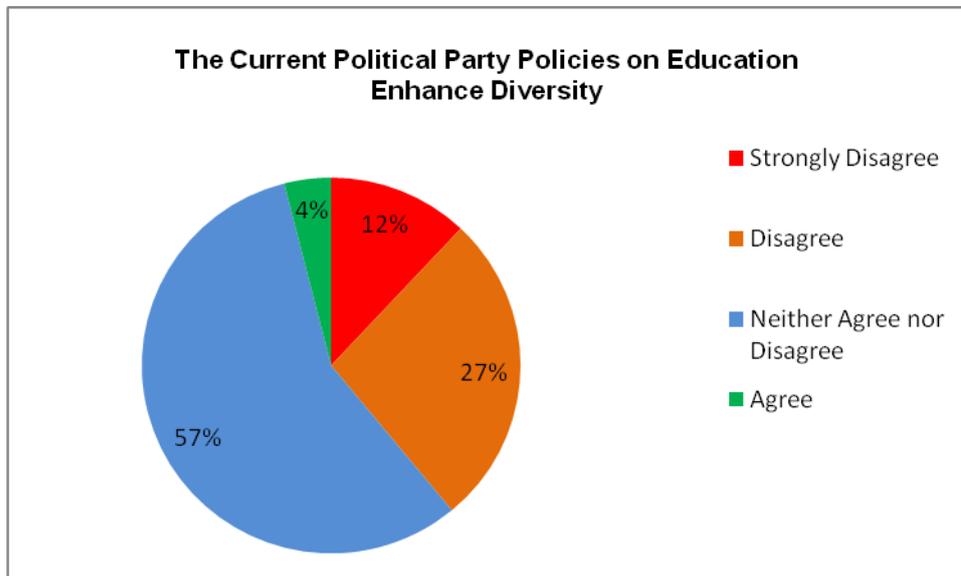
Only 4% of teachers considered that current political party policy on education enhanced diversity. It could be that teachers have biased views and do not consider policies should cater for diversity. The majority (57%) of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed. This finding indicates that they did not form a view or feel that diversity is not an important issue. Some teachers may not feel qualified to comment or believe that some policies do whilst others do not. However, 39% of teachers disagreed that the policies enhanced diversity.

Additionally, a teacher considered that "diversity is not just about race but also about religion and respect which the government has failed to illustrate in their policies for diversity and more talk of unity was required". The view of another teacher was that the "policy makers sometimes lacked in-depth knowledge or skills to address issues and there was no clear policies - where there were, these still fluctuated incoherently". This view is supported by John (2006), Tomlinson (2005), Muir and Smithers (2004) Gilborn and Mirza (2000), Corson (1998) and Macpherson (1998) discussed in Chapter Two.

5.6 Findings from the interview with the headteacher of the Inner London School - (see Appendix two).

How does the headteacher perceive the attitudes of African-Caribbean boys towards learning, subcultures and socialisation in school?

5.6a What does the headteacher think about parental involvement in their children's learning?

What does the headteacher think about the policy implications to changing African-Caribbean boys' attitude to learning and achieving (see Appendix two)?

The headteacher plays a strategic role in the management of the school and in driving the government's educational policies. The analysis of the interview with her revealed that she saw the school as a typical inner-city secondary, catering for Asians, European and other ethnic minorities. Most students spoke their own languages at home. She said the school was vibrant and harmonious but with not enough integration of the different races and that African-Caribbean students mixed very little but there were no racial conflicts. The headteacher saw the school surrounding vicinity as a violent community with large gangs, knife and gun crimes and reported a middle class flight which started in 2000, which meant that people left the area for more affluent locations. The majority of children were of Asian descent with only 15% being African-Caribbean. Students spoke thirty five different languages which made progression difficult in curriculum planning. This is in terms of teaching staff with appropriate languages to meet the needs of all students, sufficient support staff for SEN and EAL students. Some African-Caribbean students were held back academically by EAL students because they were not separated and some students were wrongly placed in groups needing EAL support because some of these boys had Caribbean accent which were considered as needing additional help or that they were taught together with students with EAL and held back because the teaching pace had to cater for these students with EAL. It is ironic that nearly forty years after Coard (1971) this situation still prevails and little is done to rectify the problem which is a failure on the part of the school leadership.

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The headteacher said that lack of African-Caribbean boys in the Sixth Form was because they did not meet the requirement to go on to A-level subjects and as a result they left at the end of GCSE examinations. She also said that African-Caribbean boys were alienated by the school at KS4 because they underachieved and left the school as they could not progress. She said that African-Caribbean girls also underachieved but boys were worst.

The headteacher said that African-Caribbean boys underachieved because schools had low expectation of them and in turn boys dealt with this through their attitude and behaviour. As the key leader in the school this is a major confession on her part as her responsibility is to raise standards and ensure all children achieve. She also said that alienation from school could be one of the reasons African-Caribbean boys formed subcultures in school. According to the headteacher systems are required to track African-Caribbean boys from SATS to GCSE to ensure better results. This view can be argued to be a bit shallow as the issues affecting black boys are much wider than that. African-Caribbean boys develop subcultures as a way of forming an identity of their own (in common with all subcultures) which they could relate to. The way they dress, (even though KS3 and KS4 wore uniforms) their body language and attitudes have a negative impact on how teachers' perceive them. The headteacher said African-Caribbean boys lacked male role models and some had parents who were anti-authority and this affected achievement and de-motivated boys. She argued that some students were in local authority care, had SEN or were on FSM which indicates that they came from lower socio-economic areas. The headteacher said that ethnicity played only a small part in underachievement and other factors were at play. This tells me that the headteacher was focused on delivering a curriculum for the school and that insufficient focus was placed on the needs of African-Caribbean boys because she saw the problem to be more with the parents and the boys themselves.

The headteacher admitted there was a need to work with and involve parents more and to use school data to support children and their parents. Her view was that African-Caribbean students resided in the poorest areas and children's social class background played a huge role in their achievement. She said that the different

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groups who underachieved had deprivation in common and she wondered if the African-Caribbean boys who did well were from a middle class background. She asserted that early mentoring was important for role modelling and that when she appointed a young black male mentor students became more focused because someone now showed interest. The mentor also had expectations for these students. She said there was a need for more positive attitude from black staff and that African-Caribbean boys should be separated from EAL students, but that some senior black teachers were reluctant to separate them. This indicates poor leadership skills on the part of the headteacher in allowing senior black teachers to change her plans to address the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys at the ILS. She added there was a need for more focus on homework, better teaching materials, improved schemes of work and more use of ICT in teaching. However, this is general and generic to benefit all learners.

The headteacher said that some teachers should reflect periodically on their expectations and attitudes towards different groups and admitted that institutional racism existed but may not be intentional, but rather that this can be viewed as stereotyping or cross-cultural misunderstanding in teachers. I noted that the headteacher was more focused on raising standards in GCSEs than on meeting the specific needs of African-Caribbean boys because they were only a small percentage of the population. However, African-Caribbean would be catered for in this raising of standards.

5.7 Figure 50 – An evaluation of the general approach adopted to answer the research question

Participants	Data Collection Methods	Methods of Analysis	Was the Research Question Answered
Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 African-Caribbean boys 15 boys from Year 10 and 11 and 5 from Year 12 and 13	Questionnaire	SPSS Software EXCEL Spreadsheet Content Analysis (of written comments)	Very useful data obtained which assisted in answering the research question but further clarification through interviews required

Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 African-Caribbean boys - 5 boys from Year 10 and Year 11 and 2 from Year 12 and Year 13	Semi-Structured Interviews	Content Analysis	Yes – the interview provided the opportunity to develop on the findings of the questionnaire and provide a rich source of data to answer the research question obtained
All fourteen boys in the interview sample	Sociogram	Content Analysis	The sociogram aimed to provide a background of the boys, their socialising and key people in their lives.
Teachers in the ILS (26 in total)	Questionnaire	SPSS Software EXCEL Spreadsheet Content Analysis (of written comments)	Provided a rich source of data which help to identify teachers perspectives of African-Caribbean boys in the ILS
Headteacher of the ILS	Semi-Structured Interview	Content Analysis	The interview with the headteacher provided a strategic view of African-Caribbean boys in school
Bernard Coard	Interviews	Content Analysis	The interviews with Bernard Coard, which took place from 2004 to 2009 when I visited the island of Grenada, provided a general historical background for my work which helped in formulating the research questions.

The above approach provided a rich source of data which was analysed in this chapter and the findings used to make recommendations in Chapter Six as to how strategies can be developed to help African-Caribbean boys improve their academic achievement.

5.8 Overall findings:

The reasons why African-Caribbean boys are underachieving in particular parts of education have been highlighted in the Literature Review. Reasons identified include peer group pressures, masculinity and negative subcultures. Their background and social class is also said to contribute to underachievement. The Literature Review covered various perspectives such as the historical, political, social class background, race, masculinity, students' attitude and subcultures.   It looked at the arguments that recent education reforms have not catered adequately for diversity, and that ethnic minority students have suffered under a curriculum which did not meet their needs. The Institutional Focus Study (Chapter Three) described the main features of the ILS as well as providing an account of the area in which it was located. I described ILS as a largely working class school. The implications of this are that if there are differences in performance between different groups in the school then it is important to examine other factors rather than simply the affects of socio-economic conditions outlined in the literature review.

The school in the study is also 'multi-cultural' with very few white children. The largest group of students were those who originated from the Indian sub-continent, but there were also an increasing number of Black African and refugee students. The African-Caribbean students in the school are a relatively small minority and African-Caribbean boys continue to perform poorly although this was not the case with African-Caribbean girls   As I described in Chapter Three, these boys were heavily under represented in the school's Sixth Form and over represented in the LSU.

From the case study it was clear that the large majority of the boys in the study wanted to do well at school and understood the importance of gaining qualifications. Almost all of the boys felt that it was important to have GCSEs, A-levels and to go to university. Most boys had high expectations and wanted respectable jobs in the future. Some boys did not see themselves getting good jobs because they were not doing well in school.

From my research findings it is clear that issues of masculinity and subculture referred to in the literature review as issues that might undermine educational performance- are important in the life of African-Caribbean boys. However I have argued that there is little evidence to suggest, for example, that the subculture the boys brought with them, even though it was distinct, impeded on their learning. On the contrary many boys were able to interchangeable transit between their subculture into the main school culture. They were well aware that members of their peer group could interfere with their learning, but only if they let them. In Chapter Three there was some discussion about some of the negative aspects of peer group pressures and the role this plays in boys learning. However, in Chapter Five it was identified that peer group pressures can actually foster a positive and competitive relationships among students and teachers need to recognise this in order to help boys learn together.

The evidence from Chapter Five would suggest that many of the reasons for the failure of a large number of these boys can be found in the lack of attention by the school to their particular needs. For example, while the school was committed to raising standards generally, there was little sense that specific policies might be required to address the needs of these boys. As I have shown in Chapter Three, the needs of these boys are 'hidden' or mistakenly combined with the needs of other students. The research findings show that some of the boys in the study did not think that their teachers properly understood them or their culture even if they did have good working relationships with some teachers. The fact that a large number of teachers in the school are 'black' did not always mean that the boys were able to identify with them or see them as being role models. While there were allegations from the some of the boys about racism most were able to relate to their white teachers. The most vocal anti-teacher comments made by the boys were mainly against the two senior African-Caribbean teachers.

Half of the teachers thought that the boys' sub- cultures affected their attitude to school or their behaviour. Some teachers also mentioned the fact that some boys only had one parent or had poor role models at home. This was in contrast to what many of the boys had reported. Many boys said that there were important people in their lives who were inspirational. Teachers said that there was a need to work and involve

parents more in their children's learning and to use data to support them and that level of involvement depended on parents' social class background. Boys on the other hand said that their parents supported and encouraged them to learn and that they were good role models for them.

While many of the boys complained that what went on in school was not exciting or relevant to them, half of the teachers in the survey thought that the National Curriculum catered for all minorities. Approximately half of the teachers also thought that the curriculum was already multi-cultural enough and many did not think that there needed to be specific changes to address the issue of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and that African-Caribbean boys should not be given special treatment.

The interview with the Headteacher confirmed these arguments. Although she was aware of the cultural diversity of the area and was prepared to acknowledge that institutionalised racism did exist, the headteacher thought that staff should be trained to look for materials that promote diversity and she considered that this should be included in teachers' schemes of work. The headteacher also considered that teachers working in multicultural schools should reflect on their own attitudes towards different groups. She suggested that these biased views could be from teachers who come from Africa, Asia and Australia. The headteacher said that these teachers do not have the same consciousness and sensitivity as British teachers from all backgrounds.

In conclusion, at times the headteacher tended to see the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys as part of a more general problem of underachievement and the need to raise standards. For example, she considered that the problem of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement was either a resource problem or could be put right by better tracking and monitoring. She did not recognise the systemic failure of the school to cater for the needs of the boys. As I have noted in the interview with the headteacher, she linked the failure of African-Caribbean boys with some of the general failings of the school. I have not had the opportunity to discuss with the

headteacher how these boys have become a 'hidden' population in the school as first mentioned in Chapter Three.

The headteacher argues that there was a need to track African Caribbean boys from SATS to GCSE to ensure better results. However, Chapter Three indicates that such data does not currently exist. She also asserts that there is a need to work and involve parents more but added that some parents are anti-authority, that is to say that they go against the school and it was difficult to work with them. This contradicts evidence from the boys who said that they have influential people/parents in their lives. The headteacher considers that African-Caribbean boys were just as likely to become alienated from school because they failed to achieve, rather than because they might not be properly provided for by the school. It could be argued that these are symptomatic of each other. The headteacher could be seen as arguing that ethnicity plays only a small part in underachievement and there are other factors at play.

5.9 Summary

This Chapter has provided an explanation and discussed the findings of the questionnaires with teachers and students and the interviews with students and the headteacher. The result from the students and teachers study was discussed and shows that African-Caribbean boys wanted to learn and achieve good qualification and careers. It was also found, that some boys were prevented from reaching their full potential as a result of lack of understanding by school about their needs. This demonstrates the systemic failure of the school to meet the needs of African-Caribbean boys.

There were some boys who talked about careers, such as being a drummer or a movie director but on the whole boys had realistic aspirations about their future careers and had a good idea of what they would be doing in five and ten years time. All the boys made the connection between doing well at school and having careers. They saw school as a place to learn; but they also saw it as a place to socialise and meet friends. I found that the boys moved freely between the main school culture and the subculture but still wanted to learn and play in equal measures which may sometimes lead to behavioural problems. In this respect the boys could be 'their own worst enemies'.

The systemic failures within the school included an inappropriate curriculum which does not fully cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys and so they become 'hidden'. There was also a systemic failure to separate the boys from EAL and SEN students because of senior black staff and weak leadership. Another issue is that the school failed to identify boys with SEN as early as KS3 (see Chapter Two and Three) and as a result the boys were "lost" or 'hidden' within the school. This is specifically so with the Year 12 boy identified in this study with weak spelling who may have had SEN needs. The findings reveal that even in Year 12 boys did not see GCSE and A-level qualification as a viable option. This was because they could not progress their learning. The reasons given by the teachers and the boys have been analysed in the interviews and questionnaires.

Many teachers blamed the boys' subculture for their lack of achievement and a number of teachers thought the boys did not have parental support, which is contrary to what the boys themselves said. There were some teachers who thought that there needed to be specific policies and a different curriculum for the boys. There were some, however, who did not consider that the boys should be given 'preferential' treatment.

Even though the headteacher was aware that African-Caribbean boys underachieved she thought that it was part of a general problem of low standards within the school. She said that it was factors outside of the school which caused the underachievement such as lack of parental support, single parenting and that the boys came from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

The final chapter looks at the implications of my research for the formulation of policies. It includes a series of recommendations. This chapter also provides an evaluation of my findings and discusses how issues of validity were addressed.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH EVALUATION, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the previous chapter I have discussed in-depth the findings of my research. In this chapter I provide an evaluation and then provide a further summary of my findings. I also discuss their implications for the future in relation to the existing literature about the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys, the gaps and further work that is needed.

6.1 An evaluation of my research and how validity was addressed

The research was approached with a 'balanced' view. In other words as well as hearing it from the boys it was also important to investigate what teachers thought of African-Caribbean boys and how they saw them in school, their learning, their achievement and the subcultures they developed. Additionally, it was important to have the view of the headteacher, to find out her vision for the school, how she saw the problem and what she considered was the way forward.

In relation to the discussion in Chapter Four about the issues of being a teacher researcher and the implications for validity, a colleague within the school was also asked to assess how I had conducted the research. This was done to establish if I was lenient or had over emphasised in any aspect of the research or if as a researcher I had been too assertive with students. It was necessary to ensure that the role of researcher had not been exploited. Below I have summarised a range of strategies that is adopted to validate the research.

According to Creswell (2003) using peer debriefing helps to enhance the accuracy of the study. This was achieved with the assistance of my colleague Dr. Allen, (who is an education researcher himself) who observed me carrying out interviews and completing questionnaires with students. He was aware that this work was part of an

education doctorate at Brunel University. He considered that the research had been conducted in a professional and objective manner and that the confidence of students was not compromised in any way **(see Appendix fourteen).**

Throughout the study I attempted to maintain a professional approach and I was careful to separate my role as a teacher from that of a researcher in order to avoid bias. As I discuss in-depth in Chapter Four, there were benefits from being a teacher in that participants were more accessible and, as some of the boys knew me, there was a sense of trust which enabled them to be open in their responses. Most of the participants looked relaxed during the data gathering but there were some boys who felt nervous about providing information. It could be that these boys did not know me very well, felt that information they gave would be used against them or did not completely trust me as a researcher. In Chapter Four, I used a sociogram to help make boys feel relaxed. However, in future I would look at more techniques to help boys relax during the interview. Under different circumstances it would be beneficial to use a larger sample including boys from another school as this would provide a larger sample of response for the study and also a contrast could be provided of a different organisation. I would want to get more participants from Years 12 and 13 in order to get a wider spread of responses and to compare other schools with the ILS. As discussed in Chapter Three (IFS), in the ILS there were few African-Caribbean boys in the school and particularly in the Sixth Form. The findings have been based on these few. In a future study it would be useful to find a school with a larger population of African-Caribbean boys, particularly in the Sixth Form.

In Chapter Four I have also discussed the case study methodology used in this study. Whilst conducting the study of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement, I have given careful consideration to the data collection methods. The use of triangulation involves employing more than one method of collecting the data. Throughout the study I gave careful consideration to the issue of validity and reliability. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001) validity is an important key to effective research. They argue that if a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless. Validity is thus a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative/naturalistic research.

It was also important to consider validation of the data collected when analysing it. By coding the transcript and putting the data into themes and also doing the same for the comments on the questionnaire, I was able to get a picture of what the participants said within each theme. According to Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) a coded list with brief definitions of each code allows a passage of text to be coded each time it is read and checked against the code to ensure both that the coding is appropriate and that the definition is still adequate.

According to Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) it is possible to involve participants and respondents during the later, analysis stages of a project. They can be consulted about the adequacy of transcription of interviews and about the kind of interpretations and explanations the data analysis has generated. This is known as member validation. The view held by Creswell (2003) is that validation can be done by using participants (member-checking) to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings. He argues that through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants it can allow these participants to verify the analysis. The headteacher confirmed that the interview transcript and analysis summary was a true account of what she had said. Two boys from both year 10 and year 11 (out of the five from each year interviewed) also confirmed that the interview was an accurate account of what they had told me and did not want to remove or add anything more. Confirmation of accuracy from one boy in year 12 and one in year 13 was obtained to ensure consistency in what they had said.

According to Creswell (2003) self reflection creates an open and honest narrative that will resonate well with readers. I have provided a reflective view of my roles as teacher and researcher in Chapter Four, 4.10 to 4.19, discussing the benefits and limitations of being a teacher and a researcher in the ILS. As a researcher, I have also been able to reflect on the approach adopted throughout the study and to establish whether it was biased in anyway and if I had remained objective throughout the research separating my role as a teacher and as a researcher. I also focused on the research questions to be answered and gave careful consideration to the data

collection methods in order to ensure they were designed around the questions that needed to be answered. I also considered the most suitable methods to be used in the study in order to ensure that data collected and analysis was valid and directly focused on the study of African-Caribbean boys and their teachers.

According to Creswell (2003) spending prolonged time in the field allows the researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and the people. It also lends credibility to the narrative account. I have discussed this issue in the section on 'teacher/researcher' in Chapter Four. As I have worked in the school as a teacher for a number of years, this has given me the opportunity to spend a long time in the school and develop a better understanding of African-Caribbean boys in their own settings. I have always been conscious of the need to be a focused researcher and to detach my teaching role from the study.

Creswell (2003) say that one way to validate the findings is to use an external auditor to review the entire project. I enlisted an associate, Karl Brooks, an ex teacher and now an educational psychologist to read my work. He knew little about the school where the research was conducted. I knew Karl on a professional level working as a Justice of the Peace which was totally separate from education. He provided feedback to say that I appeared to be very systematic in my approach to the entire study and that it was a good piece of work which demonstrated commitment and enthusiasm. In his view, from reading the work, looking at the questionnaire, interview questions and sociogram, I had remained focused on the study and appeared objective in the systematic way I had reported the work.

The view held by Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) is that trustworthiness or reliability can be seen as the degree to which different observers, researchers etc. (or the same observers etc. on different occasions) make the same observations or collect the same data about the same object of study. The concept is highly contentious in qualitative research where it is often not clear what the same object of study is and researchers can differ in the interpretations. The view held by Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) is that one way to engender trustworthiness is to include evidence in

your analytical reports. Usually this takes the form of quotations from interviews and field notes, along with detailed descriptions of episodes, events and settings. In the study with African-Caribbean boys in Chapter Five, 5.2 and 5.3, I have used several quotes from the boys as a way of engendering trustworthiness.

6.2 Validating the questionnaire

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) the advantage of using a questionnaire over interviews, for instance, is that it tends to be more reliable; because it is anonymous, it encourages greater honesty. However, dishonesty and falsification might not be able to be discovered in questionnaires as it is sometimes difficult to tell if all participants are answering honestly. Some boys may not be entirely honest in their responses and this cannot be spotted. Therefore validity is an issue in this respect. I conducted a pilot questionnaire survey for teachers and students and I also asked a small sample of students to complete them. This led me to realise that I needed to restructure the questions to make the questionnaire more focussed on the research questions and to make it more participant friendly. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) argue there is a need to pilot the questionnaire and refine its content, wording, and length as appropriate for the sample being targeted. As a result of the pilot study, the decision was made that an attitudinal survey would best suit the research questions to be answered and that this would be followed by an interview to obtain further data.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2003) one central issue in considering the reliability or validity of questionnaire survey is that of sampling. An unrepresentative, skewed sample, one that is too small or too large, can easily distort the data, and indeed, in the case of very small samples, prohibit statistical analysis. I have discussed the issue of sampling in Chapter Four, 4.22 to 4.27. In order to ensure validity I used a representative sample of teachers and also made sure that there was a representative sample from year 10 and 11 and a representative sample of year 12 and 13 in the sixth form. I have discussed the problem of the lack of African-Caribbean boys in the sixth form in the ILS.

In analysing the statements in the questionnaires using SPSS software, quantitative data was obtained. This was put into charts and graphs. The data from the questionnaire recorded what the boys' views. The comments on the questionnaire were coded and put into themes which again recorded what had actually said. I ensured that the data was checked against the analysis after being entered to make sure that there were no transposition errors. I also cross checked the transposition from the SPSS analysis on the Excel spreadsheet to ensure that there was no input errors.

According to Yin (2009) validity usually refers to external and internal validity which links the cause and effect and allows the researcher to remain objective whilst conducting the study. There is a possibility however, that my interpretation of the findings may have been influenced by the fact that I was a teacher researcher in the same school being studied. Also my passion for the subject may also have influenced the study. However, this was reconciled through ensuring that checks were made throughout the study to ensure validity and I also asked two critical friends to review the work conducted as a way of checking the validity.

The issue of reliability, trustworthiness and bias was addressed from the outset of the research. The data collection was designed with the research question in mind. Also pilot questionnaires were given to students. The questionnaires were redesigned to focus more on the research questions. I also asked the headteacher to validate that the transcript of the interview with her was a true and accurate record of what she had said. I did the same with the students. The interviews with the boys were also a way of validating what they had said in the questionnaire and acted as a way of gathering additional information which the questionnaire could not accommodate.

In a future study, I would redesign the questionnaire to ensure that for example, the boys would be pressed further to find out how they interacted between the main school culture and their subculture and how they regarded the impact of both cultures on their learning. It might also be better to group the questions into different themes such as teaching, learning, and subcultures.

In the scenario given to boys the consequences of bad behaviour and issues around discipline should have been explored further through follow up interviews. This could also be the subject of a further study. Finally it would be interesting to find out as part of a future study what has happened to the two Year 13 boys who went on to university and what has happened to the Years 10, 11 and 12 boys who participated in the research.

Although the sample of teachers represented the population of the teaching staff at ILS in the school, I would ensure that teachers provided information about their race, subjects they taught and their gender, as this information would be very useful to inform the discussions around teacher impact on student attainment/performance.

Teachers were asked whether support groups outside of school would help to motivate African-Caribbean boys, but this question was not posed to the boys. This additional information should be addressed in any future study.

Teachers gave contradictory responses to the questions about whether the National Curriculum catered adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities in secondary schools. There were some teachers who did consider the curriculum was adequate and some felt it was not. However, there were two teachers felt that African-Caribbean boys should not be given preferential treatment. This is an area which requires further study to explore how the curriculum could be developed to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys.

In a future study it would also be interesting to involve parents as participants in the research as it is often claimed that African-Caribbean students underachieved because of a lack of parental support or because they come from single parent families. Involving parents is important so that they become aware of how their children learn and behave within the school culture and also to establish their views about boys' subcultures and attitudes to teaching and learning.

It would be useful to find out the nature of parents employment in order to establish their social class background and measure this variable on the students' performance.

In designing the questionnaires, I have discovered a design flaw in that, I should not have given the boys and their teachers the opportunity to respond 'neither agree nor disagree'. They should not have had the opportunity to 'sit on the fence' or 'opt out'. The boys and their teachers should have been given only a four tier option. Therefore they would strongly agree, agree or strongly disagree or disagree. The design flaw allowing participants responding to 'sit on the fence' did not specifically tell me the views of the boys who answered neither agreed nor disagreed. Redesigning the questionnaire would provide data which would be richer in that responses would be much clearer and voices more clearly articulated.

6.3 The significance of this study

Much has been said about African-Caribbean boys and why they are reported to be underachieving. This study has undertaken a body of research and identified areas where further research should be conducted. In particular, it has set out to hear the views of African-Caribbean boys themselves regarding how they view school, teachers, learning and peer group pressures that influence learning. It also investigated the subcultures they develop and how these affect learning. Few researchers have attempted to fully 'hear it from the boys' in a school situation. Sewell (2005) discussed in Chapter Two, in his 'Hometown' school study is probably the most significant. This new research will be valuable to educationalists and teachers to develop greater knowledge and understanding of African-Caribbean boys and why they sometimes behave in the ways they do.

As stated in Chapter One, I have been particularly influenced by the work of Bernard Coard (1971) and also the assertion by Trevor Phillips (2005), the former Commissioner for Racial Equality, that African-Caribbean boys are becoming a new 'underclass' in society. I have argued that, in contrast to the situation described by Coard in the 1960s and early 1970s, where African-Caribbean children constituted a visible minority in predominantly 'white' schools, African-Caribbean boys in particular are an increasingly 'hidden' group of students. This is because they are just one of a number of different ethnic groups. The fact that many of the resources at the ILS are devoted to EAL and SEN students, with whom African-Caribbean boys

are mistakenly grouped, only intensifies this situation. As a result, in the IFS I have argued that the specific needs of African-Caribbean boys appear to be being ignored. When Coard was writing it could be argued that at least parts of the British education system were overtly racist. My argument is that the racism that currently exists is now 'institutionalised' and covert within the school's systems. Teachers in ILS are committed to their students and operate in a multi-cultural environment. With the one exception that I have referred to in Chapter Five, they can hardly be called 'racist'. It is still the case, however, that African-Caribbean boys perform poorly and as is clear from the IFS in Chapter Three, not only are these boys 'hidden' but they are also over represented in the LSU.

My arguments are still that, as was the case when Coard (1971) was writing, it is school structures and practices that are the major contributor to the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. However, in the ILS, there are different structures and different processes at work compared to those that were identified by Coard (1971). Even though, in Chapter Five I have provided a detailed account of the boys' subculture which included everything from music, friends and body image ('tonking'), I have argued that this sort of masculinity displayed by the boys is not in itself something that is anti educational.

The evidence from the study shows that African-Caribbean boys want to learn and do well academically, because they understand the value of educational qualifications in helping them to achieve success in their lives. I have shown how, to varying degrees, the boys are able to move out of their subculture and enter into the main culture of the school even if they do not always endorse the main culture they are able to conform to it as they move around the school. However, I did find some boys who did not move easily between the two cultures and therefore they were sent to the LSU.

If African-Caribbean boys' masculinity is not a threat to their willingness to learn, then one of the contributions I have made is to argue that it is teachers' perceptions of these boys that are a main reason for their underachievement. As I have shown in Chapter Five, there is a lack of understanding of the boys' subculture in ILS. For example, it is perceived to be negative and even threatening. Teachers do not

understand that the masculinity displayed by these boys should not threaten their academic performances.

The following recommendations aim to address some of the issues arising from the research findings. Later in the chapter, I include an outline of an LEA training package that will incorporate some of the recommendations.

6.4 Recommendation for a set of programmes to ensure teacher training

Teachers must develop strategies which ensure that they work with the subcultures of African-Caribbean boys, much in the same way that boys work well in the main school culture and then return back to their subculture. This can be achieved through teacher training and awareness of different cultures so that they can interact well with the boys in the playground and in the classroom.

The programme of INSET must ensure that teachers gain a greater cultural understanding of African-Caribbean boys which will help to make them understand the boys and also to become better teachers. This would also enable teachers' to feel confident about developing high expectation of the boys, while avoiding stereotyping, cross-cultural misunderstanding and possible victimisation. This issue has been discussed in Chapter Five. Such an INSET programme should try to enable teachers to feel less threatened or intimidated by subcultures and recognise that just because boys develop these it does not mean they do not want to learn.

The INSET programme should also help teachers to understand that institutional racism is a part of reality, but that they do not have to feel threatened as individuals. In other words, the INSET should have a dimension which explains to teachers' that individual actions may be the products of wider practices inbuilt in school structure which leads to systemic racism. It should also aim to inform school staff that working in a culturally diverse school does not necessarily mean that all teachers embrace diversity and that these are the teachers who may feel most threatened. This training should commence in the initial stages of teacher training and be reinforced throughout a teacher's professional career. For example, I have recently signed up for a course in Leadership in Diversity. This study has made me realise that I need to become more

culturally aware in order to remain teaching in London. I value the different cultures and seek to learn from them. This should be so for all teachers.

Teachers should be encouraged to develop a higher level of awareness about issues affecting African-Caribbean boys. This means that there needs to be an understanding of the journey of West Indian people and their children. It is only by doing this that teachers will be able to adopt appropriate strategies in the classroom. What I am arguing is that improving teaching technique by itself is not enough. As my study has provided an historical context to the problem of African-Caribbean boys' underachievement and has reconnected with the work conducted by Coard (1971), I think that my contribution has provided a greater understanding of life in the classroom for African-Caribbean boys today in comparison to their counterparts in those early days of the 1970's. The early West Indian children suffered overt racism because they were singled out, labelled and placed in ESN schools. African-Caribbean boys remain in mainstream school but they suffer the systemic failure to indentify and cater for their needs.

Teachers also need training in appropriate pedagogical techniques and in motivational principles to make school fun and less boring for these boys. Through this study I have contributed in identifying that African-Caribbean boys expect learning to be fun and interesting and that their teachers must be good at teaching. It is worth bearing in mind that this would probably be a shared perception of learners from all backgrounds and would require a general overhaul of teaching techniques. What is required across the whole school is quality and effective teaching. Although resources are important, effective teachers can make all the difference. As Coard (2006) states: "effective teaching can happen under a mango tree". The fact is that whilst good resources are important, good teachers are even more important to making a difference in the lives of African-Caribbean boys.

Teachers should also be taught to reflect on who they are teaching and try to develop more understanding of the culture of African-Caribbean boys in order to avoid bias and cultural misunderstanding.

It is clear from the study with African-Caribbean that some teachers do not understand them and that some are overtly racist to them. Negative teacher attitude towards black boys should be challenged and dealt with through an INSET programme. Such INSET should make teachers aware of the different aspects of diversity and how to impellent strategies to deal with diverse groups. Children should not have to be faced with teachers like the one who used the word 'Nigger' in Chapter Five. This does nothing to foster positive relationships between boys and their teachers. In the scenario given to the boys in Chapter Five they recognised the need for discipline and sanctions but they still want teachers who understand them.

6.5 Recommendation for selective recruitment of teachers to cater for African-Caribbean boys

There must be more careful recruitment of teachers that African-Caribbean boys can relate to and who have a real understanding of the boys' cultural background, the subculture they develop and the way they behave and why. A major finding from this study is that not any black teacher will do. White or black, these teachers must be able to relate to the boys' subculture, attitudes, needs, aspirations and concerns. This should be addressed at the point of recruitment and in the selection interviews through teachers demonstrating at the interview or in tests that they understand and can implement fairness and equality and encompass the cultural needs of all students.

6.6 Recommendations on identifying the 'hidden' needs of African-Caribbean boys

When Coard (1971) wrote about West Indian children in British schools in the early 1970s, the rest of the school population was predominantly indigenous. Since then many schools have become culturally and ethnically rich with children and teachers from many different backgrounds. A particular contribution of my research has been to demonstrate that even in multi-cultural schools it is necessary to introduce policies in school which deal with specific groups within a non-white population. Nearly forty years after Coard (1971), some schools may have changed but African-Caribbean children are still underachieving. Teachers need to take this into serious consideration and recognise the need to improve the life chances for African-Caribbean boys. All

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teachers need to be convinced of the need for changes and the reasons for it, so that they see the true value to students.

Another major requirement is the need for systems to be put in place which identify the needs of African-Caribbean boys in education at every stage from KS1 and KS2 and, when they enter secondary education at KS3 and again at KS4, to ensure that they are separated from EAL students and not grouped or classified as African and becoming 'hidden' as in the ILS. This is an important factor in improving the academic chances of African-Caribbean boys so that they do not reach Year 12 having obtained very few GCSEs, and not being able to spell (as was evident with some boys in Chapter Five). Therefore these boys would be alienated at the end of Year 11 and unable to get to Sixth Form to do A-level qualifications. This means that they will not be able to go university. From what African-Caribbean boys have said, they want to learn, achieve, go to university and have good jobs and lead enriched lives. They must be given what they so enthusiastically ask for. (See Chapter Five). They should be encouraged through a self study programme provided by the school to support home learning.

There must be adequate systems put in place to track boys' progress through the use of data on performance from SATS to GCSE so that their needs can be identified and addressed and systems put in place to redress any underachievement at a very early age. At the moment there are many methods of collecting data but they are all used for compiling general statistics about the school population and its results as a whole. Whilst such data is useful there needs to be data on African-Caribbean boys who are currently 'hidden' in order to generate specific policies for them. In other words, my research findings have contributed in identifying that there are particular implications for school systems, data managers and quality controllers. Data currently available are not being used effectively to identify and help raise the achievement of African-Caribbean boys. This is confirmed in the IFS where there was no data available specifically for this group of children.

6.7 Recommendations for a curriculum which enhances diversity and meeting the needs of African-Caribbean boys

The National Curriculum must reflect the diverse population of most London and other inner-city schools and ensure the needs of African-Caribbean students are catered for. This may involve lessons on black culture and black history. This requires a major policy change by the government if they are serious about eliminating underachievement. My findings have shown that some boys wanted their culture to be more visible in the curriculum and that these needs are not currently being catered for. The findings from this study confirm John's (2006) statement that the curriculum is white in every sense of the word. Diversity must be imbedded in all models of the curriculum. Difficult or not, it must become a reality in order to motivate all students to do well and achieve good academic qualification. In speaking of inclusive diversity this curriculum review would need to incorporate all the various ethnic groups not just African-Caribbean boys although they should be a main focus in order to address their underachievement.

6.8 Recommendation for inspirational and excellent teaching that meets the needs of African-Caribbean boys

Many boys found school boring and called for interesting, enjoyable and challenging lessons. This too must be part of the curriculum changes which ensures that school meet the needs of African-Caribbean boys. Also schools must employ more teachers who are prepared to change and move with the times. Although already in place at teacher training level this needs to be incorporated at in-service levels.

6.9 Recommendation for a modern approach to school environment and to teaching

Some boys found schools old fashioned. More 'glistening' schools which have futuristic characteristics are needed to address the mismatch between technological advances boys are used to outside of school and what they lack in school. However, technological resources are not enough. Boys need teachers who are inspirational and dynamic in the classroom and also have a more modern approach to teaching.

6.10 Recommendation that an alternative is provided to the LSU

Bad behaviour by some boys should also be challenged and dealt with, but not through exclusions. Instead, this can be done through a programme of positive after-school clubs, where boys are supported and taught the value of education. It cannot all be left solely to the black community or parents as said by one teacher in Chapter Five. It is up to the school and teachers to challenge and deal with behavioural issues.

6.11 Recommendation for a celebration of all cultures in school

In the ILS in Chapter Three, a range of ethnic mixes were identified among students. The school would benefit from a rotation of cultures in the PSHE in order to benefit all in terms of celebrating one's own and embracing each other's culture and background.

The space within the National Curriculum such as PSHE and Citizenship should be used to bring in issues around race and to cater adequately for the needs of boys. Topics such as black history, black images, black community and problems associated with black people in society need to be included with black students having a leading role. This could be viewed positively as a way of sharing culture across the different races in the school. In diverse multi-ethnic schools, such celebration and sharing of the different cultures is essential to developing a truly diverse school and enriching the lives of all students. As argued above, the National Curriculum must reflect the diverse population of an increasing number of British schools and ensure their needs are catered for by incorporating black culture and black history.

6.12 Recommendations for 'separating' African-Caribbean boys

In Chapter Three (ILS) it was identified that African-Caribbean boys are 'hidden' and not separated from EAL students. It is further recommended that African-Caribbean boys are separated from EAL students from as early as possible, certainly by KS3 and teachers made to understand that EAL students have different needs to African-Caribbean boys who have English as a First Language.

It was also identified in Chapter Three that some African-Caribbean boys may have EAL needs but the ones with SEN should be separated and given the teaching to support their learning. By separating them, the needs of these boys are identified well before public exams in KS4.

I also recommend that a system is put in place which identifies SEN of African-Caribbean boys from as early as KS1, so that support and extra attention is given to these boys to help them to develop and learn, and so that they do not end up finishing compulsory schooling without qualifications. This system should not stigmatise these children or take them out of mainstream classrooms and into LSU, but should support and encourage them at entry to school (KS1, KS2 and KS3) right up to KS4 and KS5. This concurs with Coard's (1971) early arguments outlined in Chapter Two.

It is also important that separate classes are provided for African-Caribbean boys for some of their lessons in order to focus on learning, developing, achieving and cultural issues. It is vital that these boys are given this additional support to reinforce in them the importance of school, education and qualifications and to help them realise their full potential. They would also benefit from support to acknowledge that qualification and careers in most cases go hand in hand.

This echoes Phillips (2005) who stated: 'If the only way to break through the wall of attitude that surrounds black boys is to teach them separately in some classes, then we should be ready for that' (p, 1). I do agree with Sewell (2005) who said that teaching black boys separately would not necessarily improve their exam results. However, I think it is extremely important to separate these boys for some lessons to focus on getting them to understand the importance of education to them and the benefits of good qualifications. This can be done in additional classes after school.

6.13 Recommendations on the mentoring of African-Caribbean boys

In Chapter Five, African-Caribbean boys expressed their views about mentors. Some said they would have welcomed a mentor but did not get one. Others thought it was a good thing. It is therefore essential that a programme of mentoring is put in place to help black boys in schools. In Chapter Two it is acknowledged by Sewell (2009) that

African-Caribbean boys do benefit from having temporary external role models. I propose an adaptation of the REACH (2007) but that role models are provided from within the school. These do not necessarily have to be black but must have good mentoring training and understanding of issues to do with African-Caribbean boys and also focused on raising the aspiration and motivating these boys.

I recommend that a programme of one to one support is offered to African-Caribbean boys and that study support groups are developed for African-Caribbean boys to help raise attainment levels. This programme should emphasise the importance of education and qualifications and should help boys stay focused on learning as they move between the main school culture and their own subculture.

I recommend that extra-curriculum activities be provided for African-Caribbean boys for key subjects to help them achieve better results in examinations. The findings in Chapter Five indicate that the boys want good mentoring to help them raise their academic achievement.

6.14 Recommendations for a strategy to involve black parents in their children's education

Black parent groups should meet with white teachers to strengthen relations and to show white and teachers from other racial backgrounds that, as parents, they are interested in their children's education. Single parenting is not a good enough reason to explain boys' underachievement as discussed in Chapter Two and in some of the data from teachers in Chapter Five - these exist amongst all races in the twenty first century where family values have changed.

The school leadership team needs to develop a strategy to strengthen links with parents in order to help establish active participation and involvement in their child's education and progress at every stage. Parents should be actively informed of the child's progress through meetings, discussion groups, stronger communication links and reporting so that they can work together with the school to help, support and develop the child's learning. The school needs to ensure it forms partnership with parents. In Chapter Five most boys said that their parents encouraged them to learn.

Therefore this link is important in developing a partnership with parents to foster boys learning.

6.15 Recommendation for a strategy to involve the black community in African-Caribbean boys learning

During my conversation with Coard (2009) he stressed the importance of the redevelopment of a new range of youth clubs in order to keep boys actively involved, off the streets and interacting in learning skills.

Another recommendation is that black community groups such as churches, community centres, youth clubs and associations specifically targeted at African-Caribbean youths should be encouraged to come in to school to talk to boys. In addition, successful local black business people could also do this. At a wider level it is important for schools to make links with African-Caribbean community organisations such as those mentioned earlier. This is in order to help boys relate learning to their own culture as well as that of others. Using examples of successful African-Caribbean businesses in assignment material is also important.

It is clear from the findings in Chapter Five that boys do not want to be on the streets. The government needs to reinstate many of the youth centres closed in the late 1970's and 1980's so that African-Caribbean and other boys can have a place to go, where they could participate in enjoyable but also educational and skilled activities to get them involved in learning.

6.16 Recommendation for a PSHE policy which helps boys to understand issues affecting them in school and in society

Boys need to be educated as to the dangers on the street and the consequences of being part of a gang as part of the PSHE programme.

It is also good that boys saw school as a place to socialise and meet friends but they also need to understand and separate this relationship with their learning. This is an issue for the school to address to help boys deal with the main culture of the school and the boys subculture which should be seen as a good thing and part of the boys'

identity. This requires schools to have discussions with boys in PSHE about education and society.

A revised PSHE programme could help address some of the issues raised by boys who did not see education as a realistic way of making a good living and thus heading for the 'new underclass' as discussed by Phillips (2005). The importance of education could be taught and reinforced through the programme.

This study has also questioned some of the assumptions about the negative effects of single parenting discussed in Chapter Two. By listening to African-Caribbean boys and giving them the opportunity to put forward their views about the support, role models and mentoring their parents and other families members provide, this study has shown that these boys do consider they have parental support and that their families want them to do well and they have a support network outside of school. In other words, the study shows that there is a discrepancy between what teachers think about parental attitudes and what the boys think. For example sixteen out of the twenty eight teachers surveyed thought that African-Caribbean boys needed more support from parents. However, in Chapter Five 5.2, to 5.4 the boys say that they have parental and other support networks outside of school. Therefore some of the problems associated with African-Caribbean boys underachievement could be attributed to the perception of the teachers. This may be the result of teachers having formed negative views of the boys and the way they behave. This was clearly demonstrated from what the boys said about some of their teachers who, they said, did not understand them or their culture.

6.17 Contribution the study has made to the research on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement

The continued underachievement of African-Caribbean boys was examined through the literature review – Chapter Two. However, even though the chapter reviews a range of studies on African-Caribbean boys' underachievement, it is also the case that few of these have been 'from the boys' point of view'. Sewell (2007) in his Hometown study comes closest to doing this. However his work has concentrated on the masculine characteristics of these boys. In contrast, the case study in Chapter

Five, in examining African-Caribbean boys continued underachievement looks at how boys perceive school, learning, qualifications and teaching and how they interact with their peers and their subcultures. The research conducted has provided a voice for African-Caribbean boys to air their views about school, teaching, learning, peer interactions and, in order to allow a comparison with what the boys said, has included an interview with the headteacher and surveyed their teachers. Riley and Docking (2004) say that, despite the growing emphasis on the importance of pupils' voice, few researchers have looked specifically at the perceptions of children from homes in socially disadvantaged areas. This study has filled a major gap in the literature. By providing the opportunity to hear the voices of African-Caribbean boys it has added a new dimension to the study of their underachievement. The research findings in Chapter Five have provided a humorous, but clear account of how the boys act out their sub culture in the school context. One of the main contributions that have been made is to show that, even though these boys may be part of a distinct subculture, they can interact well with the dominant culture of the school and that African-Caribbean boys like school, want to learn and get on well in school. They do not have the anti-learning approach to school that other researchers have argued is the case with white working class boys Willis (1977). Despite the boys' positive attitude towards many aspect of their schooling, they do continue to underachieve. The evidence from the IFS (Chapter Three) and from the case study in (Chapter Five) suggests that this underachievement is because of systemic failures and institutionalised racism within the school. It has been argued that in the ILS, rather than being a distinctive group of students visible to all, the boys are 'hidden' because they are often not distinguished from EAL students and grouped together with them.

Contrary to what has been said about their laddish anti-learning culture (Sukhnandan, Lee and Kelleher 2000) this study has shown that African-Caribbean boys are largely positive about school and are pro-learning but that they move freely from the main school culture into their own subculture. It is possible, however, that this movement between the two cultures could be a contributing factor in the continued underachievement of these boys. Even though the boys imply that they can move freely into the main school culture and back into their subculture, the fact that they are

still underachieving suggests that this movement has an impact on their learning and achievement. This sort of movement between cultures may not be unique to African-Caribbean boys. It is possible that the boys are not able to separate completely from their subculture when returning to the main culture. However, in raising this issue and demonstrating that subcultures are not necessarily anti-learning the study has made a further contribution to the current literature and research.

This study has shown from the boys' responses, in Chapter Five, that they are positive about school, want to pass their exams, stay in education, go on to university and have good careers. However, it is worth bearing in mind the view of Martino and Mayenn (2001) (p41 above) who argue that "in the midst of trying to get a handle on the education crisis of black boys, the literature has shown little about how boys construct personal meaning for their social and academic lives". The point here is that African-Caribbean boys' perception of moving freely between the two cultures is a complex issue. This is manifested in the way the boys act out their subculture in the playground, the corridors and then generally conforming when in the classroom.

Martino and Mayenn (2001, p51) assert that the negative cultural messages about black males in the media and wider society that portray them as violent, disrespectful, unintelligent and hyper-sexualised do nothing to help the situation of the black boys. The authors say that these cultural messages carry over into schools and affect the way black male students are treated. These characteristics were not found in this study and in fact the boys portray themselves as ordinary boys similar to those in other different cultures. This contradicts the arguments of Martino and Mayenn (2001) who see the boys' position as 'sexy' cultural icons and as 'rebels' against the norm in how they dress and behave. Mac an Ghaill (1994) (p54 above) has also claimed that African-Caribbean boys' underachievement is linked to the anti-school attitudes of some. This author argues that some African-Caribbean boys see learning as effeminate and their peers see them as being gay, soft or a wimp if they like learning. However, this is not unique of African-Caribbean boys. Other groups of boys behave in the same way when they are acting out their masculinity and subcultures.

Most importantly, the study has made an important contribution by revisiting the work of Coard (1971) and examining how institutionalised and systemic racism continues to take place in an inner-city secondary school, where African-Caribbean boys are only one of a number of ethnic minority groups (see Chapter Two and Chapter Three).   The interviews that I carried out with Coard (2004, 2006, 2008 and 2009) provided a greater understanding of his work. It also enabled me to compare the problems faced by the first generation of West Indian children in Britain with what is happening to African-Caribbean boys today. Even though there may be huge contrasts between Coard's (1971) experiences and what is now happening to African-Caribbean boys, the study has shown that Coard's (1971) arguments about systemic racism and the continued underachievement of African-Caribbean boys are still true, even if this operates in a very different context. My argument is that covert systemic racism has replaced the overt racism described by Coard (1971) - discussed in Chapter Three, Five and Chapter Six.

In contrast to the time of Coard (1971) where African-Caribbean children, were an obvious minority within a white population of students and teachers,   in the school in which the study has been based (referred to as Inner London School ILS) African-Caribbean boys were not only 'hidden' they were also likely to be grouped with EAL and SEN students and classified as African/Black. In the study I found two African-Caribbean boys who had difficulty in spelling simple words and they blamed the school for this failure. I have also found that despite years of multi cultural education, the school system is failing African-Caribbean boys in a different way by not identifying and meeting their needs. For example, these include having teachers who understand their subcultures and who do not stereotype them. It is also important to have a curriculum that caters for the boys' cultural needs such understanding their heritage through black history, and policies in the school which ensure that African-Caribbean boys are not merged with EAL students.

The findings of this study that institutionalised and systemic racism exists in the ILS are contrary to the views of Trevor Phillips who is cited in Chapter Two by Casciani (2009) as saying that "institutional racism is dead". However, the findings concur with the arguments of John (2005) who asserts that the curriculum is white in every

sense of the word. I am not aware of any other studies that have applied the approach of Coard (1971) in an historical context and argue that it is the schools' structures and systems which fail students and label them as ESN. The findings also reveal that students do not underachieve because of what they bring to school with them in terms of their background and subculture as discussed by Lupton (2005).

The study has also contributed to existing research by providing African-Caribbean boys with an opportunity to discuss how they perceive their teachers. This has provided insight into the problems some boys face with some of their teachers' perceptions of them and of their culture and subculture. The study shows, for example the study shows that this is true of black teachers as well as white. A good example of this are the two senior black teachers identified in Chapter Five who the boys hated. This is another useful contribution to the research which shows that 'not any teacher will do'.   Black or white, teachers must have a good understanding of the boys and their culture.

Coard (2006) said that some white teachers were not conscious of their inbuilt racism and they brought this to the classroom. This study shows that teacher perception is still a major factor in the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys today (see Chapter Five).   Some boys said that teachers did not understand them or their culture; even though the findings of this study show that most boys are fair minded about their teachers and they could see their goodness (some also recognised that several teachers are racist).   This study has also provided a voice to teachers through the questionnaire and the comments therein to provide a contrast to what the boys say about their teachers in comparison to what teachers say. One teacher saw the African-Caribbean boys' subculture as negatively affecting learning. This study has also provided a better understanding of the relationship between African-Caribbean boys and Black African teachers.

6.18 How the work with teachers has contributed to this study

Martino and Mayenn (2001) argue that black boys' demeanours are misunderstood by white middle class teachers and they are seen as defiant, aggressive and intimidating. However, there does not seem to be any recent further direct research of teachers'

opinions of African-Caribbean boys. This study has shown how some teachers (both white and black) perceive African-Caribbean boys subculture in a negative and threatening way. This study has shown that there is misunderstanding by teachers about the way the boys' subculture relates to the main culture of the school. The boys appear to move freely between their subculture and the main culture of the school.

Despite the statement of John (2005) that the White Paper is white in every sense of the word, the study has shown that many teachers still see the curriculum as adequate to cater for diversity. This is in contrast to the view of Hill and Cole (2001) who argue that the hidden curriculum (in particular the non academic aspects of the school, such as PSHE and citizenship) serves to reproduce educational, social and economic inequalities. The curriculum does not serve the needs of the school's diverse communities. Gilborn and Mirza (2000) whose report was published within months of the Macpherson (1999) report argue that 75% of schools studied do not have a clear strategy to eradicate underachievement of students. Muir and Smithers (2004) report that the failure of school systems and individuals within it to successfully engage with students of African-Caribbean origin has severely hindered them and contributed to massive underachievement.

As I have argued, this study also provides a voice to the headteacher of the school to express her views about African-Caribbean boys in terms of teaching, learning and subcultures and achievement. In the interview with the headteacher, however, she said that ethnicity played only a small part in underachievement and other factors were at play (for example parenting, lack of role models, difficult economic circumstances and that the school had low expectations of African-Caribbean boys). It was clear that the headteacher did not have specific strategies in place to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys. The comments from the headteacher provide a further understanding of the systemic and institutionalised racism within the structure of the school in failing to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys.

6.19 Strategies for presenting a training package to the Local Education Authority and recommendations to the headteacher of the ILS

In Chapter Two Blair (2001) asserts that "from the time black children enter the education system, they begin to feel the extent to which their relationships with teachers are mediated by race, even if they cannot articulate it". (Chapter Two, 2.20). From the findings of the case study interviews in Chapter Five, 5.2, some of the boys clearly stated that some of their teachers do not understand them and their culture. Boys also said that some teachers were racist. This also concurs with the historical argument of Coard (1971). Therefore, I propose a training packing for teachers which the Local Authority will be able to implement.

6.20 Training package for teachers

From the recommendations above it is clear that there is urgent need for changes in order to ensure that teachers have a better understanding of how African-Caribbean boys behaved, their masculinity, subculture and race. I intend to develop and present a pilot training package to the ILS and then a package to the LEA in order to address the teacher training needs identified. This will be by way of INSET/training to address the problems faced by African-Caribbean boys in school relating to teacher perceptions. I have based this recommendation on the views of four African-Caribbean boys and what they say that they want from school and the negative views that the boys convey about some teachers. This training should provide teachers with greater understanding of African-Caribbean boys, their heritage, culture, the way they behave and why.

6.21 Training package for African-Caribbean boys

The findings also indicate that there is a need for much improved careers advice for African-Caribbean boys. I intend to develop a pilot package of training to the ILS and then a package to the LEA which will instigate extra lessons in schools for African-Caribbean boys in order to provide them with a better understanding and importance of education and qualifications and how these link together to enable access to further, higher education, and career pathways. The teaching package for the boys will

include clear strategies on 'how to survive' in the main school culture and get good qualifications. The aim is to educate boys about the demands of the main school culture, without having to reject the richness of their own subculture. This should be targeted at KS1 to KS4 to include literacy and numeracy skills. Also training should provide boys with greater understanding of the value of education and how it can enrich their lives.

6.22 A programme of strategies which the headteacher can adopt to address the 'hidden' population of African-Caribbean boys

I also propose to include in a report for headteachers of some of the findings relating the African-Caribbean boys as a 'hidden' population, highlighting the fact that this results in the boys needs not being met by the school and therefore contributing to the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys. The report will also highlight the need for policies which will ensure that African-Caribbean boys are treated separately from EAL students and their individual needs catered for. It will also highlight the need for mentoring to be specifically targeted at these boys and an adaptation of the REACH (2007) programme consisting of in-school mentors as the REACH programme is very general and involves group talks with boys by black leaders but does not provide individual mentoring. Mentors must be specifically trained in dealing with African-Caribbean boys and recruited from outside the school.

The report will also include strategies for better communication and links with parents of African-Caribbean boys, with recommendations for a regular black parent forum to discuss boys' progress and other school issues. For example discussing peer pressures, subcultures, dealing with teachers' perceptions and how parents can help to support their children. This should be a regular half term meeting.

6.23 End Thoughts

It is important to have an education strategy in place which caters for the needs of African-Caribbean boys. If this is not implemented there will be serious repercussions for society. I am of the same view as Phillips (2005) who said that:

"black boys are becoming a new underclass in British society".

It was Nelson Mandela who said: 'to me education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'.

It is important for prominent black people to recognise that systemic and institutional racism exist in schools and challenge this in order to protect our children in schools and in society. I think it is wrong of Trevor Phillips, the former Commissioner for Racial Equality to contradict himself above and in Chapter Two in saying that institutional racism no longer exists. Phillips has been publicly criticised for saying that "there is no longer institutionalised racism in the police force" (Casciani, 2009). This statement has caused uproar among leading black activists.

I admire the work of Professor Gus John who I have discussed in Chapter Two and the contribution he has and is making. He spoke at a Leadership in Diversity seminar I attended on 30th January 2009 and said how disappointed he was by Phillips' stance. The BBC News home affairs correspondent Dominic Casciani (2009) ask the question "what has really changed over the last ten years?" and points out that the 1999 Macpherson report had a very clear idea of what is meant by institutional racism. A situation where racism is both crystallised and embedded in social institutions and has become systemic. This is not a new issue it was discussed by Coard (1971) nearly forty years ago.

Stephen Lawrence's death led to the creation of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2003), a crucial piece of legislation that forced every public body in the UK to take racism seriously. This law was enforced at a time when Trevor Phillips was still in post as Commissioner for Race Equality. At such a crucial time in Britain's diverse society the last thing needed is a 'turnaround' by such prominent black individuals as Trevor Phillips whose role was to help enforce such laws. Casciani (2009) cites Chris Mallard one of the UK's leading academics on race relations and Chairman of Focus Consultancy as saying that "racism is institutionalised because it's deeply embedded within the prejudices of a society, and it is those prejudices and deep psychological feelings that allow racism to be legitimised. He goes on to say that institutionalised racism is not something you can get rid off in just ten years. I think that it is important to build on the findings of the Stephen Lawrence enquiry in order to bring about

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positive changes for African-Caribbean boys. There will come a time when the black community and parents will challenge the education of their children and their rights to enjoy a good life in society. I appreciate that a lot of work has been done by many black contributors. However, the fight for a just education system must continue.

There is a lot of work to be done in developing strategies to help African-Caribbean boys and there needs to be collaboration among the black communities including leading prominent black representatives. I want to continue the research with these boys to help raise standards in education, in teaching and to bring about changes in policy.

As a society, British people owe it to young black males to do something to help them achieve. Despite what is said by some theorists and the media, I have argued that African-Caribbean boys are not 'their own worst enemies'. It is the system that fails them. From the study, I have identified that boys want to learn and do well and I think these findings will help others in the field to focus on areas to develop a curriculum which meets the needs of the boys.

Phillips 'underclass' prediction above could prove right if systems are not put in place to change the negative academic achievement of African-Caribbean boys and is in line with the following quote from a black African teacher I met recently:

 "I told them. I told them to manage these boys. Now it's gun on gun and they are killing each other. I am glad to be out of that school".

The message here is that policy, teachers and schools need to cater for the needs of African-Caribbean boys and manage poor behaviour to ensure that they learn and achieve so that they do not become victims of the street cultures defined in Chapter Two. The help that is needed for these boys is policy changes, support, quality teaching, mentoring, inclusion programmes, understanding and working with and accepting the boys' subculture and masculinity.

More positive images and perceptions of black boys in society need to be created. As I have argued, teacher training and teacher perception of African-Caribbean boys

needs to change positively. I re-emphasise that what is required is greater understanding of African-Caribbean boys and for them to be treated as normal children without preconceived notions connecting them to the negative things happening in society.

In a diverse Britain there is a need to ensure the care of African-Caribbean boys in order to develop them into educated happy individuals who will be given the chance to achieve academic qualifications and take up worthwhile jobs. The majority of African-Caribbean boys are honest, happy, fun-loving and caring individuals who want to do well. In a fair and just society, such as Britain claims to be, these students deserve a chance for an equal education where their needs are catered for.

What I have discovered from the research conducted with African-Caribbean boys is that they want to learn, and they want to achieve. Their view is that some teachers do not teach them properly and that some of them are racist and do not understand them.

I aspire to bring about positive changes as a researcher and teacher to contribute to the educational achievement of African-Caribbean boys. I admire Martin Luther King who had the courage and vision to stand up and say: '*I have a dream'*. Hi*s* dream and vision helped to bring about many positive changes in society too.

The black community must 'stand up and fight' for the educational rights of African-Caribbean boys. These boys can achieve if only they get the help needed. We have seen that from Martin Luther King's vision has emerged Barack Obama – President of the United States of America. There is greatness ahead for our boys with policy changes, support, understanding and quality teaching.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A-LEVEL	Advanced Level
ALIS	Advanced Level Information System
CATS	Classroom Assessment Techniques
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EiC	Excellence in Cities
ESN	Educationally Sub Normal
ESOL	English as a Second Language
FMS	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certification in Secondary Education
IFS	Institutional Focus Study
ILS	Inner London School
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
KS	Key Stage
LACES	Looked After Children Education Support
LDA	London Development Agency
LEA	Local Education Authority
LSU	Learning Support Unit
MC	Master of Ceremonies
MP	Member of Parliament
NUT	National Union of Teachers
PE	Physical Education
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Education
QCA	Qualification and Curriculum Authority

SATS   Standard Assessment Tasks

SEN   Special Educational Needs

SENCO   Special Education Needs Coordinator

SEU   Special Exclusion Units

SSP   Specialist Schools Programme

VCE   Vocational Certificate of Education

Appendix one – interview questions – African-Caribbean boys

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Student Name:………………………………… Year Group:………………………….......

Tutor Group:……………………………............. How Long at the School:…………………

Courses Doing:………………………………………………………………………......

Ask boys to fill in the sociogram before the interview – 5 minutes – as a warm up to settle the boys and get them into conversational mode

Interview:

Introduce self and set up context – as interested in relationship between boys outside of school lives and inside school experience – specify approximate number of questions which act as interview guide.

Topic Schedule:

Sequence of Topics.

What comes into your mind when you think of school? (Prompt – metaphor)

What do you struggle with at school and why?

What do you see yourself doing in 5 years time? Ten years time?

What things stop you learning? (Prompts, teachers, other students, room layout).

What do you think school prepares you for?

Are there particular teachers that you work better for – can you give me examples?

Give student the scenario of escalation –disciplinary leading to suspension – if you were the teacher how would you have dealt with the situation and prevented the suspension?

Who is a good in school role model and why?

Who is a good out of school role model and why?

What are your hobbies?

Appendix number two – sample sociogram form completed by student

All about you and your leisure time

Name. ....

Year Group..11P.............

Dancing   Socialising with friends   Football   MC   Cycling   Girlfriends

What do you do in your leisure time? Please tick boxes as necessary.
(Please fill in the blank circles for other things)

- Cinema
- Dancing
- Football
- Hang with friends
- LEISURE
- Help with the sound at my church
- spend time with family
- Computer
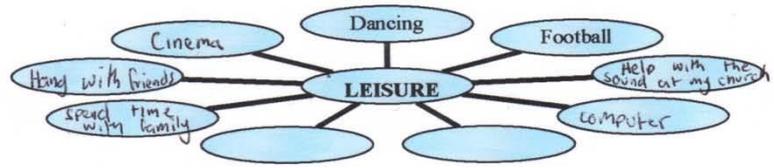
What do your parents do? (Please tick the correct box)
Please fill in blank circles for other things.

- Retired
- Work ✓
- Not working
- PARENTS
- Business
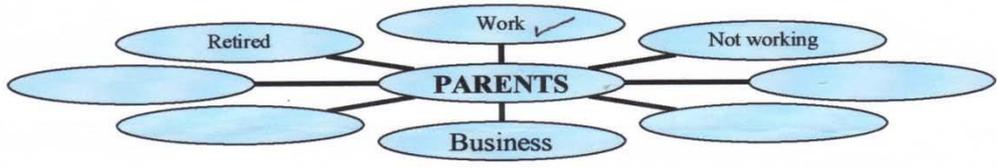
Please draw your own chart as the ones above of your friendship groups (for example MC crew, study group

- Friends from school
- Friends from out of school
- FRIENDSHIPS

Add the five most important people in your life to the chart (i.e. mum, dad etc)

- Mum
- Gran
- Sister
- IMPORTANT PEOPLE
- Auntie
- Cousin cousin
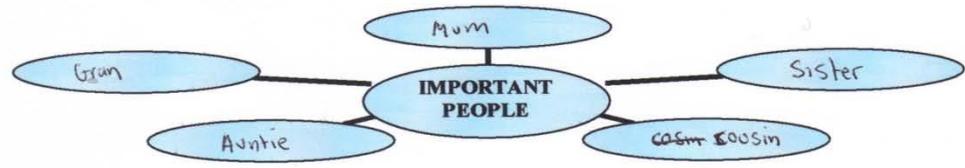
Thank you very much for your support.

Appendix three- interview questions - headteacher

INTERVIEW WITH HEADTEACHER

Questions – warm up and prep

Introduce and set up context -   interested in black boys' achievement in a school context – specify approximate number of questions which act as interview guide.

Topic Schedule:

Sequence of topics:

Q1.   How would you describe the school, its community and pupils?

Q2. Which group of pupils causes you the most concern and why is this?

Q3. How best do you think we can support students causing concern?

Q5. What are your views as to how students could be helped to develop their own learning?

Q4.   How do you see the role of parents in supporting and developing their child (ren) learning?

Q6. What are your views about the government's current education policies?

Q8   In your opinion, how can educational policies be improved to cater for   diversity?

Q7. How do you think teaching could be further developed to cater for diversity?

Q9. What other major policy constraints do you face as a headteacher in an Inner London school?

Q10. What other visions do you have for the school and its pupils?

Appendix four – sample questionnaire - students

P2

QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENT
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

S1

Name (If you want to)...   Form:...12Q...........

This questionnaire will be used strictly for education research purposes and will not affect you personally. You have my promise that all information will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any reports. I want to find out your views and opinion on education. Your assistance is very much appreciated so please be as honest as possible. Thank you.

Please **TICK ONE BOX** to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. It is important to go to university and get a degree. Comments *it's not that important it's not a must depending on what your doing like if you want to be a doctor or something*				✓	
2. I don't need university qualifications. I can make money by working or doing other things. Comments..	✓				
3. It is cool to learn and achieve a good secondary education such as GCSE's and A Levels. Comments *depending if the teachers give you relevant information for your exam*	✓				
4. Pressures from friends stop boys from learning. Comments..			✓		

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| S2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | | 2 | 1 |
Please <u>TICK ONE BOX</u> to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5. It is cool to be part of a group such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist (galist) crew Comments.it's good to have people whatching for your back because of the danger in the streets *you must be ready for anything* but your best friend can also be your worse enimie it's not certin			√ —			
6. It is cool to be wedged or tonk (i.e. have six pack muscles) and wear designer clothes. Comments.ONLY when you wanna attract attention of girls like in summer boys come out topless or because you wanna be stronger		√				
7. Mentors supporting students in school are a good thing. Comments..	√					
8. Mentors help keep student focused on learning. Comments..			√			
9. My teachers understand me. Comments..					√	
10. My teachers understand my culture. Comments..						√

Appendix four continued

QUESTIONNAIRE
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
TEACHERS

Teacher/ Researcher: Ms Graham

Teacher Initial (optional).. Subject Taught............................

This questionnaire is for my Education Doctorate project. The information which you give to me will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any reports. Your assistance is very much appreciated so please be as honest as possible. I am focusing this work on <u>African-Caribbean</u> boys in schools.

KEY:
A= Agree   SA = Strongly Agree   NAD = Neither Agree nor Disagree   D = Disagree   SD = Strongly Disagree

Please tick the most appropriate box to indicate your views on this using the key above. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines)	A	SA	NAD	D	SD
1. African Caribbean boys develop sub-cultures which adversely affects their learning. Comments.....*They are not different from other kids. Even the white kids have sub culture.*					✓
2. Peer group pressures are a major reason why African Caribbean boys underachieve. Comments.*Peer pressures are exchangeable among most ethnic groups, individuality is the issue here.*				✓	
3. Excluding African-Caribbean boys from school because of behavioural problem is not the most effective way to deal with this problem. Comment.*What is the alternative? Exclusion is a last resort and can be positive re-orientation.*			✓		
4. African Caribbean boys need support groups outside of school to help motivate them to learn. Comments.*Targeted support rather than generic would pay dividend but would there be national interest?*		✓			

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is very much valued and appreciated. I promise once again that this information will be kept confidential

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Appendix five – sample teacher's questionnaire

			4	5	3	2	1
Please tick the most appropriate box to indicate your views on this using the key above. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines)			A	SA	NAD	D	SD
5. Most parents are actively involved in supporting their children's learning. Comments... *What support are we talking about? Educated house wives might be proactive, but most economic mobile parents have less time.*					✓		
6. A number of sociological factors influence African Caribbean boys' achievement. (Please tick more than what if appropriate) Social class background ✓ Choice of school Geographical area in which they live and attend school ✓ Parents income bracket ✓ Other... Comments:...*Poor parenting is contributory.*..........						✓	
7.The National Curriculum caters adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities in secondary education. Comments...*If black community feels differently they should come up with specific menu that will provide diversity.*			✓				
8. Schools provide quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children. Comments..			✓				
9. Sufficient emphasis is placed on extra curricular activities to help African-Caribbean boys to achieve better results. Comments...*What would encourage black kids to learn differently? I would like to know.*			✓				

Appendix five continued

			A	SA	NAD	D	SD
			4	5	3	2	1
Please tick the most appropriate box to indicate your views on this using the key above. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines)							
10. The current political party's policies on education enhance diversity. Comments..					✓		

Please add any additional comments below:

Poor communities all over the world crave to have their children educated. Black children in UK and other western societies have educational access than their counterparts in Asia and Africa and these groups work harder to achieve their educational qualifications with less opportunities. Black parents are responsible for their children failure in schools. The drive should start at home/families so children know the importance of their education.

Thank you very much for your support with my work. It is greatly appreciated.

Please note that question number 6 was deleted. Therefore questions numbers 5, 10, 7, 8 and 9

See Appendix six – sample consent forms – headteacher, teachers, parents and students

Appendix six – copy email from Headteacher giving consent to conduct research in the school

RE: Doctorate Thesis

Dear Janet

I am sure this is fine but I would like to know the subject of your thesis and what you will be researching with the students and staff.

M

-----Original Message-----

From: JANET GRAHAM

Sent: Monday, February 06, 2006 11:31 AM

To: **(full name deleted for ethical reasons)**

Subject: Doctorate Thesis

Dear M

I am currently at the stage of embarking upon my thesis for the above which I hope to complete by September 09.

This mean that I now need to start conducting research and I would like to use some of the Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 students and some teachers as participants.

I am therefore requesting your permission to do so.

I hope that this is ok with you.

I hope to conduct research between now and June 06

Regards

Janet

Appendix six – sample consent letter - parents

12th May 2006

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Study of African-Caribbean Boys in School – For an Education Doctorate at Brunel University.

I am currently doing an Education Doctorate at Brunel University as part of my professional development and I am a business studies teacher at your son's school. As a teacher and deputy head of vocational studies the underachievement of African-Caribbean boys is a subject which is close to my heart. I am also originally from the West Indies and from the island of Grenada. I am very interested in the achievement of African-Caribbean boys and want to study this for my research project. I have approached the headteacher of the school and she has given her approval for me to conduct the study. I have also submitted an ethics form to Brunel University to say what the research is about and to affirm my commitment that the research will be conducted according to the standards required by the university and the research association. The university has also approved the study.

I have asked your son if he would like to participate in the study and he has agreed to complete a questionnaire and possibly take part in an interview. I attach a copy of the interview questions and the questionnaire which your son will be asked to complete as part of the study for your observation. I hope that the research will give me the opportunity to explore what boys think about school, teachers, learning and subcultures in a school context. This information will be kept strictly confidential and your son's name will not be used in any of the reports resulting from the study. However, I hope that the findings will help me to gain a deeper understanding of African-Caribbean boys in their school and from the boys' point of view. I hope that from the findings, I can make some recommendations as to how schools can help them to be successful in their academic achievements.

I do hope that you will agree for your son to participate in the study. Please rest assured that any research the boys would be involved in would be conducted with their full approval and they would have the opportunity to pull out of the study if they do not wish to proceed or feel uncomfortable in any way. I have taken every step to ensure that your son will feel relaxed, comfortable and that he will know that the study is separate from his school work and that he will not be penalised in any way as a result of participating in this study.

I have also ensured that the research is in line with the ethics of the university and of the British Education Research Authority, where I am obligated to ensure that participants are treated fairly and ensured confidentiality at all times.

If you require further information, clarification or would like to speak to me to discuss your son's involvement in the study, please call me on the school's number and I would be happy to discuss this with you.

I would be very grateful if you could sign below to indicate your approval for your son to participate in the study.

Yours sincerely

Janet Graham

Dear Ms Graham

I agree/do not agree for my son to take part in the study (please delete as appropriate)

Child's Name:……………………………………… Year Group:…………………………….

Parents Name:.. Date:...

Appendix number six – signed consent from - students

CONSENT FORM – STUDENT

Please complete this form to give your consent to take part in the research study

	Please tick the appropriate box	
	YES	NO
Have you read the letter informing you of your rights and my duty to you?	☑	☐
Were you given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this Study beforehand?	☑	☐
Did you get a satisfactory answer to your questions?	☐	☑
Who did you speak to about this research?.. *my ~~class~~ mum & dad*		
Do you understand that your name will not be mentioned in Any reports concerning this study?	☑	☐
Were you told that you are free to withdraw from the study?		
- at anytime	☐	☑
- without having to give reasons for not taking part	☐	☐
Do you agree to take part in this study?	☑	☐

Signature of Student _____   Date: _____

Name (in capital letters): _____

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Appendix six – consent form from the teachers

Brunel
UNIVERSITY
WEST LONDON

Brunel University, Uxbridge
Middlesex, UB8 3PH, UK
Telephone +44 (0) 1895 274000
Fax +44 (0) 1895 269769
Web www.brunel.ac.uk

14th June 2007

Dear Teacher

Re: Study of African Caribbean Boys in Schools

I am conducting research as part of a doctorate programme which I am doing at Brunel University about African Caribbean boys in education and would be very grateful if you would help me with my research by completing the attached questionnaire.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and I want to reassure you that any information which you provide to me will be kept in strict confidence and will only be used for the study. Your name will not be used at any time and you have the right to refuse to participate in this study. I also want to reassure you that your identity and that of the school will be protected in any written information resulting from my work.

If there are any questions you would like to ask relating to this study, please do not hesitate to do so. Also, any other suggestions or advice you can give to me in relation to my work would be very welcomed.

The university code of practice requires me to seek your consent and I would be grateful if you could complete the consent form below.

Thank you for your support it is very much appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Janet Graham
Teacher/Researcher

Appendix six– sample consent form signed by teachers

CONSENT FORM – TEACHER

Please complete this form to give your consent to take part in the study

Please tick the appropriate box

	YES	NO
Have you read the research participant information letter?	✓	
Were you given an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this Study beforehand?	✓	
Were questions raised answered to your satisfaction?	✓	

Who did you speak to about this research?........ *Janet Graham*

	YES	NO
Do you understand that your name will not be mentioned in Any reports concerning this study?	✓	
Were you told that you are free to withdraw from the study?		
- at anytime	✓	
- without having to give reasons for not taking part	✓	
Do you agree to take part in this study?	✓	

Signature of Teacher .... Date: 2/7/07

Name (in capital letters): ....

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Appendix six – consent form for interview - headteacher

Brunel
UNIVERSITY
WEST LONDON

Brunel University, Uxbridge
Middlesex, UB8 3PH, UK
Telephone +44 (0) 1895 274000
Fax +44 (0) 1895 269769
Web www.brunel.ac.uk

14th February 2007

Dear Maggie

As I would like you to participate in my research project I have to seek separate consent. Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and I want to reassure you that any information you give to me will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used for the study. Your name will nor the school will be used at any time and you have the right to withdraw from the project at any stage. Your identity and that of the school will be protected in any written information and you can adopt another name of your choice if you prefer.

The university requires me to tape record the interview in order to analyse what you have said later and for ease of translating.

If there are any questions you would like to ask relating to this study beforehand, please do not hesitate to do so. Also, any other suggestions or advice you can give me in relation to my work would be very welcomed. Please complete the consent form below.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Janet Graham
Teacher/Researcher

QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENT
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Name (If you want to):................................   Form:..11.x...............

This questionnaire will be used strictly for education research purposes and will not affect you personally. You have my promise that all information will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any reports. I want to find out your views and opinion on education. Your assistance is very much appreciated so please be as honest as possible. Thank you.

Please <u>TICK ONE BOX</u> to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. It is important to go to university and get a degree. Comments. (ACHEIVE) WHAT YOU WILL 't.... (Acomplish)	✓				
2. I don't need university qualifications. I can make money by working or doing other things. Comments. No University qualisisations = Post Man goes					✓
3. It is cool to learn and achieve a good secondary education such as GCSE's and A Levels. Comments. to lead a great like you will Need success goes	✓				
4. Pressures from friends stop boys from learning. Comments. yes 1 discussed it with Me !!!			✓		

Appendix eight - quoted extracts from students questionnaires

(P6)

QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENT
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Name (If you want to).. Form:...//P..................

This questionnaire will be used strictly for education research purposes and will not affect you personally. You have my promise that all information will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any reports. I want to find out your views and opinion on education. Your assistance is very much appreciated so please be as honest as possible. Thank you.

Please <u>TICK ONE BOX</u> to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. It is important to go to university and get a degree. Comments...yes I think it is as you can further your education		✓			
2. I don't need university qualifications. I can make money by working or doing other things. Comments............				✓	
3. It is cool to learn and achieve a good secondary education such as GCSE's and A Levels. Comments...yes as the ones that are think it is cool to pass about, are the ones that will fail at the end of the day		✓			
4. Pressures from friends stop boys from learning. Comments...yes as they think if they don't join in, they will be picked on		✓			

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Appendix nine - quoted extracts from students questionnaires

QUESTIONNAIRE – STUDENT
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Name (If you want to)... Form:...11e...............

This questionnaire will be used strictly for education research purposes and will not affect you personally. You have my promise that all information will be kept confidential and your name will not be used in any reports. I want to find out your views and opinion on education. Your assistance is very much appreciated so please be as honest as possible. Thank you.

Please TICK ONE BOX to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1. It is important to go to university and get a degree. Comments..		✓			
2. I don't need university qualifications. I can make money by working or doing other things. Comments.....That may be true. If you want to be saying for the rest of your life. 'do you want fries with that!'					✓
3. It is cool to learn and achieve a good secondary education such as GCSE's and A Levels. Comments...			✓		
4. Pressures from friends stop boys from learning. Comments...We all have free will. We can either choose to go with the rest of crowd, or we can dare to be different and go alone, by working hard for a good future or find someone who works hard to hang around with				✓	

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Appendix ten - quoted extracts from students questionnaires

	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree	3 Neither Agree nor Disagree	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
Please <u>TICK ONE BOX</u> to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).					
5. It is cool to be part of a group such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist (galist) crew Comments. BANG! BANG! BRAP! ! BRaP! ! BuLLEt ! ! ! BuLLet! ! ! Bullet! ! !	✓				
6. It is cool to be wedged or tonk (i.e. have six pack muscles) and wear designer clothes. Comments. Gotta get the ~~gt~~ gyal dem !! Lol		✓			
7. Mentors supporting students in school are a good thing. Comments. NAH				6	
8. Mentors help keep student focused on learning. Comments. Dunno			✓		
9. My teachers understand me. Comments. SAC 4RM				✓	
10. My teachers understand my culture. Comments. No Way					✓

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Appendix eleven - quoted extracts from students questionnaires

	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	4	5	3	2	1
Please <u>TICK ONE BOX</u> to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).					
5. It is cool to be part of a group such as the MC crew, the tough group and the girlist (galist) crew Comments.it's good to have people whatcing you back because of the danger in the streets but your best friend can also be your worst enimie itsnot certin			✓		
6. It is cool to be wedged or tonk (i.e. have six pack muscles) and wear designer clothes. Comments Only when you wanna attract attention of girls like in summer boys come out topless & because you wanna be stronger			✓		
7. Mentors supporting students in school are a good thing. Comments..	✓				
8. Mentors help keep student focused on learning. Comments..			✓		
9. My teachers understand me. Comments..				✓	
10. My teachers understand my culture. Comments..					✓

Please **TICK ONE BOX** to indicate your views on this. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines if you want to).	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	4	5	3	2	1
12. I think schools could do more to make learning a more enjoyable experience. Comments.Know.Bat...		/			
13. I can relate to the black teachers in my school. Comments.I...See...where...theyire...Comin. ......4.R.M...		/			
14. I can relate to the white teachers in my school. Comments.dont...Really...Like...em............				/	

Please make any other comments about your learning, the teaching you receive, your peer groups or anything else you really want to say about your education.

.....I.O...RAIHER...DiscnsS...WIIH...MS.....................
.............GRAHAM.!.(.(...
....
....
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....

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is very much valued and appreciated. I promise once again that this information will be kept confidential

Appendix twelve - quoted extracts from students questionnaires

Appendix thirteen – extract from teachers questionnaire

Please tick the most appropriate box to indicate your views on this using the key above. (Please make additional comments on the dotted lines)	A	SA	NAD	D	SD
5. Most parents are actively involved in supporting their children's learning. Comments. *What support are we talking about? Educated house wives might be proactive, but most economic mobile parents have less time.*			✓		
6. The National Curriculum caters adequately for diversity and ethnic minorities in secondary education. Comments. *If black community feels differently they should come up with specific menu that will provide diversity.*	✓				
7. Schools provide quality education to meet the needs of ethnic minority children. Comments. *It is known that ethnic minority children at the end of KS2 are at par with other children. Underachievement and deviation start at KS3 and that has to be addressed.*	✓				
8. Sufficient emphasis is placed on extra curricular activities to help African-Caribbean boys to achieve better results. Comments. *What would encourage black kids to learn differently? I would like to know.*	✓				

Appendix fourteen – validation by my critical friend

STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF VALIDATION OF RESEARCH

I have observed Janet Graham carrying out interviews with students and getting them to complete questionnaires. I understand that this is work towards an Education Doctorate at Brunel University.

I consider that she has been both professional and objective in these activities and has maintained the confidence of students without compromising her position as a teacher in the school. She has explained to students what she is doing and put them at ease. I have carried out my own research in this school as part of a PhD programme so have some understanding of methodological and ethical issue. I think that Janet has risen to the challenge of being a teacher researcher and interpreted what students have said in a fair way. I have also looked at the teacher questionnaires and the analysis. It is clear that Janet has demonstrated ability to deal will quantitative data.

I have watched students form Year 10 complete the written questionnaires and have examined a small sample. This shows that the students have generated useful and original data. I have also looked at interview questions and compared these against Janet's transcripts and analysis. The interviews have provided deeper ethnographic responses. Some of the conclusions that she has drawn from her analysis could be the subject of further research.

Teacher (with PhD in Education)
Vocational Studies