Education and Inequality: Experiences of Black Teachers in British White Education System

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Purpose: The purpose of this article is to depict inequality cases and examine the complexity of black teachers' experiences in the British white system. For this reason, the researchers of this article applied concepts of whiteness, intersectionality, and battle fatigue to Boakye's I Heard What You Said (2022).

Methodology: This is qualitative research and its nature is deductive. The theoretical framework primarily was based on Crenshaw and Bradbury's definitions of intersectionality, Kincheloe's of whiteness, and Smith's of battle fatigue. Loden and Rosener's diversity wheel was also used to clarify various cases of intersectionality. I Heard What You Said (2022) contains 56 experiences of a black teacher in the British white education system. The sample size includes all 56 experiences of the black teacher.

Findings: Finding shows that Whiteness and the internalization of white characteristics play a significant role in defining black identities. They are inferior not only because of their different skin color but also because of numerous criteria and the differences from whites. In this educational system, all learning is also consistent with white beliefs and the norms that define them within the system. Boakye mentions that "'white is light' imagery and 'white is right' ideology" is imposed on students from the early days of attending schools which demonstrates white supremacy in the British education system. In the British educational system, not only are teachers marginalized, but also they have to make an effort in order to institutionalize white beliefs and ideas in students' minds. The British education system ignores diversity in its curriculum, wanting to follow the concept of "sameness" in education. The narrator criticized the aim of the National Curriculum of England in the late 1860s, based on the view of Mattew Arnowl, citing some ambiguous concepts such as "essential knowledge", "educated citizens", "the best that has been thought and said", and "…engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievements …" He explained the condition in Arnold's time in 1860. It highlighted that the white education system shows no changes in its aim through time. It seeks to stabilize its characteristics in the educational system in relation to ignorance of differences and white supremacy in all parts of the educational system in British. Furthermore, applying the concept of intersectionality, it becomes clear that each proof emphasizes the connection of the particular sections, which to some extent differs from others. Considering the concept of intersectionality in the context of whites being superior, makes the causes more complex. Applying the concept of battle fatigue shows that the black teachers fight against racism even if they believe they could bring insignificant changes to the British educational system.

Conclusion: The research shows that black teachers' experiences of discrimination in the British education system are based not only on their skin color as black but on the connection between different dimensions of diversity and criteria in different areas of the personal, sociocultural, and organizational sphere. There is a need to revise the National Curriculum of Britain to start work on eliminating inequalities in the education document and to extend it to the whole education system.

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1. Introduction

In countries with a white majority, there is often talk of ensuring that all have equal opportunities in education, including when it comes to hiring and retaining teachers. This is particularly a problem where minorities are underrepresented (Dandala, 2020). Racial equality has become an important factor in England, although a number of theories have been put forward. Experiences of minorities and people of color in relation to aspirations, ethnic academics, and teachers in England have followed the same exclusionary roles. Because of the long history of racial inequality in England and its education system, the promotion and advancement of black and minority ethnic teachers is a complex and sensitive issue (Miller, 2016).

The shortage of minority teachers in schools is a problem because it signals that the school system discriminates against certain groups of people, and it also affects the education of minority students. Minority teachers often find it difficult to find and stay in work, meaning minor ethnic students do not have many role models to help them learn (Joseph-Salisbury, 2020).

Table 1. Percentage of White and minority ethnic teachers in British schools (Bradbury, 2020)

White teachers in British schools	Minority ethnic teachers in British schools	total
85%	24.3%	100%

If governments are to recruit and retain minority teachers, it is important to listen to the experiences and challenges of black teachers. In England, where the government believes racism is no longer a problem, 85.7% of all teachers are white British (Bradbury, 2020).

Table 2. Percentage of British schools with just white teachers, and those which has minority ethnic teachers

Schools with just white teachers	Schools including minority ethnic teachers	total
46%	54%	100%

According to school staff data, 26% of schools have no ethnic minority staff at all and 46% of schools have no ethnic minority teachers (Bradbury, 2020). It is important to note that based on Census data in 2021 provided by UK government 82% of people in England and Wales are white, and 18% belong to a black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic group[1].

This paper examines racism, whiteness and intersectionality, and battle fatigue experienced and negotiated by black people in England and particularly in its education system. Whiteness, as a criterion and key idea of Western modernity, has been dynamic and historically not imputed to groups including Jews, Irish or Eastern Europeans (Narkowicz, 2023). It requires those at its margins to strive towards it in order to turn to modern deserving subjects within wider intra-European hierarchies (Antonucci, and Varriale, 2020). The whites' effort to universalize its properties as the "proper ways to be" has ceaselessly undermined the attempts of non-Whites in various contexts(Kincheloe, 1999). Hence, it is something that Europeans focus on to assert legitimacy and rightfulness. (Imre, 2005; Krivonos, 2020; Zarycki, 2022).

The term intersectionality is used in anti-racist politics because it emphasizes the experiences of the most privileged individuals of subordinate and subordinate groups. The key point of intersectionality is that individual life chances are shaped not only by a single status hierarchy, but also by multiple intersecting systems of oppression and injustice, such as racism, sexism, and classism (Homan, Brown, and King, 2021; Chantarat et al., 2022). Intersectionality focuses on how different forms of oppression, discrimination, domination, and other social processes intersect and influence each other. In other words, black teachers and students in schools may belong to more than one marginalized group.

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https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/[1]

Racism goes beyond interpersonal discrimination or implicit bias against people of color; it is a socio-politically constructed system with a hierarchical classification of people that prioritizes white people over non-white people through a clear allocation of resources and power (Hope et al., 2022). Black people withstand the physical strains and millstones of hundreds of years of injustice, toxic exposure, and white supremacist violence.

These hardships and problems injure and exhaust the body, shortening the lives of some and preventing others from even getting started (Hardeman et al., 2022). Research using race as a variable should explain that any importance between race and another factor is highly related to societal discrepancies, since race does not represent biological or cultural differences between groups (Adkins-Jackson et al., 2022). Racial differences and the importance we place on phenotypic or genetic traits are determined by cultural, historical, ideological, geographic, and legal implications arising from racism and white supremacy (Bailey, Feldman, and Bassett, 2021). Intersectionality as an analytical framework helps educational researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to better understand how different domains of race, gender, and class interact and experience differential discrimination (Hope et al., 2022).

Racial battle fatigue is a concept extended by Smith (2004) in relation to black staff in higher education. This concept is explained as the psychological, emotional, physiological, energetic, and time-related costs of fighting racism (Smith, 2009; cited in Pizarro, and Kohli, 2020). Battle fatigue for these teachers who are diminished is caused by the mental and emotional difficulties and pressures of addressing racism on top of the work done by white teachers. This cumulative impact of racism and other racial issues is due to teachers being so worn down that they are easy to quit (Tereshchenko, Mills, and Bradbury, 2020).

Researchers have previously examined racism in education, as Williams (2018) in his study, *When Will We Listen and Heed?: Learning from Black Teachers to Understand the Urgent Need for Change*, examined the life stories of African-American teachers through critical racial and identity theories as a framework to understand the roles and meanings that gave birth to the term African-American or Black teacher. Haque & Elliott (2019), in their study Visible and Invisible Barriers: the impact of racism on BME Teachers, found that black and minority ethnic teachers face barriers to promotion and career advancement, and as a result, feel undervalued, isolated, and not feel supported.

Teachers felt overburdened and demoralized, and resented stereotypical responsibilities such as conducting Black History Month. Black teachers face racist curriculum, epistemic violence, racist peers, unenforced policies on discrimination, and the complexities that come with being black in a white normative space. Tembo (2021), in his research *Black Educators in (white) settings: Making racial identity visible in Early Childhood Education and Care in England, UK*, tried by the use of Critical Race Theory and narrative analysis method, illustrates the experiences of Black educators in early childhood education and care. Tembo noted that there is little research documenting the narratives of black educators in early childhood education and care in England.

The researchers found that the case for racism is an important issue in the British education system and there is a need for further research into black teachers' experiences of the British language. For this reason, the purpose of the present paper is to examine Boakye's *I Heard What You Said*, a 275-page account of the experiences of black teachers in England, considering concepts such as intersectionality, whiteness and battle fatigue. This account is a collection of 56 stories told by a black man living in the Britain and a member of the British education system. All narratives are based on what Boakye experienced in this system. This is the first-hand documented experience recently published in 2022, where no one has yet applied the selected concepts. Therefore, the research question of this study is what role concepts such as whiteness, intersectionality, and combat fatigue play in the complexity of Boakye's experiences and feelings.

2. Methodology

This research is qualitative and deductive in nature. Deductive analysis generally means applying theory to the data to test the theory. It's kind of a top-down approach to data analysis. In qualitative analysis, this

often means assigning predetermined codes to the data. The codes can be developed as purely organizational tools, or they can be constructed from concepts drawn from literature, theory, or researcher-developed proposals (Bingham, and Witkowsky, 2022).

Statistical population

The primary source used in this article is the *I Heard What You Said* written by Jeffrey Boakye in 2022. Secondary sources are theoretical definitions of racism and related concepts.

Sample size

The *I Heard What You Said* account contains 56 of Boakye's experiences as a black teacher in seven chapters of 275 pages. All sides are considered to be analyzed based on the concepts of intersectionality, whiteness and battle fatigue in the British schools and general education system.

3. Findings

For the analysis, intersectionality is key to understanding how black teachers, as a small group, feel racism in their schools and experience it as Boakye telling his stories in *I Heard What You Said*. More importantly, he faces various situations trying to shape his life and find his place in a society shaped by white supremacy.

Based on Crenshaw's opinion, women were neglected in social movements related to domestic violence, which declared that identity was not perceived along one axis, namely race, gender and sexuality. In fact, it is understood through the intersection of several axes of identity. The way she uses the term points to examples of inequalities affecting Black people, and Black women in particular, as a result of sexism and racism. (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991).

Crenshaw defined intersectionality as "a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking." Since then, the term has had a long history as it has entered different and numerous fields and contexts (Carbado et al., 2013).

The basic components of intersectionality could be understood as recognizing which people are shaped by their simultaneous belonging to several interconnected social categories. Furthermore, the interaction between multiple social categories takes place in the context of related power systems and structures, such as laws, politics, government, which is another element, as well as a distinction of power inequality as a key to intersectionality. Structural inequalities, expressed as relative disadvantage and privilege, are the result of interactions between social categories, power relations, and contexts. Consequently, a person's experiences of inequality may be chronic or transient, resulting in unique lived experiences. (Bradbury, Tereshchenko, and Mills, 2022)

Based on the concept of intersectionality and what is shown in the Diversity Wheel (Loden and Rosener, 1991), a person is influenced by environmental, social and cultural elements and experiences, learning from family, friendships, community, nationality and belief system. In an organization, a person is influenced by the group or context in which they work and the structures or processes in which they operate, which can consist of systemic limitations and biases (Loden and Rosener, 1991).
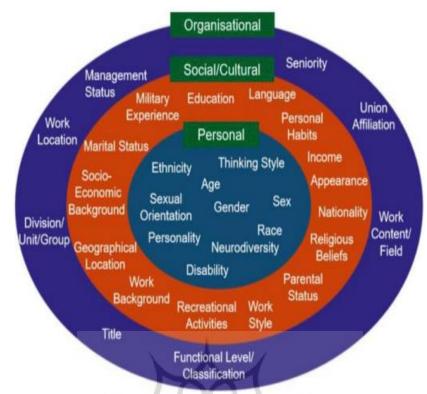
Figure 1. Diversity Wheel of Loden and Rosener, 1991, taken from Scottish Government site, 2022

In conclusion, Loden and Rosener (1991) expanded Crenshaw's definitions of intersectionality, which primarily considered race, gender and sexuality, to include environmental, social, cultural elements and experiences derived from family, friendships, community, nationality and belief learns system. They and Bradbury et al. (2022) referred to the context and singled out each lived experience of the individual as transient and unique of its kind.

Boakye, as a black teacher, once recounts his lived experience that he has to attend teacher training, which is why he had to go through the sing-in system. There was a digital facial recognition device that took a photo of everyone and turned it into a printed security pass after entering their name. Not recognizing a black teacher may at first seem like the device is broken, but given the racial system of British society, it could mean something else.

To explain his sense of discrimination, the narrator used a simile of how it feels like day is turning into night as I try for the third, fourth, fifth, sixth time. I'm the only person who didn't recognize this machine. Because he was the only black teacher who wanted to attend the special session. Even the other whites didn't know what had happened, so they tried to help him by offering helpful advice on how to stand further back or higher or in or out of the light (Boakye, 2022, 3). It is a type of discrimination different from the controversial type of racism.

To make his feelings clear, the narrator described the school as possessed by a racist spirit, like the hotel in The Shining. He used the simile to compare this school to the place of evil.

It might sound paranoid, but the rejection I felt by not being recognized echoed wider suspicions that I might not be recognized by the teaching profession. How I felt waiting for that machine to see me is symbolic of my discomfort around being a black teacher in a white education system. (Boakye, 2022,3).

Not being recognized by the machine made him feel uneasy about not being considered as a teacher in the British education system for whites. He felt left out of the education system by the device made by the white system. For this teacher, school as a social context is a place where he faces some systematic limitations and barriers that have unique and transient experiences, as Bradbruy et al. (2022) noted. This

feeling is the result of the interaction between the categories of race, educated individuals, his social and cultural experience that made him an educated individual, and his belonging to the category of his profession as a teacher in the context of white power.

Once all of these categories are combined, have the narrator ask why he couldn't be a black male teacher in British. He later wrote down his experience of how, in the first session, students could not believe that a man and not a woman was their teacher. The children ask him: "are you really a teacher?" (Boakye, 2022, 12). He noted that he got the position of English teacher that is usually "dominated by white women" in Britain. The narrator was aware of the intersectionality and complex connection between different concepts that lead to discrimination, as he noted: "Due to matter of patriarchy, gender stereotyping, inequality, and dominant masculinity teaching is a historically 'female profession'" (Boakye, 2022, 11). Women are supposed to be teachers, especially English teachers. Therefore, students asked him if he was a teacher. Hearing such a question made him feel inconvenient and wondered: "Why shouldn't a black man like me be accepted as a teacher at face value?" (Boakye, 2022,14)

On another occasion he went further and described his experience of exclusion from the British white education system, pointing to evidence, exclusion from being human in the eyes of the students in the class, simply because of his black skin.

In a school context, I tend to have been a total anomaly. A young(ish), black male teacher who knows something about the kind of music that most kids think is garlic and wooden crosses to their fang-baring parents and teachers. I've seen it when they see me, the curiosity and slight disbelief. Wondering what kind of creature I could possibly be, existing in the barren landscape of formal education but looking like I might have come from somewhere fresher altogether (because of the colour of my skin) (Boakye, 2022,60).

Boakye was also sensitive to discrimination against white women in the same system as a result of intersectionality. He criticized the British education system for abusing women as it is a "low-stakes, non-money-making career option that educated girl have been allowed to pursue." Of course, even such low-stakes work should be set aside as a result of marriage and taking on the roles of wives and mothers. With such evidence, the narrator highlights the dominance of white female teachers, stating that it doesn't matter how many women work as teachers, but those who direct education are only men: It does not matter how many female teachers there are out there: the strings are pulled by man's hand." (Boakye, 2022, 11)

It is a type of intersectional discrimination that is the effect of the interaction of different intersections of patriarchy and gender in the white context. It is a fact that supports Crenshaw's argument that women are driven to find their place in society defined by white supremacy. He shows how an education system based on the power of whiteness seeks to erase all cultural and linguistic differences and support the concept of whiteness as the only accepted norm in the British education system. Therefore, he once explained his experience and his victim's feeling of speaking and behaving as a white person in order to be able to be a teacher in the white system. He found it a difficult task. At the time he achieved these skills he wanted to put it on my CV, he explained the difficult process he went through to achieve these skills: "You wouldn't believe the scarifies, what to say or not to say." (Boakye, 2022, 12).

Another fact Boakye (2022, 13) has pointed out regarding the intersectionality of discrimination relates to the notion of being "polite". He explained the kind of discrimination the British system imposed on them, either white or black teachers. It is evidence that the culture of politeness is being used to legalize discrimination against both white and black teachers. He explained how two generations are taught: "no question ask and be polite." The dangerous thing about politeness is not criticizing the harmful issue in order to revise it. He uses a simile of undercooked sausages, "like when the sausages are undercooked but you to offend the host so you just let everyone at the barbecue get food poisoning." (Boakye,2022,14) Such discrimination is the result of the intersectionality multiplex of social and cultural categories occurring in the context of structural power, which is white power.

The British white curriculum provides a "monochrome environment" that shuts out all differences like black writers from the system and challenges new thinking. Boakye argues about whether all children are racist.

He (2022, 65) describes how young children as young as 7 react to these pictures of black writers hanging on the classroom wall and ask him if he is one of them or on another occasion he saw his pupils at 11 or 12 on who spent about 5 years education in British white education and thought you could ask him: "… one of them must surely be your black teacher, why else would a black person be up on the wall of people who, like, write and stuff?" (2022, 68). The fact of the matter is that hanging black writers is not normal in the white education system. None of them were dealing with a teacher who put up the pictures of black writers, what they already saw hanging on the wall were just white pictures. In the face of such evidence, he found it was the limited information available to them. Boayke explained his sense of discrimination with words like: "Even now, in the twenty-first century, black writers remain a footnote in the taught curriculum." (2022, 68)

Boakye's intersectional experiences don't always relate to black races, sometimes they do in relation to other sections. To explain that Boakye brings facts from the national curriculum, which wants to eliminate diversity and focuses on equality. To criticize the concept of equality in the National Curriculum, Boakye (2022, 120) uses the metaphor of the "rabbit" and the "hat",

I appreciate that, from a kid's perspective, school must often feel like a series of disconnected rabbits being pulled out of a series of disconnected hats. The national curriculum, I suppose, is intended to ensure that the same rabbit is pulled out of the same hat, regardless of which school you're in (Boakye,2022, 120).

The British education system ignores diversity in its curriculum, wanting to follow the concept of "sameness" in education. To make his point clear, he put forward the aim of the national curriculum of England,

The National curriculum provides pupils with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces pupils to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievements (Boakye,2022, 122)

Boakye (2022) criticized the aim of the National Curriculum of England in the late 1860s, based on the view of Mattew Arnowl, citing some ambiguous concepts such as "essential knowledge", "educated citizens", "the best that has been thought and said", and "…engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievements …" He explained the condition in Arnold's time in 1860.

He (2022) explained the situation in Arnold's time in 1860. Arnold lived in European society which engaged in the slave trade that destroyed much of the African lands. It was a time of extreme racism in the forms of discrimination, humiliation and oppression of Africans. So in such an environment of dehumanization and cruelty he asked a very important question about the meaning of "essential knowledge" in The National Curriculum of England which is being extended into the 21st century. Given such ambiguity as to what the following term "educated citizen" meant in 1860, stretching into the 21st century. Who can be considered an "educated citizen" if the concept of "essential knowledge" is not clear?

In addition, he found that "The curriculum that I have been taught to teach inherently upholds the notion of whiteness as pure." (Boakye,2022, 127) Looking at Loden and Rosener's (1991) Diversity Wheel, there are connections between various intersections of personal in terms of whiteness, social/cultural in terms of education and social economic and organizational background in terms of seniority and management status.

Boakye (2022) claims, as black teachers, that they feel unwelcome in the white school because they are discriminated against based on various criteria, namely their skin color, their accent and even their culture. This is understandable for black teachers. They experience inequality in the workplace and also under the influence of different systematic constraints. Boakye (2022) mentions that the roots of this uneasiness felt by black teachers should not be discounted as: "By failing or refusing or neglecting to address racial identity in teacher training, the profession actually ends up supporting structural biases and prejudices, simply by not challenging the status quo.". If such a case of negligence exists,

"No institution is free of systemic prejudice, no system immune to racial inequality, and to pretend otherwise is to create a climate in which these inequalities can – and will – persist." (Boakye, 2022, 20)

The government produced a report in 2021 and announced that 85.7% of all teachers in state funded schools in England were white British (Gov.uk, 2021), showing that the number of black teachers in these schools is limited. Consequently, minors in such a system would face inequalities as a result of power inequality distinctions, which can lead to different experiences for black teachers in the British education system as marginalized individuals. The connection here is between personal insect and scarcity and social structure in the context of British whiteness.

Boakye (2022) made a great effort to speak and behave as a white British to work at the white school, but this leads him to marginalize not his accent but the accent of his parents who considered English a second language , although they could speak fluent English. Boakye grew up in the British education system, he remarked,

"But my parents do list English as a second language, which makes me a British immigrant – once removed. And if there's one thing immigrants are good at, it's playing the game. We're exceptional at it because we have to be. The stakes are too high for failure to be an option." (Boakye, 2020, 24).

This is a kind of unique experience of intersectionality that Boayke achieved due to the interaction between the insects of the personal such as race, culture in relation to language, education, parental statues based on the Diversity Wheel (Loden, and Rosener, 1991).

Racism and discrimination are two inseparable concepts in a white supremacy system where blacks are a minority and excluded. More importantly, when dealing with a marginalized group, some new and unique life experiences are made. According to Crenshaw's definition, intersectionality is a metaphor for recognizing how different types of inequality or disadvantage sometimes combine to create barriers that conventional thinking fails to capture (Crenshaw, 1989). He explained his feeling of exclusion at the time when he was a student, "I've been the only black boy in the class. I've sat in classrooms, plural, solely representing a minority perspective."(Boakye, 2022, 49)

His experience in such a situation is marginalized and confronted with limitations. He mentioned that: "It's a world I had learned to navigate on my own, so maybe I was desensitized to the plight of others in the same situation, like a rugged loner who's been in the wilderness so long that he's forgotten how to meet a fellow traveler and seek the common ground"(Boakye, 2022, 50). Such behavior is due to the association of personal insect with persona habit of a sociocultural insect that entails such a sense of loneliness as a result of intersectional inequality.

Whiteness

Whiteness, as a criterion and key idea of Western modernity, has been dynamic and historically not imputed to groups including Jews, Irish or Eastern Europeans (Narkowicz, 2023). It requires those at its margins to strive towards it in order to turn to modern deserving subjects within wider intra-European hierarchies (Antonucci, and Varriale, 2020).

The whites' effort to universalize its properties as the "proper ways to be" has ceaselessly undermined the attempts of non-Whites in various contexts (Kincheloe, 1999). In achieving this goal, blackness remains inferior to whiteness since in a white system the only acceptable beliefs are those defined through white gaze. Boakye mentions that "'white is light' imagery and 'white is right' ideology" (Boakye, 2022,127) is imposed on students from the early days of attending schools which demonstrate white supremacy in British education system. In British educational system, not only are teachers marginalized, but also they have to make effort in order to institutionalize white beliefs and ideas in students' mind.

Another notable excerpt from the book explicitly reveals the fact that in Britain the educational system as the dominant ideology is what is expressed by white people and that all other beliefs and thoughts are inauthentic. It's something Europeans focus on to assert legitimacy and rightfulness. (Imre, 2005; Krivonos, 2020; Zarycki, 2022). An experience of Boakye relates to the above point. He declared the supremacy of white,

"In service of its own dominance, the white ideal continues to place itself on a racial pedestal, beneath which all others are inferior, exploiting the fictions of race for economic and social power." (Boakye, 2022, 128)

As a result, blacks are marginalized in such a system and some societal beliefs would be internalized by both members within the system. Therefore, black people's efforts in this education system are undermined as they are viewed as inferior and excluded from the system.

To place white norms in the privileged position of rationality and superiority, white people would need to frame a pervasive and universal image of nonwhites as irrational, disordered, and prone to uncivilized behavior (Nakayama, and Krizek, 1995; Stowe, 1996; Alcoff, and Zack, 1995; Haymes et al., 1996). In such a system, black people and their customs or beliefs do not matter, and only white thoughts and norms count.

In fact, as a minority group, black people even forget how to interact with other black people in every context. They only play their roles based on what white people expect of them. In this system, students face the exclusion of blacks from almost every aspect and context of society, as black is equally bad based on white characteristics. Such ideologies are institutionalized by students through learning in a white-dominated educational system. Boakye stated on one occasion,

If white is the norm then black is the subversion. If white culture is the blank-page start then black culture is the ink-made mark. If whiteness is neutral then blackness is potent. If the white curriculum is what we're supposed to do, then the black curriculum becomes a taboo. If white is right then black is wrong. And no one ever needed permission to be right. Blackness is illicit. (Boakye, 2022,158)

Such an explanation illustrates the dominant system of thought in the British education system, which sees blacks as inferior and whites as superior. This belief is internalized not only by whites but also by blacks. Because of this, it has become a common belief among all members of society and even in schools as the first social institutions into which children enter. "Thus, embracing blackness, even in small ways, can feel like an act of rebellion." (Boakye, 2022, 158)

The fact that some racist beliefs and ideas are mixed into the education system in the British is undeniable. In fact: "British child experiencing an average British syllabus has reached sixteen years of age, they will have encountered numerous texts that reinforce the 'black = bad, white = good' ideology." (Boakye, 2022, 127)

As a matter of: "white purity is an ideal that has been constructed and reconstructed over time, throughout history…" (Boakye, 2022, 127). In this educational system, "black/white dualism" is imposed on students from the very beginning, and they institutionalize the belief imposed from the early days of their educational life that the only legitimate ideology is that of whites.

The extent of white dominance in the British education system is shown in this report with some statistics provided by Boayke, the teacher. He explained that the percentage of teachers in the British who are white and British non-white, other or white non-British is 85.9. (Boakye, 2022, 102) By making an analogy between the human body and the British educational system, this teacher concluded that,

"If, for some mad reason, you removed 85.9 per cent of your body mass, you would be left with literally just your skin and nothing else, which is a highly appropriate metaphor for explaining how significant skin is in matters of race and education. White teachers basically make up the body of the UK's teaching body. (Boakye, 2022, 102)

As a matter of the fact, the main body of Britain educational system is shaped by white people which represents white supremacy in this system. As a result, black/white dualism is internalized in this system and black individuals are marginalized and inferior.

In a white dominant society, black people are marginalized and pressured while trying to become a member of another social organization, institution, or group. On almost all of the occasions mentioned, blacks are limited in number, meaning that they represent a small group in this situation. Therefore, in the white-run system, where everything is in favor of the whites, they are seen as inferior. Based on what is described in

this report, black teachers are a minority in the British education system and are so influenced by white supremacy that even they might forget their own individuality.

They internalize white beliefs and norms that make them isolated beings within that system. Whites and the superiority of their qualities are felt by black teachers, who are not a lot in numbers, which brings hardship and difficulty to them. In some cases, they tend to resist emotionally or mentally. Teachers' experiences of being a minor group in schools in England have been studied over the past few decades, with studies focusing on different groups of teachers and different stages of their teaching career (Powney et al., 2003; Basit et al., 2006; Bush, Glover, and Sood, 2006; Cunningham, and Hargreaves, 2007; Haque, and Elliot, 2019).

Battle Fatigue

Racial battle fatigue is a concept extended by Smith (2004) in relation to black staff in higher education. This concept is explained as the psychological, emotional, physiological, energetic, and time-related costs of fighting racism (Smith, 2009, cited in Pizarro, and Kohli, 2020). Battle fatigue for these teachers who are diminished is caused by the mental and emotional difficulties and pressures of addressing racism on top of the work done by white teachers. This cumulative impact of racism and other racial issues is due to teachers being so worn down that they are easy to quit (Tereshchenko, Mills, and Bradbury, 2020).

Battle fatigue occurs when Black teachers face mental or emotional difficulties in confronting racism and struggle to cope. This situation of racial insensitivity is vividly illustrated by Boakye's experience. He once overheard a white teacher explain to two Asian students "how prejudice once served an 'evolutionary purpose' by triggering suspicion of 'different tribes' in service of pre-emptive defense." (Boakye, 2022, 94) He kept mulling over the root of this claim, showing that his mental conflict continued even during this crisis at home. He mentioned,

"What I did do, at the time, was ruminate on the whole debacle for twenty-four hours, discuss it at home with my wife, then, the following day, confront my colleague in a quiet staffroom with the assertion that they were absolutely wrong. It was a stuttery exchange on their part, but I was fluent in my conviction." (Boakye, 2022, 95)

In the example above, the black teacher dealt with this racist situation by starting a conversation with his colleague and making him aware of his erroneous beliefs.

Schools are the first social institutions that children enter, so they could play a central role in people's beliefs and thinking. More importantly, the teachers in these educational institutes teach the students ideologies that could shape their personality and lead them to internalize these ideologies, which are mainly based on the dominance of the white group over the black ones. The discrimination felt by blacks in such a system presents them with some difficulties. Boayke claimed that it was necessary to fight racism in schools in order to reform the whole system.

Because "A system that allows for apathy or inaction around any social injustice is a system that is inherently broken. What has been described as 'racial literacy' is nowhere near high enough on the education agenda." (Boakye, 2022, 167) It is noted that not only black teachers have an important role to play in this case, but also white teachers, "the overwhelming majority of staff in UK schools", (Boakye, 2022, 167) could help alleviate this for the most part. However, no racist ideologies are imposed on them and "there is no pressure for white people to see dominant whiteness as their problem." (Boakye, 2022, 167)

Boakye added that the concept of anti-racism is used explicitly in this book for the first time, which marked a turning point in his or her attitude toward race and education, and showed that person coming to the conclusion that they make some mark in the struggle would against racism. This person said,

Up until this point, I hadn't realised my responsibility to tackle racism through my work in education. It was an exciting time; realising that I could bring the various strands of my life together in one mission. It felt like it was time to raise my head above the parapet and start leveraging whatever small influence I had towards a greater aim (Boakye, 2022, 167).

The goal is to oppose any kind of racist ideologies and discriminatory attitudes and behavior towards minorities in all parts of society and the education system are no exception. It could even be considered one of the most important sections, as beliefs and ideas could be internalized in schools ruled by white supremacy. Based on the definition of battle fatigue, there are some difficulties for black teachers in taking a stand against racism.

This teacher claimed: "The dilemma I found myself facing was that of any teacher who has been at the chalkface for as long as I had: how to position one's self to ensure maximum impact. I was making a stand, and now it was time to lead. Or so I thought." (Boakye, 2022, 168) He was aware of the rigors of fighting racism and discrimination, but strove to make some changes, even if they were tiny or insignificant, even though it was happening in a society where whiteness and their beliefs prevailed are only legitimate.

Discussion

Researchers have already examined racism in education, such as Tembo (2021). He used critical race theory and narrative analysis method to illustrate the experiences of black educators in early childhood education and care (ECC). He noted that he could not generalize about the experience of all Black educators, but he could highlight underexplored areas and advocated the need for counter-narratives to challenge normative, non-racist experiences. Bringing counterstatements from black teachers to the fore exposes the tacit nature of racism and exclusion in education. This challenges a related color-blind narrative that has led many people to believe that racial issues do not merit discussion in the ECEC context or that children do not see race. The finding of the present research supports Tembos' finding as inequality and discrimination against blacks and other people of color are portrayed in Boakye's work by providing real evidence that he witnessed in British schools and the system as a whole when he narrates how children at 7 could not believe that he was a teacher.

In her study, Callender (2020) refers to the lack of male teachers in primary schools in the UK, US, Canada and Australia and found how David's story, the main character, depicts his voice being muted as she gets involved in the process of learning is interwoven with othering, hyper-surveillance and disciplinary power. Through interviews and documentary data, the institutional processes of overt and covert racism, and racial and gender stereotypes became clear. Callender (2020) states that the number of male teachers is small. The present research comes to the same conclusions. But what Callender argues regarding being mute as a result of noticing others differs from the case Boayke mentions. He explained the importance of being "polite", that white society makes teachers, whether white or black, remain silent and not ask questions or criticize the white education system, leading to reformation.

Haque and Elliott (2019) found that teachers felt overworked, demoralized, and resentful of stereotypical responsibilities such as conducting Black History Month. Black teachers face racist curriculum, epistemic violence, racist peers, unenforced policies on discrimination, and the complexities that come with being black in a white normative space. Current researchers found some evidence consistent with Haque and Elliot's findings—given the racist curriculum, as Boayke discussed ignorance of the aim of the National Curriculum regarding diversity. The findings also support what Haque and his colleagues noticed as the complexities and interdependencies of race, class, and gender. The difference between this and their research, however, is that the researchers of the present article also applied the battle fatigue on the account *I Heard What You Said.*

Williams (2018) found that the stories of black teachers can help challenge the structures that keep education white. Black teachers can bring a deep understanding of racism and racist identities, having experienced them firsthand, understanding and appreciating communities that have historically supported black students neglected by the white world. He found that all of the teachers he interviewed believed that black teachers were more likely to spot misrepresentations in the curriculum and supporting materials. This comes not only from experiences as a teacher, but also from remembering her own confrontations with racism as a black child going through the British education system. The same is true of the present study.

There is some evidence in the available research that highlights how Boayke, as a black teacher in the England education system, identified the problems such as outdated curriculum extracting from Brown's thought in 1860 at the time European countries engaged slavery trade to large amount.

Alice Bradbury and et al. (2022) in an article entitled "Minoritised teachers' experiences of multiple, intersectional racisms in the school system in England: 'carrying the weight of racism'", as current research explored the intersectionality of teachers in the UK education system. In that research, they explained that black teachers, as a minor group, face discrimination in schools not only because of their race but also because of their class and gender, similar to what is found in the current research. Some of the teachers interviewed consistently reported their experiences of quitting work due to the discrimination they faced in the schools, which is the same as found in *I Heard What You Said* (2022), written by Jeffrey Boakye.

In "Minoritised teachers' experiences of multiple, intersectional racisms in the school system in England: 'carrying the weight of racism'", (2022) Alice Bradbury and et al. discussed the concepts of whiteness as the dominant idea in Britain and also battle fatigue in the British education system. More importantly, the vast majority of teachers working in this system are white, not black, and there are even schools that do not have teachers of color, and white culture is seen as the norm in the UK education system. They expressed that even in these schools, black teachers are intersectionalized, leading them to mental and emotional crisis and sometimes leading them to quit their jobs. (Tereshchenko, Mills, and Bradbury, 2020) These findings are similar to those of the researchers of this article regarding feelings of experiencing discrimination in an intersectional context, resisting such discrimination in any way, and facing combat fatigue.

4. Conclusion

To recap, in the British education system, which is a white-dominated system, black teachers and students are in the minority. As members of this system, they experience discrimination and injustice in different ways. Whiteness and the internalization of white characteristics play a significant role in defining black identities. They are inferior not only because of their different skin color, but also because of numerous criteria and the differences to whites. In this educational system, all learning is also consistent with white beliefs and the norms that define them within the system.

Furthermore, applying the concept of intersectionality, it becomes clear that each proof emphasizes the connection of the particular intersections, which to some extent differs from others. It is important to note that the concepts of intersectionality took place in the context of whites being superior, making the cause more complex.

It also highlights that the white education system shows no changes. It seeks to stabilize its characteristics in the educational system in relation to ignorance of differences and white supremacy in all parts of the educational system in England. The essential part needs to be considered when revising the National Curriculum of Britain to start work on eliminating inequality in the education document and extend it to the whole education system.

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