

Durham University

Criminology Dissertation

Racism within the UK police force: an insight into the experiences of black and minority ethnic police officers.

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Abstract

The importance of race relations within the police force has had particular relevance throughout modern society, particularly since the publication of both the Scarman report (1981) and the Machperson report (1999).

Current literature surrounding the experiences of racism black minority ethnic (BME) colleagues experience within the police force demonstrates a possible shift from overt forms of racism to covert forms. These are reflected in the complaints procedure, recruitment levels and opportunities for promotion.

This research aims to explore the experiences of racism BME police officers experience, evaluate methods which have been implemented to encourage change and highlight further causes for concern within the institution. This will be done with the support of empirical research conducted through correspondence with the National Black Police Association.

Introduction

As a research subject, race relations within the police force have been widely explored since the Scarman Report, which was published following the Brixton riots in 1981 (Souhami, 2012). Lord Scarman challenged society by raising the serious issue of racism, which was impacting not only the general public, but was also occurring within organisations. The police are one of the few organisations who directly serve society and come into contact with members of the public daily; racism within this institution is therefore particularly troubling. Machperson's report, published almost twenty years later, acknowledged the existence of institutional racism; this has been explained in detail more recently by Grieve and French (2000, p. 14).

“Institutional racism is about stereotyping; it is about being unwitting; it is about ignorance; it is about failing to recognise a racist/hate crime; it is about not listening or understanding and not being interested in listening or understanding; it is about white pretence and black people being seen as a problem”.

Contrary to Scarman, (1981) who believed that racism was expressed by a minority of police officers, Macpherson believed at the time that the police as an entire institution was racist (The Secret Policeman, 2003). What Scarman should have considered is the idea that individuals create institutions; (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006) this raises the question of how individual racism amongst colleagues can be distinguished from institutional racism. Although Scarman (1981) and MacPherson's (1999) ideas of institutional racism take different directions, the theory of institutional racism relies on Scarman's suggestion of individual racism adopted by some officers. This should be taken into account when analysing the empirical data collected for this study.

Both reports were mainly concerned with the impact that racism within institutions had on minority ethnic members of the public (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007). Until now, there has been a clear gap in the research into race relations within the police (Morant and Edwards, 2011), which has failed to focus on police occupational culture as a whole, but specifically fails to show how minority ethnic members of the police force are treated by their white colleagues. Because of this, the research for this dissertation aims to focus solely on the experiences of BME officers through the collection of empirical data in relation to the current literature on the topic.

Firstly, when analysing racism within the police, it needs to be taken into account that race is a social construction. Researchers explain how race, and therefore racism, is defined by our daily social actions and interactions with others. It has been argued that multiple races entail multiple racisms (John-Baptiste et al., 2006), which

vary throughout different geographical locations and also institutions (Holdaway, 1997). Morant and Edwards (2011) acknowledge that there is still a gap in research regarding race and organisational cultures, especially police organisational cultures. Expanding further on the idea that race is a social construction within society and institutions, and its 'changing forms, relating them to specific contexts in which they are located,' (Holdway and O'Neill, 2007, p. 398; John-Baptiste et al., 2006) provides this research topic with an essential framework. This concept offers an explanation for changes in the experiences of racism that minority ethnic officers face within the police force, which are detailed both by current literature and also results from the study.

It is important to understand why the police force should be studied separately from other institutions, in order to gain a more accurate perspective on institutional racism. In their research on police racism, Barron and Holdaway (1997) consider the social construction of race within a general work environment, in order to research racism in the force by taking into account "mundane work settings" and tasks (Barron and Holdaway, 1997, p. 20). Although police work entails a lot of routine paperwork similar to other jobs (McKenzie, 1998), it could be argued that the police force, as an institution, is a particularly controversial choice of a 'mundane work setting' due to the difficult and trying nature of the work they carry out on a daily basis. It needs to be considered that the type of work the police experience will undoubtedly affect their relationships with people of any race they encounter in society; this differentiates the construction of racism within the police from racism within other institutions. More recently, Rowe (2008) supports this view by

suggesting that, due to the demanding nature of police work, officers experience 'social isolation and group loyalty' (Rowe, 2008, p. 103) and therefore police working culture is formulated intensely under the dangerous conditions they are exposed to.

Despite the UK's rapidly increasing level of multiculturalism, many institutions (including the police) are yet to accurately reflect our country's diversity within their workforce, particularly at senior levels. As raised by the BBC documentary 'The Secret Policeman' (2003), in order to tackle racism within the police force specifically, it firstly needs to be 'representative of the population it polices'. Policy makers can benefit from improving race relations within the force for many reasons. There are significant costs incurred to recruit and train a member of the force. Addressing the retention of police officers, especially minority ethnic officers who are already underrepresented within the occupation, is paramount for management. This is because training a police officer is an expensive task and the force aim to encourage the career progression of all officers in order to combat wastage rates (Cooper and Ingram, 2004).

Some have argued that a higher proportion of minority ethnic officers visible to the population will improve the relationship between minority ethnic communities and the police (Johnston, 2006), thus encouraging more BME citizens to consider the force as a suitable occupation. Improving recruitment rates can be linked with the improvement of social cohesion between minority and majority groups within British society, another aim for policy makers (John-Baptiste et al., 2006).

Not only was this research carried out to highlight the importance of race relations within the police force for both policy makers and society, but also because it has also been drastically under-researched in recent years (Morant and Edwards, 2011). There has been one particularly significant attempt at revealing the extent of racism within our modern police force to the general population through modern media, which was done through the BBC broadcast of the documentary, *The Secret Policeman* (2003). However, the most recent scholarly articles surrounding the treatment of minority ethnic officers within their own institution is yet to be extensively covered, despite the fact that racism in this area is still a huge problem.

This research aims to contribute towards current scholarship on the topic by filling a gap in modern research, loosely evaluating whether racism still exists within the police force amongst colleagues today. It seeks to further analyse how racism has changed in recent years, discussing the areas in which racism is evident within the force and the effectiveness of policies implemented within forces aimed at encouraging a change for BME officers. Finally, the results of the primary research conducted will aim to highlight the problems which BME officers believe still need addressing by management in order to harmonise the workplace for non-white members of the force.

2 Literature review

Contemporary research has focussed on how racism has changed throughout recent years and has described it as a shift from overt to covert racism (Holdaway, 2005). Past examples of racist behaviour demonstrate openly expressed prejudice and discrimination in the form of jokes, banter and more worryingly, anger and hatred towards the existence of minority ethnic police officers (The Secret Policeman, 2003).

However, 'the evolving concept of institutional racism' (Grieve and French, 2000, p. 9) appears to have adapted to race related political correctness which is being increasingly enforced within the police alongside policies which aim to provide a better working environment for minority ethnic officers (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006). Institutional racism has been described as 'the stuff that gets into the bloodstream of the organisation' (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007, p. 397) as opposed to that which can be seen or heard superficially. In other words, racism is inherent to the environment, not necessarily explicitly portrayed (Rowe, 2008). It has been argued that any changes which have been implemented in recent years have not

solved the fundamental problem of racism at the core, rather the effects have simply been 'cosmetic' (John-Baptiste et al., 2006, p. 13; Secret Policeman, 2003). Although any change in the level of overt racism should be considered a positive change, some believe that, although 'you won't hear racist comments now', racism is now more deeply rooted (Babu, 2013).

One of the most controversial ethnographic studies conducted, which provided evidence for the shift from overt to covert racism, was the documentary 'The Secret Policeman', broadcast by the BBC in 2003, as well as the sequel, 'The Secret Policeman Returns' (2008). The documentary follows reporter Mark Daley, who went undercover as a police officer in the Greater Manchester Police force. Although his findings were groundbreaking, his research, a form of covert research, breached many ethical guidelines and sparked disagreement amongst the public, policy makers and the media. However, it was only through this type of research that he was able to produce such honest findings which shockingly gave light to old concerns regarding racism within the force which had clearly not been eradicated. Instead, overt racism in the form of jokes and remarks had been replaced with covert racism which was prevalent in areas such as recruitment, promotion, the complaints procedure and in daily encounters with other officers.

Despite this evidence, Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) acknowledge that covert racism may not have been entirely replaced by obviously displayed forms of discrimination towards BME officers. There is still some evidence for obvious expressions of racism within police constabularies as well as covert racism amongst the ranks, as

demonstrated by an article published by the BBC (No Author, 2012). A particularly alarming admission made by Marsh (2006) that supports this claim describes how racist and derogatory language is still casually transmitted between officers using police radio. Marsh (2006) argues that such blatant discrimination, which can be extensively heard by both officers and members of the public in the proximity, has led to BME officers feeling isolated and victimised. Some would argue that this type of racism, therefore, still needs to be thoroughly addressed and has not been completely replaced.

Recruitment

The literature surrounding the topic of race relations within the police force has covered in extensive detail measures put in place to tackle both overt and covert racism within the organisation. One of the most debated methods implemented to encourage change is to continue increasing the recruitment level of BME officers. The most current data produced by the Home Office (Dhani, 2012) demonstrates a continuously increasing proportion of minority ethnic officers within the English and Welsh Police Force (5% in 2012 compared with 2.9% in 2003). A report conducted by the ERHC (2009) argues that the progress made with regards to the representation of BME officers within the force should be praised and encouraged further, however most agree that there is still significant action which needs to be taken.

Racism is still thought of as the largest barrier for entry for minority ethnic recruits' entry into the force (Stone and Tuffin, 2000). If increasing the number of BME officers is to be considered beneficial for improving race relations between

colleagues, researchers and policy makers ought to consider further the extensive impact that racism amongst the ranks has on the lack of minority ethnic officers who aspire to join the police force (Marsh, 2006). John-Baptiste et al. (2006) believe that a greater representation of ethnic minority officers will not only 'challenge, educate against and change institutional racism within police services and within police working life' (John-Baptiste et al., 2006, p. 7) but also improve multi-cultural Britain's relationship with the force.

However, the impact of increasing recruitment levels by themselves in order to tackle racism amongst colleagues has been questioned (Stone and Tuffin, 2000). The lack of change within other areas of the force where both overt and covert racism have been expressed have hindered the effectiveness which increasing recruitment levels have had on reducing racism (Cashmore, 2001). The reasons in support of this view have been categorised into four main areas by researchers as follows.

Type and quality of recruit

Primarily, the effects of the extensive measures that the government have implemented to improve recruitment levels of BME officers across the nation in recent years should be considered. These include: high profile advertising campaigns aimed at 'rebranding' the police image (McLaughlin, 2007, p. 150); forms of positive action; race related training (Babu, 2013) and the Police Community Support Officer scheme (PCSO), aimed at increasing the visible number police officers on the street which unintentionally resulted in an increase in BME officers (Johnston, 2006). However, the problem highlighted in this instance is one of concern over officers'

motivations to join the force, as they may have merely been attracted to the role having been influenced by profound advertising (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007; Johnston, 2006). Some scholars believe that these officers will 'not be cut from the same cloth' as those who aspired to join the force initially (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007, p. 487). It can be argued that the importance of increasing the calibre, or quality of minority ethnic recruits, rather than the quantity should be highlighted for policy makers and force management (Cashmore, 2001) in order to tackle institutional racism.

Another perspective discussed by Cashmore (2001) is that increasing the *number* of minority ethnic recruits will not change the working environment if BME officers feel afraid or uncomfortable to express their culture differences, or if they even hold discriminatory views against ethnic minorities themselves (McLaughlin, 2007); 'I cant see the use of having more Asians in the force if they are just going to act like whites' explains one officer interviewed in (Cashmore, 2001, p. 655). It has been argued that white police officers defined their black and Asian colleagues primarily by their race, rather than their occupation. In other words, BME officers were not seen by their white colleagues as police officers who were of ethnic minority, but as black or Asian members of society who 'happened' to work as police officers (John-Baptiste et al., 2006) within a white working institution. In the past, it was deemed imperative for officers to try to conform to this stereotypical white culture as the only way to experience harmony with their white co-workers (Barron and Holdaway, 1997), which supports findings in the study conducted by McLaughlin (2007). However, modern research demonstrates a significant change in this area since the

development of black police associations (discussed in further detail in this chapter). They have encouraged officers to embrace their racial differences, rather than to try and eliminate racial stereotypes through conforming to the supposed white working culture (Holdaway, 2007).

Promotion

A further cause for concern as to whether boosting recruitment levels of minority ethnic officers will improve race relations amongst colleagues is the small quantity of BME officers who manage to climb the hierarchy to more senior positions (Babu, 2013; Bland et al., 1999). Currently, only 8 of the 266 most senior police officers in England and Wales are minority ethnic officers, (The Secret Policeman, 2003) which demonstrates the popular view that there are not enough BME officers at senior level (Morant and Edwards, 2011). It has been mentioned that recruiting more BME officers at lower ranks will reduce BME officers as *minority* groups; however, concerns are highlighted as to whether increasing numbers over rank or position of recruits should be targeted.

Lord Scarman (1981) believed that racial prejudice was only held by a few racist 'rotten apples' in junior ranks within the force. However, Morant and Edwards (2011) argue that views expressed by senior managers are passed down to officers 'on the beat'; Butt (2006) supports this view by explaining that racist views are held throughout the hierarchical structure (Rowe, 2008). This provides an explanation as to why it is important for the police to display a representative proportion of

minority ethnic officers, reflected in both junior and more senior ranks, otherwise increasing the number of recruits will be ineffective.

Complaints procedure

Not only is it important to consider the quality and quantity of BME candidates, but also how they are treated once recruited must be considered in order to retain them once trained (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007). The effectiveness of the complaints and support system put in place to deal with allegations of racism is evaluated widely within research. A fair system is paramount for BME officers who rely on their colleagues for support in dangerous situations on a daily basis. Therefore, if a complaint is made against a colleague regarding racism, the officer should be treated respectfully and professionally (Marsh, 2006). Unfortunately, it has been argued that senior officers often show little interest when a complaint concerning racism is made, and the complainer is often seen as a troublemaker or untrustworthy (BBC, 2012). This highlights the potential benefits of increasing the level of BME officers higher up in the ranks; it encourages the introduction of more empathetic members of staff who can relate to other BME officers completing earlier stages of their career (Rowe, 2004).

Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) claim that minority ethnic officers have become more tolerable towards officers who express overt racism, yet the number of formal

complaints about this type of racism has actually increased. In 2011 – 2012, there were forty-two allegations of racism directly within the force, almost three times the amount made in 2006 – 2007 which was just sixteen (Dangerfield, 2012). In contrast to some researchers, Holdaway and O’Neill (2006) believe that it has become a lot more acceptable to defend against racism and question the methods used by the force to deal with it. This could provide an explanation for this increase in complaints figures.

Black Police Associations

One significant change for BME recruits has been the introduction of Black Police Associations (BPAs) into modern forces (Rowe, 2008), which have had a significant impact on race relations for police officers in England and Wales. They aim to provide a support network for BME officers whose skin colour differentiates them from their white counterparts within the work place. A clear ‘strength in numbers’ (O’Neill and Holdaway, 2006, p. 487) attitude from their members has been acknowledged by some researchers who emphasise the benefits of increasing power held by these associations, especially with regards to the complaints procedure.

When assessing the effectiveness of BPAs in dealing with institutional racism, it is important to understand that not all associations hold similar levels of authority within their particular force and therefore may not always have such positive results (Holdaway, 2007). Although there are some BPAs which have accumulated power through their growing number of members, some argue that this has only been possible because the force is in a geographical location where there are a high

proportion of minority ethnic members within the community. For BME officers in rural constabularies, a 'strength in numbers' (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007, p. 487) culture is not experienced due to the lack of representation of ethnic minorities within the force (Holdaway, 2007). It has been argued that some BME officers who are already a minority do not want to differentiate themselves further from their white peers and therefore resist becoming a member of their BPA, causing numbers to dwindle further and the cycle to continue.

This should be considered by researchers such as O'Neill and Holdaway (2007) who focus their studies solely on the experiences of racism that BPA members experience from their colleagues. The support network offered by their Black Police Association will, at the very least, allow members to feel that they are not alone in being a minority within their institution, which is hugely beneficial for some. On the other hand, those who fear further marginalisation through membership may have had very different experiences with racism, something which needs to be taken into account when reflecting on results (Holdaway, 2007).

Concluding this section, it should be considered that even if appropriate measures have been initiated, ascending the professional hierarchy takes time and therefore policies that are already in place have produced few positive effects (Babu, 2013). Some have argued for targeting the number of BME PCSOs who are promoted to fully qualified officers (Bennetto, 2009) in order to improve race relations within the force, whilst others have praised the positive impact that the new 'College of Policing' will have on diversity, which aims to target a wide range of people to apply

and improve qualifications and standards of policing (Babu, 2013). Not only will this increase numbers of BME recruits, but also the quality of applicants coming through the system.

Cashmore (2002) suggested implementing 'accelerated action' which aimed to fast track BME officers into more senior positions in order for junior BME officers to feel more encouraged to apply for promotion. Yet this suggestion has been criticised by O'Neill and Holdaway (2007), who argue that officers face enough prejudice and stigma for being BME and that they, as much as their white counterparts, do not want any special treatment because of their race; they want to feel deserving of their career progression on merit.

One consideration by the force could be combining recruitment levels with diversity training, action which was suggested by Macpherson (1999) in his report which highlighted the necessary changes to be implemented in the police (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007). Diversity training is offered to all officers throughout the police hierarchy. It aims to educate officers about the cultural and racial differences between white and minority ethnic officers, thus improving race relations amongst colleagues. Researchers who have centralised elements of their research on this topic have questioned the reasons why BME officers face discrimination and how diversity training can be focussed around tackling these issues.

Rowe (2007) argues that 'it is about the visual aspect of it' (Rowe, 2007, p. 94); black officers (a definition which includes any race where a difference in skin colour poses

a possibility for discrimination) are marginalised primarily because of their distinct, obvious difference in appearance, more than their religion or culture. However, others believe that obvious skin colour differences may not be the primary reason for exclusion by other officers. Babu (2013) argues that combating racism includes educating officers and developing their understanding of the multi-cultural differences between minority ethnic and non- BME officers in order to improve working relationships (McLaughlin, 2007). For example, learning about why some BME officers may need to take time out during the working day to pray, or how certain cultures view the role of women in society may be beneficial for white officers who, without this training, may not understand the reasons behind some BME officers' behaviour, contributing towards their discriminatory views.

The effectiveness of the training structure, implemented in order to encourage a better work environment for BME officers, has been widely analysed by researchers. Rowe and Garland (2003) suggest that diversity training has, at the very least, had an effect on obvious racism through educating ignorant officers about the appropriate use of language and behaviour in the workplace (Rowe, 2007). It could be considered that increasing the use of diversity training amongst officers could combat the reasons why increasing the proportion of BME officers on its own as a policy is ineffective.

However despite its positive intentions, some have argued that diversity training has contributed negatively towards racial harmony within the police. Holdaway and O'Neill, and Rowe and Garland (Rowe, 2007) agree that, although positive effects

have been felt, there is still a deeply rooted problem of racism within the police as an institution; this has not been eradicated through education or training. Instead, some have suggested that 'people are getting clever' (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006, p. 355) and are being taught what behaviour and language is unacceptable to display in the presence of authority, or someone who might make a complaint. Although strict rules regarding the expression of 'casual racist comments' may have been enforced in the workplace, it has been stated that increasing awareness of the subject of race and racism does not change some officers' intrinsic racist beliefs or views held against non-white members of their team (Holdaway, 2007); it simply teaches them to mask their opinions when in the company of BME officers.

Expanding further on this point, as discussed by Holdaway (2007), all officers as members of society have the right to freedom of thought and those who hold racist views will not be changed through diversity training. A more pragmatic approach to be adopted by the institution and policy makers has been suggested; 'there are standards of behaviour they are getting paid for as professionals' (Holdaway, 2007, p. 266) and at the very least any discriminatory views should be kept quiet in order to maintain high professional standards at work.

Furthermore, it has been argued strongly that diversity training has become too heavily focussed on 'box ticking'; in other words, completing or delivering the training purely for administrative purposes, rather than to actually encourage real change for BME staff. 'Diversity training should also take into account the capacity of an organisation to change while preserving its core standards and principals'

(Johnston, 2006, p. 398-399; Bellos, 2004). The impact that race related training has had on the actual problems minority ethnic officers' experience on a daily basis has been criticised by Cashmore (2002), who states that policies aimed at tackling racism within the force 'do not encourage real solutions' (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007, p. 228).

In conclusion, it has been said that in order to promote change within the police for BME officers, both the recruitment process and the current organisational structure needs to be reformed. This should be done so that current minority ethnic officers can experience a better working environment, reflecting positively on BME members of society who therefore may be more likely to consider the police a suitable occupation (Stone and Tuffin, 2000).

Viewing a broader perspective, critics have suggested that the real question that needs to be addressed is whether the police force is an unusual example of institutional racism or whether it is simply a smaller sample of people within one institution, whose views are representative of modern society. Holdaway and O'Neill (2006) use an example from one participant in their study; a BPA chair believed that institutional racism within any work place cannot be changed until society's attitude towards ethnic minorities changes altogether, adding 'it's not an institution, but I think society is racist' (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006, p. 357).

Unfortunately, concerns over racism directed at minority ethnic officers within the police are argued to still be 'clearly a growing, serious issue' (Dangerfield, 2012) and

'attitudes to race relations has recently deteriorated' (Dangerfield, 2012). Sadly, it has been suggested that officers may have to 'settle' for a change in the superficial behaviour of officers on the surface as opposed to getting to the root of the problem which lies with officers' personal attitudes (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007). Conclusions indicate that there is a long way to go before institutions are rid of racism, whether covert or overt. 'If people think we have got this sorted, they are living in a dream world' (BBC, 2012).

3 Methodology

Conducting empirical research within the field of social science allows us to add different perspectives and dimensions to widely contested topics within society (Gilbert, 2008). It is evident that social problems which are recognised by the government as an area where policies aim to target, are often widely researched by social scientists (Gilbert, old edition). With regards to this research project, racism within the police force has been highly important for policy makers, especially after both the Scarman Report (1981) and more recently the Macpherson Report (1999). Both reports sparked controversial media attention on the effectiveness of race related police services and, as a consequence, public outrage.

From the outset, a mixed method of using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were to be included in the research due to the different level of scope each would provide on the topic (Gilbert, 2008). The information provided by quantitative data can sometimes be limited, especially when exploring peoples' experiences and feelings in relation to everyday situations, such as experiences of racism. On the other hand, *qualitative* data can provide explanation and richer, in depth data which supports the quantitative element. A mixed methodological approach was thought to be the most beneficial as 'both methods can provide both discovery and validation for each other' (Gilbert, 2008; Deren et al., 2003, p. 10).

The sensitive nature of the data being collected made access to participants particularly difficult, so it was proposed that correspondence with the National Black Police Association would be a useful resource for gaining access to participants. However, it became obvious that it would have been almost impossible to find participants without the help of the National Black Police Association (NBPA) and therefore this correspondence was absolutely vital for the success of the primary data being collected.

An electronic self-completion questionnaire in the form of an internet webpage link to a well known survey site was decided to be the most practical and accessible method for the collection of responses. This was a relatively inexpensive way of reaching a diverse range of participants from around the country, whilst it was also the best method for ensuring anonymity amongst participants (Gilbert, 2008). The length of time participants had to complete the survey was three weeks. It may have been beneficial to extend this in order to gain more responses and therefore a larger sample, however limited financial resources available to fund the monthly survey site subscription disallowed this.

All questions used in the survey were closed questions in order to increase the response rate of participants (see appendix figure 1). Providing participants with an option has been said to increase the response rate for the question because it takes them less time to complete the form and requires less thought (Gilbert, 2008). An option included in each question was 'prefer not to disclose'; due to the highly sensitive nature of the research topic, it was important to give participants the

choice to opt out of answering questions they felt were invasive of their privacy or too distressing to elaborate on.

Some questions included the opportunity to explain the answer selected. This option was presented in order to gain in-depth, qualitative data which would add significant value to the research and give participants a chance to expand on an answer if they felt it were necessary.

The literature which had previously been examined prior to conducting the survey highlighted four key areas of concern in relation to racism within the force towards BME officers. These included; the general experiences of racism within the institution, the recruitment process and promotion within this area, the effectiveness of the complaints procedure currently put in place for dealing with racist encounters and finally, the changes and improvements necessary on the subject. The survey questions were therefore categorised using these four key topics which were relevant to the current research topic.

The benefits of conducting a pilot survey were considered (Bryman, 2008), but many factors contributed towards this not commencing. This was partly due to the difficulties initially accessing participant but also because it was felt that the extensive reading completed on existing literature already was sufficient enough to generate appropriately focused research questions. Pilot questionnaires are conducted for this purpose and therefore, combined with existing skills acquired of constructing surveys, it was decided not to proceed with a pilot questionnaire.

The questionnaire was sent to members of the National Black Police Association through a contact obtained there; thirty-eight responses were gained. Participants who did not answer may have been deterred from answering the questionnaire due to the personal nature of the material and also due to its length. Although measures were put in place to ensure that it was fairly concise, it was difficult to keep it shorter than twenty questions in total because each area of the research would not have been covered sufficiently otherwise.

With regards to the analysis of the data, a grounded theory approach was taken (Thomas, 2009). Rather than aiming to prove a particular hypothesis derived beforehand, the primary research's main focus was to provide insight on the topic. The benefits of using a computer programme for the analysis was considered, however, because it was decided that the qualitative element of the data would 'reveal different themes and trends of data' (Thomas, 2009, p. 198), this method was chosen as the most appropriate. A computer programme such as SPSS would reveal the statistical significance of quantitative data on the research topic to hand (Thomas, 2009), but because this research project was designed to shed light on the experiences of racism, rather than to make definite assumptions or claims regarding the topic, it was decided that this method of analysis was not suitable.

Ethical issues

'Ethics say that while the truth is good, respect for human dignity is better' (Bulmer, 2001, p. 45). It is vital to consider the effects that social research can have on its participants. As the statement above demonstrates, gathering information for research involves other human beings and implementing precautions which protect participants from harm are crucial to ethical research. It is important to consider four main areas with regard to ethics, which will be discussed in this chapter. The first of these is ensuring that informed consent has been given prior to acquiring information from people; everyone should have the chance to opt out of taking part in the research. This includes the participant being actively aware that they are being examined for research purposes (Bulmer, 2001). The survey for this research was sent to participants and its completion was optional; in other words, participants did not have to fill out this survey if they chose not to participate.

It was especially important to consider the confidentiality of the information participants' revealed. As mentioned previously, the surveys were completed through a method which allowed all participants to remain anonymous and it was explained that any information which could reveal the identity of any person would be excluded from the write up to ensure anonymity. Questions did not, therefore, include asking participants to divulge their name or constabulary, but information regarding gender, age and ethnicity were necessary to include for the benefit of the research.

Another key area of ethical research which needed to be considered was respecting participants' privacy. Withholding information is one way in which participants can

stop researchers invading their privacy (Bulmer, 2001), so it was decided that the option of 'prefer not to disclose' should be a necessity for every question so that the participant had the choice not to disclose any information. In conjunction with this, the researcher should also consider the potential harm caused to participants of the research. As Bryman (2008, p. 118) has mentioned, harm can include 'physical harm; harm to participants' development; loss of self-esteem; stress'. Because the information being collected for this research contained opinions about the particularly sensitive topic of race and also how they have been treated by their (often current) employers, it was vital to consider the harm subjects could face if this research was conducted improperly.

4 Results

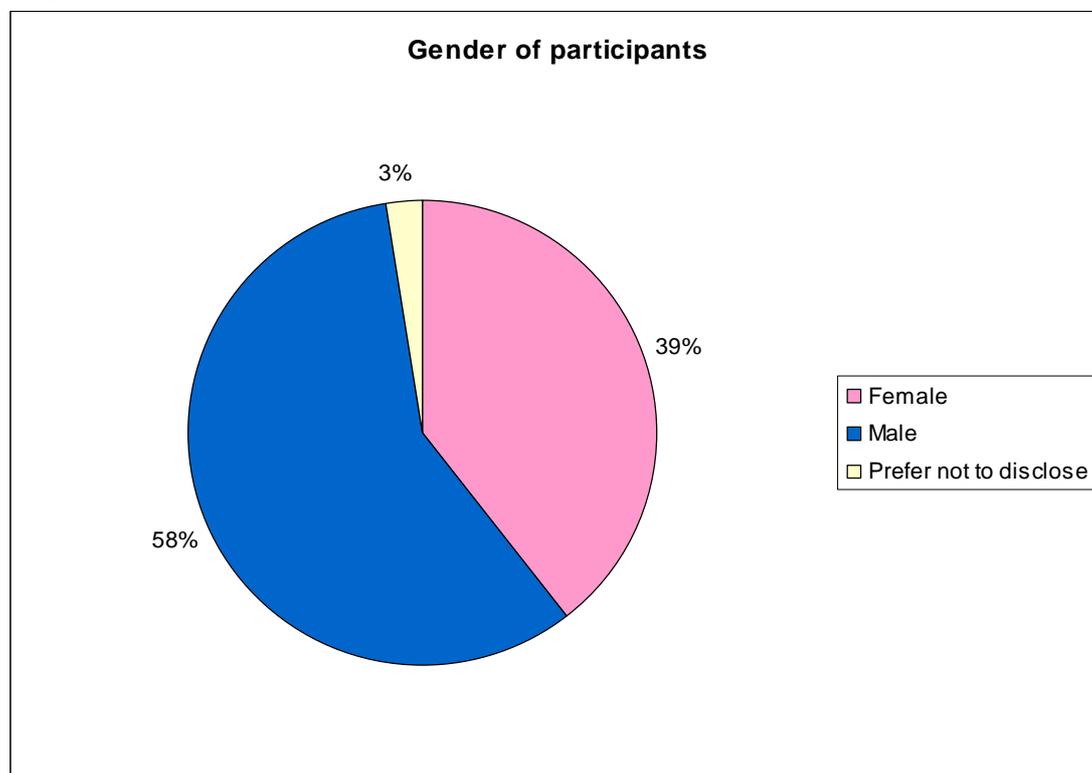
As stated in the methodology, participants responses were generated through an online survey site and the results were analysed using Microsoft Excel. All percentages are accurate to 0.1%. Please refer to figure 1. in the Appendices chapter, where the full questionnaire can be viewed.

Gender

Table (I)

Gender	Frequency
Female	15
Male	22
Prefer not to disclose	1

Graph 1.



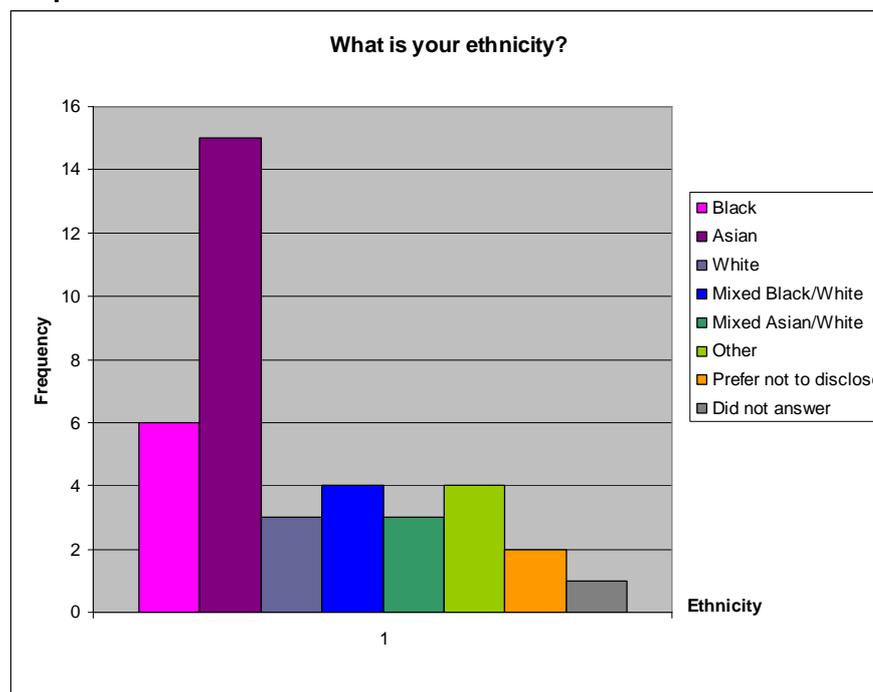
There were more male than female respondents who completed the survey, as is demonstrated by table (I) and graph 1. Male respondents accounted for 58.0% of the total, whilst 39.0% were female and 3.0% preferred not to disclose their gender.

Ethnicity

Table (II)

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Black	6	15.80%
Asian	15	39.50%
White	3	7.90%
Mixed Black/White	4	10.50%
Mixed Asian/White	3	7.90%
Other	4	10.50%
Prefer not to disclose	2	5.30%
Did not answer	1	2.60%

Graph 2.



As demonstrated by table (II) and graph 2, of the thirty-eight participants, three either did not disclose their ethnicity or did not answer the question. The majority of participants were Asian, accounting for 39.5% of respondents and were collected from three categories; Asian British, Asian Pakistani and Asian Indian. The next most

frequented ethnicity was black (black African and black Caribbean) with a total of 15.8% of total participants. Those who identified their ethnicity as 'mixed' (mixed white and Asian, mixed white and black, etc.) accounted for 18.4% of respondents.

Rank

Table (III)

Rank	Frequency	Percentage
Police Staff	10	26.30%
Police Community Support Officer	2	5.30%
Special Constabulary	0	0%
Constable	14	36.80%
Sergeant	8	21.10%
Inspector	0	0%
Chief Inspector	1	2.60%
Superintendent	1	2.60%
A.C.P.O. rank or similar	0	0%
Prefer not to disclose	1	2.60%
Did not answer	1	2.60%

Graph 3.

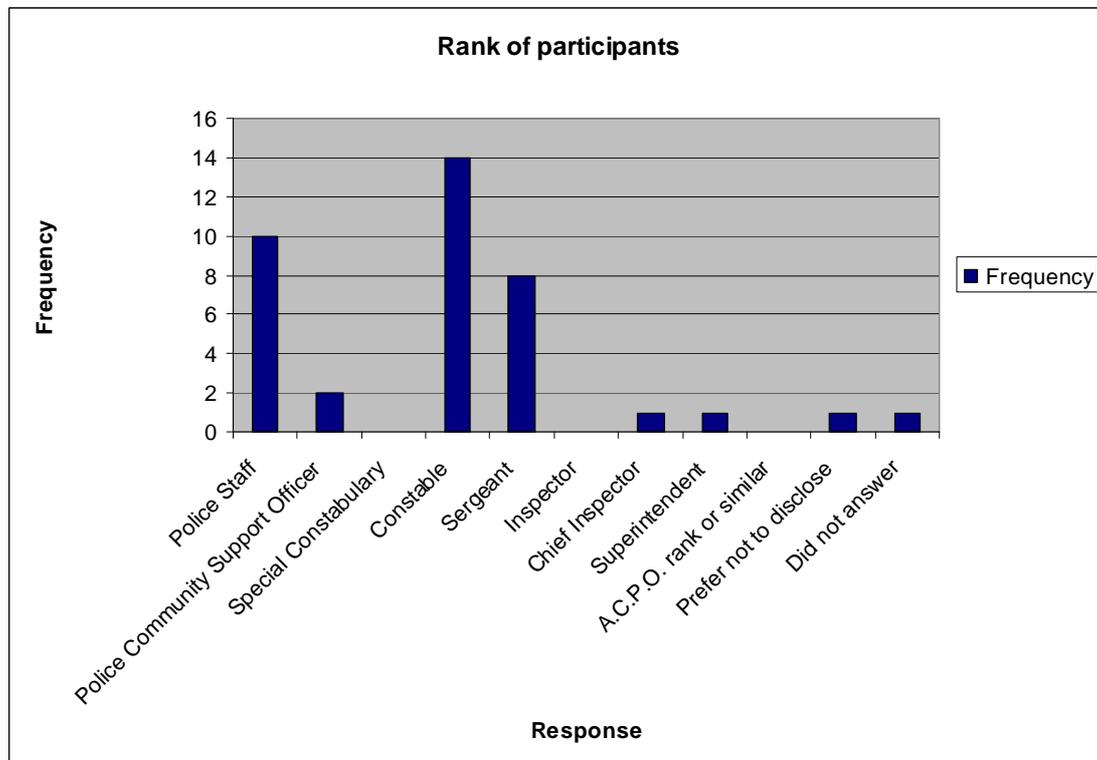


Table (III) and graph 3 demonstrate the variety of ranks participants occupy and the frequency of participants within these ranks. Over half of the participants were in Uniform (57.9%), 18.4% were in the Criminal Investigations Department and 21.1% were categorised as 'other'.

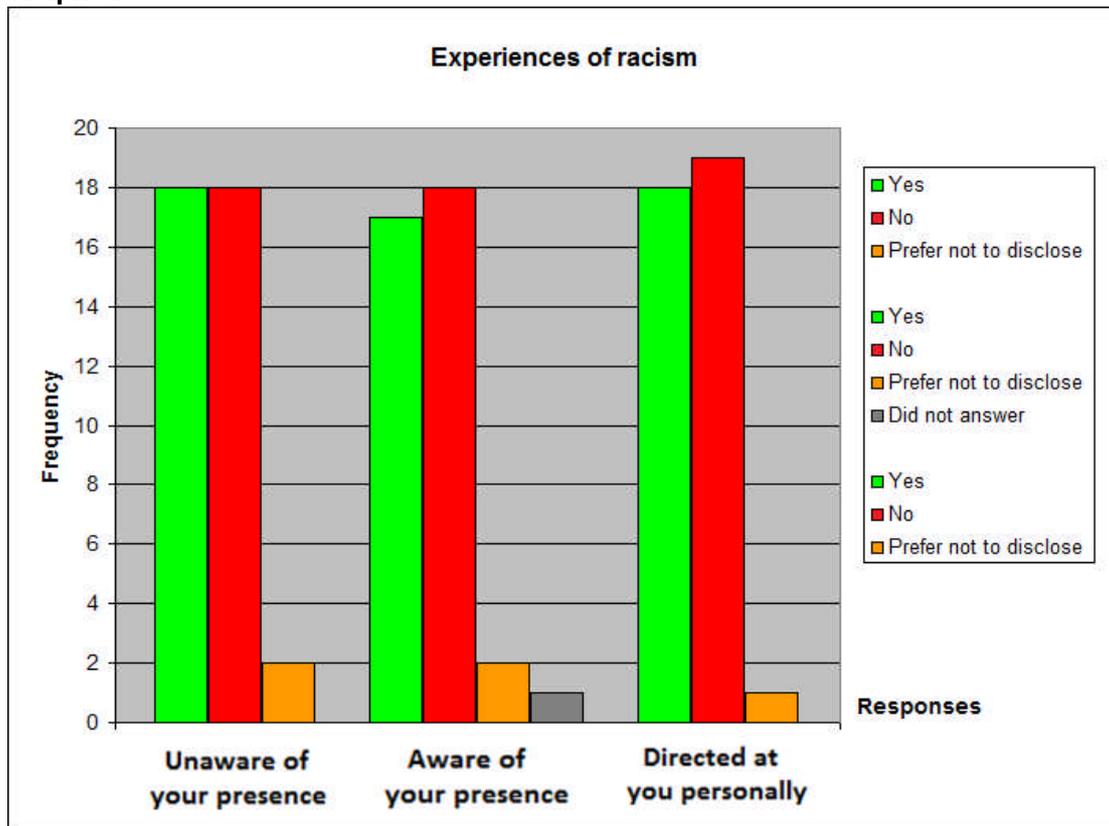
Experiences of racism within the force

Table (IV)

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Unaware of presence	Yes	18	47.40%
	No	18	47.40%
	Prefer not to disclose	2	5.30%
Aware of presence	Yes	17	44.70%
	No	18	47.40%
	Prefer not to disclose	2	5.30%
	Did not answer	1	2.60%
Directed at you personally	Yes	18	47.40%
	No	19	50.00%
	Prefer not to disclose	1	2.60%

Results in table (IV) and the graph on the following page show the responses to questions 7a, 7b and 8 (see appendix figure 1).

Graph 6.



Graph 6 demonstrates that exactly half of the participants who chose to answer the question replied 'Yes', they had heard racially abusive/offensive language being used by other officers in a situation where they were unaware of their presence. Fairly similar results are demonstrated for the same question but with regard to situations where officers were *aware* of their presence, showing that 47.4% responded 'No' and 44.7% answered 'Yes'.

Results from the third question show that 47.7% of respondents answered 'Yes' they had experience racism remarks or behaviour directed at them personally, whilst 50% of respondents answered 'No', they had not.

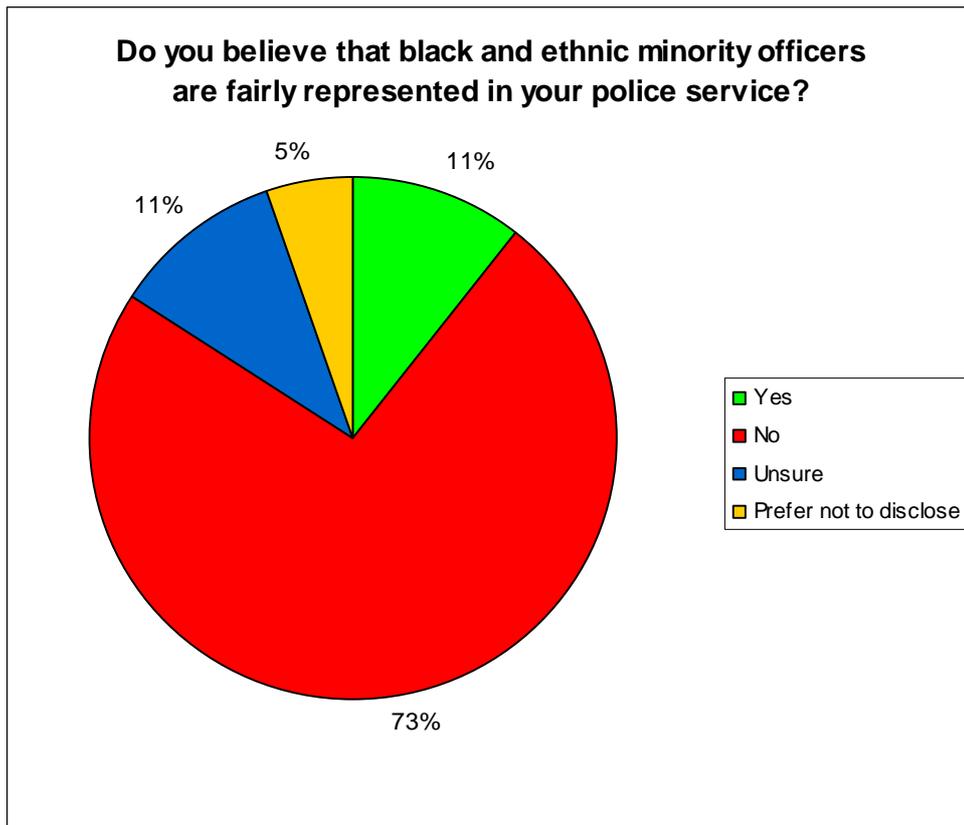
Representation within the police service

When asked whether they believed BME officers were fairly represented in their police service, 73.7% answered 'No' and 10.5% answered 'Yes'. The same amount of people who answered 'Yes' were 'Unsure' of the answer to the question whilst the rest preferred not to answer (see table (V) and graph 7).

Table (V)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	10.50%
No	28	73.70%
Unsure	4	10.50%
Prefer not to disclose	2	5.30%

Graph 7.



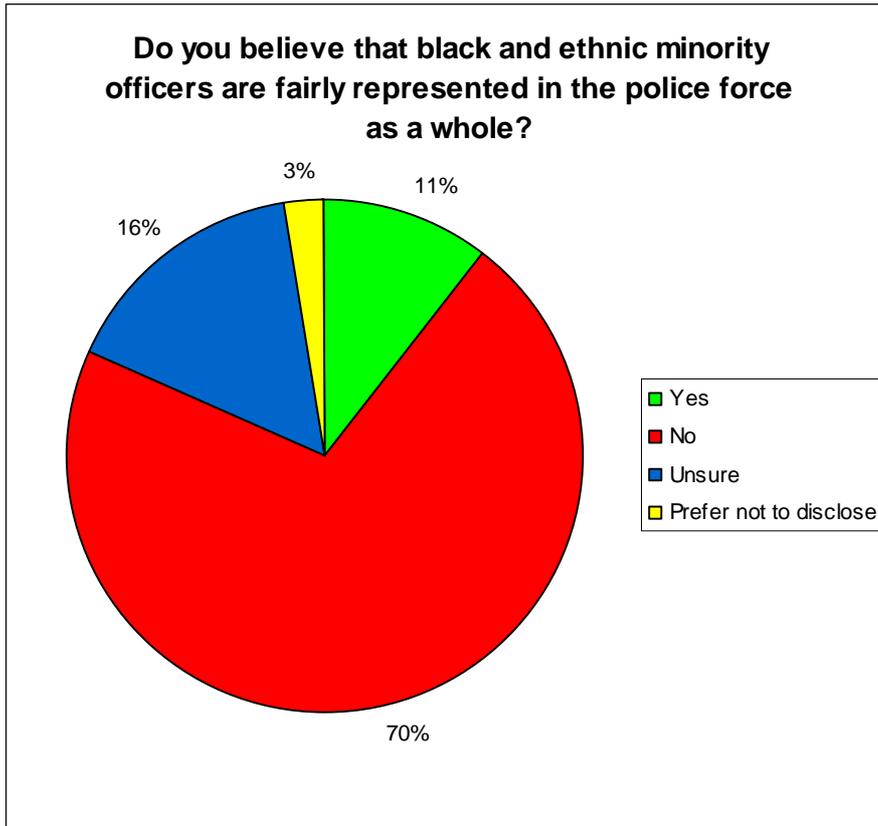
Representation within the police service continued.

Similar results were produced from the asking whether participants believed BME officers were fairly represented in the police force as a whole. As can be seen in table (VI) and graph 8, 71.1% of respondents believed that they were not fairly represented, 10.5% believed that they were fairly represented and 15.8% were unsure.

Table (VI)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	4	10.50%
No	27	71.10%
Unsure	6	15.80%
Prefer not to disclose	1	2.60%

Graph 8.



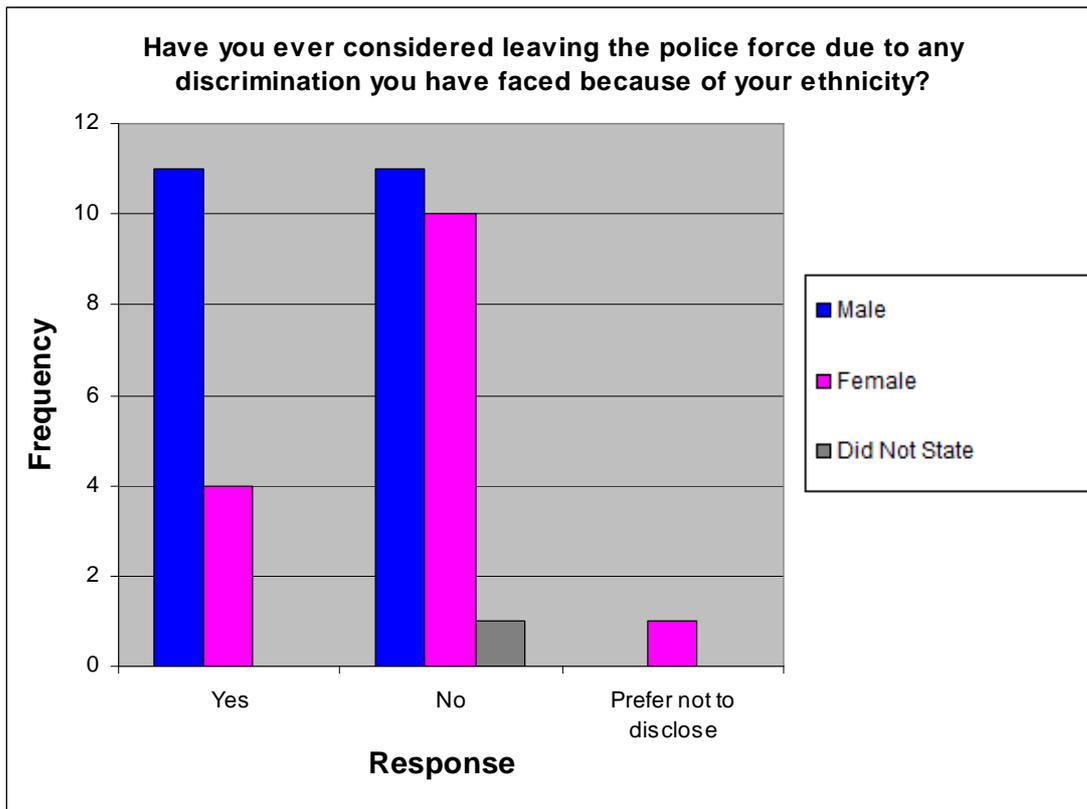
Resignation

Of the respondents who had considered leaving the force due to discrimination they have faced regarding their race, 39.5% of participants stated that they have considered resigning. The proportion of male participants who have considered resigning due to racism was exactly half (50%), whilst the proportion of female respondents who had considered resigning was almost half that (26.7%); this can be seen in table (VII) below and graph 9 on the following page.

Table (VII)

Gender		Yes	No	Prefer not to disclose
Male	Frequency	11	11	0
	% of total 'male' responses	50%	50%	0%
	% of total responses	28.90%	28.90%	0%
Female	Frequency	4	10	1
	% of total 'female' responses	26.70%	66.70%	6.70%
	% of total responses	10.50%	26.30%	2.60%
Did Not State	Frequency	0	1	0
	% of total 'did not state' responses	0%	100.00%	0%
	% of total responses	0%	2.60%	0%

Graph 9.



Promotion

Table (VIII) - Have you ever been interested in applying for a promotion within the police force?

Response	Frequency
Yes	82%
No	18%
Prefer not to disclose	0%

Table (IX) - Have you ever applied for a promotion within the police force?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	22	58%
No	16	42%
Prefer not to disclose	0	0%

The results show that 82% of participants had considered applying for a promotion within the police force, table (VIII), and 58% of participants had actually applied at some point during their career within the service, table (IX).

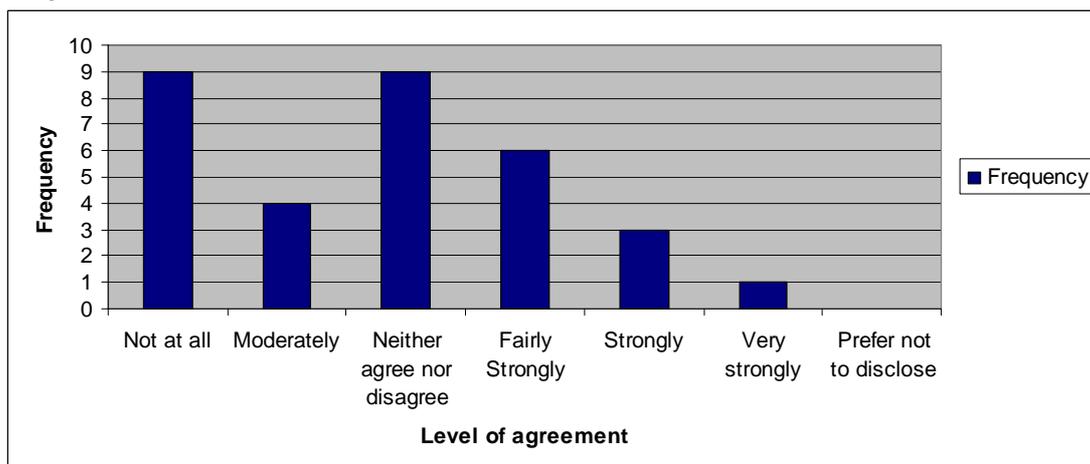
Promotion continued.

Of the people who answered 'Yes' to either of the previous two questions, 28.1% of respondents did not believe that their race would be or was taken into consideration with regards to the promotion at all, see table (X) which corresponds with graph 10. A similar proportion of 28.1% of respondents did not agree or disagree with this statement. On the other hand, 31.3% of participants answered that they felt either 'fairly strongly', 'strongly' or 'very strongly' that their race would be or was taken into consideration if or when they applied for a promotion.

Table (X)

Level of agreement	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	9	28.10%
Moderately	4	12.50%
Neither agree nor disagree	9	28.10%
Fairly Strongly	6	18.80%
Strongly	3	9.40%
Very strongly	1	3.10%
Prefer not to disclose	0	0%

Graph 10.



Complaints

Table (XI)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	34.20%
No	24	63.10%
Did not answer	1	2.60%
Prefer not to disclose	0	0%

When asked whether participants had ever wanted to make a formal complaint against a colleague due to racism, 63.1% had never wanted to do so but 34.2% claimed they had wanted to, as shown by table (XI) above.

Table (XII)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	15.80%
No	29	76.30%
Prefer not to disclose	2	5.30%
Did not answer	1	0%

Table (XII) above shows that only 15.8% of people had actually gone through with making a formal complaint against a colleague for racist behaviour whilst 76.3% had not ever made a formal complaint.

Complaints continued.

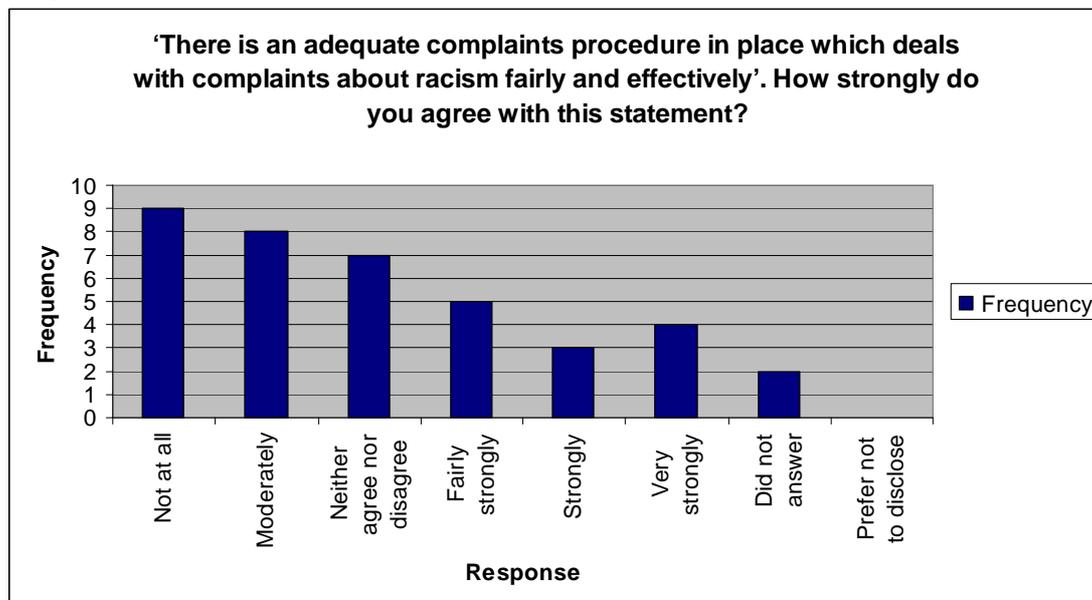
Table (XIII)

Level of agreement	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	9	23.70%
Moderately	8	21.10%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	18.40%
Fairly strongly	5	13.20%
Strongly	3	7.90%
Very strongly	4	10.50%
Did not answer	2	5.30%
Prefer not to disclose	0	0%

Participants were presented with the statement “‘There is an adequate complaints procedure in place which deals with complaints about racism fairly and effectively’.

How strongly do you agree with this statement?”. Table (XIII) and graph 11 show that 31.6% of respondents felt either ‘fairly strongly’, ‘strongly’ or ‘very strongly’ that this was the case, yet 23.7% felt that this was ‘not at all’ the case.

Graph 11.



Changes to be made within the force

As demonstrated by table (XIV), and graph 12 on the following page, 50% of participants believed that during their time in the police force, there have been some significant, positive changes made to the way minority ethnic officers are treated in the workplace. However, 71% of respondents believed that that there are necessary, positive changes *which still need to be made* in order to improve the workplace for ethnic minority officers whilst 24% did not believe changes were necessary; see table (XV) and graph 12.

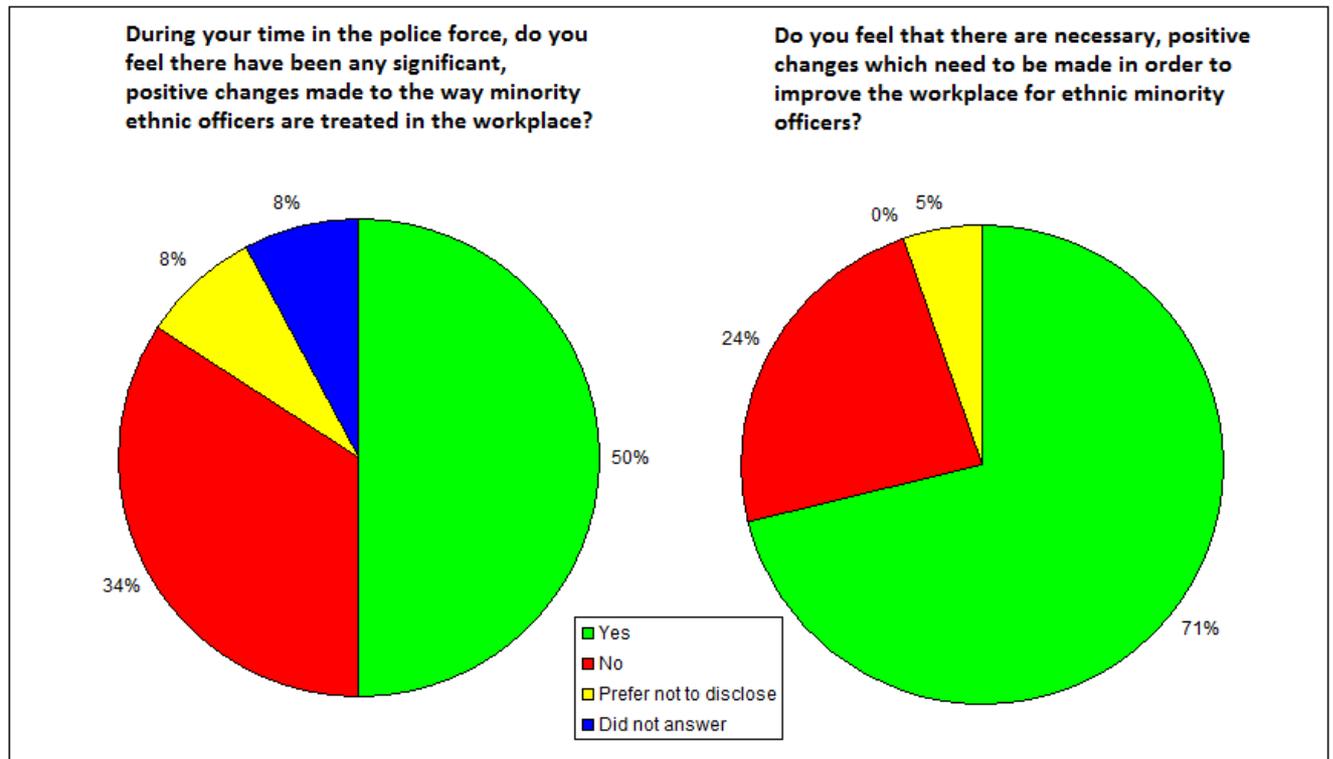
Table (XIV)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	50%
No	13	34%
Prefer not to disclose	3	8%
Did not answer	3	8%

Table (XV)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	71%
No	9	24%
Prefer not to disclose	0	0%
Did not answer	2	5%

Graph 12.



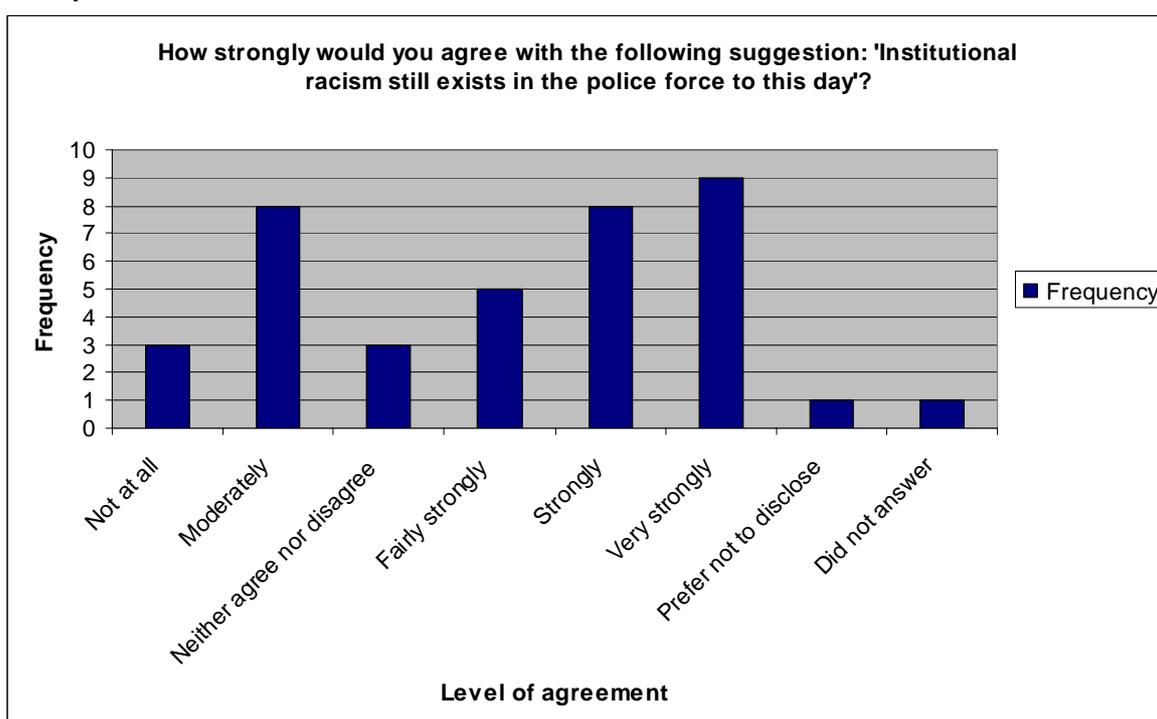
Closing questions

The penultimate question asked participants how strongly they agreed with the following suggestion: 'Institutional racism still exists in the police force to this day'. As demonstrated by table (XVI), over half of participants either 'fairly strongly' 'strongly' or 'very strongly' agreed with this statement (57.9%) whilst 7.9% did not agree with this statement at all. The same percentage of respondents did not agree or disagree with this statement and 21.1% moderately agreed with it. These results are shown in table (XVI) and graph 13.

Table (XVI)

Level of agreement	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	3	7.90%
Moderately	8	21.10%
Neither agree nor disagree	3	7.90%
Fairly strongly	5	13.10%
Strongly	8	21.10%
Very strongly	9	23.70%
Prefer not to disclose	1	2.60%
Did not answer	1	2.60%

Graph 13.



Recommending the force to other BMEs

Finally, when asked if participants would recommend serving in the police as a career choice for other BMEs from minority ethnic communities, just over half answered yes (53%), 32% answered no, they would not recommend it as a career, and 13% were unable to make a decision. These results are shown in table (XVII).

Table (XVII)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	53%
No	12	32%
Unable to make a decision	5	13%
Did not answer	1	2.60%

5 Discussion

The aim of this research has been to focus on the experiences of racism BME officers are subject to, if any, whilst addressing the key areas of concern where institutional racism needs to be eradicated. This project has also intended to analyse the effectiveness of policies which have already been put into place by management and critically discuss the advantages that these will have for improving racism within the workplace for police officers. The data produced by this study has highlighted in particular detail the changes which BME staff still feel are necessary to implement within the force. Any unreferenced quotes within this chapter are taken directly from the qualitative data produced by the survey conducted.

Primarily, it is important to consider the representation of multiple ethnicities within the study, compared with the overall police service strength of minority ethnic officers, in order to ensure the sample results are reliable. Figures produced by the Home Office (Dhani, 2012) demonstrate the proportion of different ethnicities amongst the total number of minority ethnic officers. These are shown in figure 1 below and are compared alongside the results presented in chapter 4 (shown in figure 2. on the following page).

Figure 1. (Dhani, 2012)

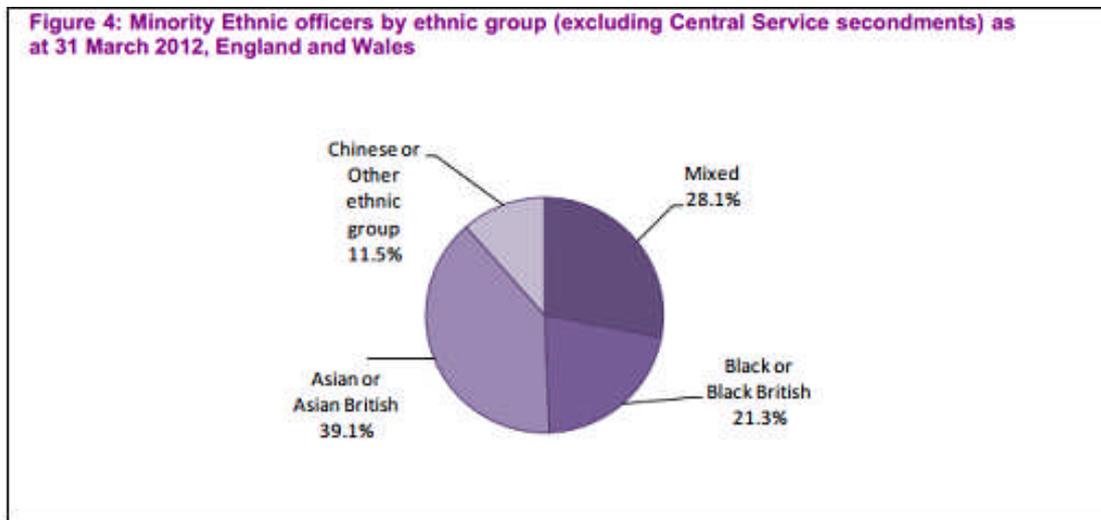
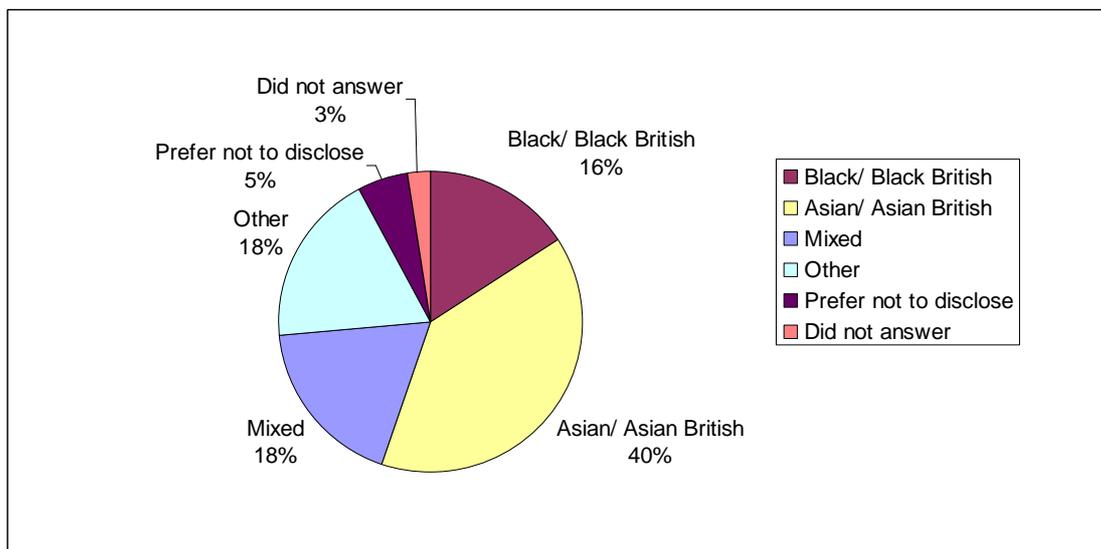


Figure 2. Ethnicity of participants in study findings presented in chapter 4.



As portrayed by these two figures, in terms of ethnicity, the study sample conducted for this research is a fairly representative sample. Both charts show similar proportions of different ethnicities amongst officers, therefore, contributing towards

a more reliable set of results (Thomas, 2009). However, due to the relatively small size of the sample and that it was not randomly selected, it should be taken into account that results from the study may not be completely reliable (Thomas, 2009). Also, respondents were all selected through their membership with the National Black Police Association. Because of this, as already criticised in relation to Holdaway and O'Neill's work (2006), officers may have different experience within their force due to their affiliation with the organisation.

Participants of this study were asked how strongly they believed that institutional racism still exists within the police force. Something which was not considered and should be raised as a point of reference is that, although the definition of race was stated within the questionnaire, in order to aid correct responses, the definition of institutional racism was not defined. Therefore, it should be considered that this term, and therefore experiences noted, are open to participants' interpretations and therefore may vary. As stated by Souhami (2012), institutional racism can be defined as:

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people' (Souhami, 2012, p. 4).

Overwhelmingly, 57.9% of participants either 'very strongly', 'strongly' or 'fairly strongly' agree that institutional racism still exists within the force. Only 7.9% did not agree with this 'at all', demonstrating a majority. Current literature supports the idea that racism continues to present problems for recruitment and retention rates (Stone and Tuffin, 2000; Cashmore, 2001), as well as contribute towards a significantly increasing number of complaints made by officers about their own colleagues (Dangerfield, 2012).

Officers have commented on the importance of continuing to implement change for minority ethnic officers and have suggested multiple improvements, which still need to be made. As previously shown in chapter 4, half of the respondents felt that 'yes', positive changes regarding race had been made within the institution, but there is clearly 'still a long way to go'. A staggering 71% felt that significant positive changes still need to be implemented within the force, which supports the views expressed by one report conducted by the EHRC (2009).

Scholars such as Holdaway (2005) have demonstrated examples of the significant shift from overt to covert racism in recent years and this study has aimed to explore this subject further. Of the participants surveyed, half had experienced racism in a situation where officers were unaware of their presence, whilst 47.4% had experienced similar behaviour whilst officers were aware that they were in the company of a BME officer. This is only in relation to comments and superficial behaviour, there isn't a significant enough difference in these figures to support the argument that overt racism has been completely replaced with covert racism.

Holdaway and O'Neill (2006) claim that overt racism is still a continuing problem which has yet to be eradicated or completely replaced by covert racism. What needs to be taken into consideration is that racial prejudice can be expressed through less obvious forms of discrimination than words or direct insults, and clear evidence of this has been provided by the survey.

The issue of diversity training has been widely discussed by scholars such as Rowe (2007) and O'Neill and Holdaway (2007) in relation to combating both overt and covert racism and discrimination within the force. Although participants were not directly asked about their experiences of diversity training, it is important to take into account any results surrounding this topic which can be linked strongly to the research topic and current literature.

Participants were aware of the current diversity training system in place and made suggestions for change within the force which included encouraging 'a greater awareness of ethnicity required for officers'. Current literature highlights the importance of diversity training for officers at all ranks, which range from educating officers about different cultures, to helping them understand suitable language for use in the workplace (McLaughlin, 2007). One officer explains; 'education for the current officers about how to deal with members of the public who are from other cultures [may encourage them to]...have a positive view of the police, improving recruitment,' having a positive spiralling effect on the work environment for BME officers.

Holdaway and O'Neill (2006) and Rowe and Garland (2003) have argued that diversity training has had some impact on racism due to the decreasing level of obvious racist comments and behaviour, affecting both officers and the public. However, it should also be taken into account that this policy, aimed at encouraging a positive change for BME staff, may have only suppressed racism and discrimination, which supports claims of a shift from overt to covert racism.

Examples of covert racism can firstly be demonstrated in relation to the career progression of BME officers. The career progression of BME recruits is significantly slower than their white counterparts (Bland et al., 1999) and a major cause for concern is the 'desperately poor representation across senior ranks', claims one respondent. The 'glass ceiling' BME officers face is mentioned by numerous officers in this study and is supported by evidence which demonstrates only a handful of BME officers progress to the top of the hierarchy (Holdaway, 2005), perhaps proving that racism exists at the hands of some senior officers with regards to decision making. This view provides a counter argument for Scarman's (1981) widely debated view, that racism is only held by a few racist individuals at the bottom of the hierarchy. Advancement into senior ranks has been said to be encouraged by networking, 'which is difficult to infiltrate,' as stated by one respondent in the study, for minority ethnic applicants due to the strong white working culture experienced by BME officers (Souhami, 2012). However, there are still huge problems at the pinnacle of the hierarchy within this area. As one participant highlighted:

'A lot of progression is based on networking, especially above the rank of Inspector where there are no exams to take. In some forces, the promotion above Superintendent is entirely in the gift of the Chief Constable and is not an open and transparent process'.

When asked whether officers believed that race would be, or was, taken into account if/when they applied for a promotion, 31.3% agreed either 'strongly', 'fairly strongly' or 'very strongly', whilst one officer claimed that 'they would look at it with a view of making up numbers, but would not be successful'. This point can be supported by similar arguments made about diversity training; which suggest that race related policies have only been implemented, in order for it to appear that action is effectively combating racism, rather than getting to the centre of the problem (Holdaway, 2007).

However, it has been acknowledged that attempts at race related action, with regards to promotion, has been put in place in order to encourage diversity within the force. This, known as positive action, aims to push for an increase in minority ethnic officers by encouraging applicants, for example, with language skills or voluntary experience in black and Asian communities (Babu, 2013) whilst avoiding direct positive discrimination which is illegal (Johnston, 2006). Nevertheless both researchers and participants of the study have argued that positive measures that have been implemented, are not put into place to encourage a genuine change for BME officers, but are implemented to appear as though the force is making changes - putting a 'tick in the box', as one respondent claimed. This could explain the

increase in the recruitment of minority ethnic officers in the past decade (Dhani, 2012).

On the other hand, it is paramount to make clear that issues regarding race should not detract from the achievements that many minority ethnic officers have accomplished through perseverance to make their way to the top. Some participants in the survey have strongly disagreed with claims that race was taken into account when applying for promotion, and emphasis should clearly be put on their ability to do the job effectively. This view has been reflected by 28.1% of respondents, who did not believe that race was or would be taken into account 'at all' when applying for promotion, explaining how it 'would be based purely on the ability to do the job'.

Both current research and results from the study demonstrate that examples of covert racism are also particularly prominent within the complaints procedure. Some respondents have argued that, after complaining to senior ranked officers about racism, they have experienced and have been subject to further discrimination through an inadequate complaints procedure put in place further up the hierarchy. This has been blamed by some participants on the fact that 'issues of racism are played down by senior officers', most likely because 'they don't understand how it feels' or because of their 'inability to understand the issue was racist' initially. This supports the work by Stone and Tuffing (2000), which argues that managers did not take suitable action when reports of racism were made, which stemmed from officers' pre-conceived stereotypes at the top of the hierarchy (Morant and Edwards, 2011). In conjunction with promotion, these results highlight the importance of

encouraging BME officers to climb the ranks, so that officers lower down the hierarchy can relate to someone who may empathise due to similar experiences (Rowe, 2004).

Respondents acknowledged that this was, and still is, a serious issue, claiming that 'changes still need to be made so that BME officers and staff are confident to voice concerns'. The need for 'a proper structure of accountability built upon an evidence based structure' is expressed by one respondent, whilst another explains how issues lie where individuals who put this system into place hold racist views themselves. This officer voiced the need for 'changes like removing the dependence of individual human decision making' in order to combat the ineffectiveness of the complaints procedure which, unfortunately, is sometimes used as a tool to portray BME officers as untrustworthy members of the force (BBC, 2012).

Although results demonstrate that almost a quarter of participants did not agree 'at all' that there is an adequate complaints procedure in place which deals with complaints about racism fairly and effectively, almost a third (31.6%) feel either 'very strongly' 'fairly strongly' or 'strongly' that there *is* an effective complaints structure for BME officers. This area of research has produced some particularly negative comments, yet it should be taken into consideration that those who chose to expand on this question, adding qualitative data to quantitative data, may be bias towards explaining particularly difficult issues regarding complaints. In other words, it is unlikely that those who have never experienced racism, or felt the need to complain,

would feel it necessary to expand heavily on the positives of the complaints procedure; results could therefore be biased towards negative views.

Despite this, the BBC has reported a rise in the number of formal complaints made within the police force about racism between colleagues, which have trebled in the past five years (Dangerfield, 2012). Of the participants who responded, 34.2% of them claimed they had wanted to make a formal complaint about a colleague because of racism, and around half (15.8%) had gone through with making an official complaint. As previously discussed, one explanation for these figures could be due to the increasing presence of BPAs amongst modern forces. It has been argued that the strong institutional support network offered to BME officers (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007) has had an effect on how complaints of racism are dealt with.

Officers expressed the view that it can be more effective to resolve problems face to face with the support of their local BPA, than to go through others formally. Unfortunately, some would argue that they are left with no choice but to resolve complaints in this manner, due to 'a fear that once an officer complains they are labelled' or worse, 'too often the victim is targeted by the police when you raise a complaint'. These responses, recorded by participants, run parallel to the findings by the BBC (2013), where one officer explains how he was investigated by his own force after making complaints regarding racism. He claimed that the main reason for this investigation was because managers of the force wanted to divert any damaging allegations away from themselves, and took action against him in order to do this.

When asked whether they would recommend the police force as a career to other minority ethnic individuals, a third said they would not (32%), with one participant explaining their reasons for this choice as; 'I could not guarantee that they would be treated with the dignity, fairness and respect that they should be'. However, one of the most significant, positive findings from the study which demonstrates minority ethnic officers' thirst for change within the institution, was the data provided by participants with regard to recommending the role. Conversely, findings from the study show that 57.9% of officers favoured recommending the force in order to drive change for BME officers in the future, with comments made stating that 'change needs to be made and we need people on the inside to be the agents of change'.

Other officers have stated that 'in order to improve institutional racism and to provide a better service to the community, the police service demographics need to reflect the society it serves'. Scholarship provides similar points on this area, which has suggested that racism can only be eradicated alongside the stereotypical white male culture, which can only be targeted through an increase in the recruitment of more BME officers (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007).

As a concluding point, research can point towards evidence which suggests that racism does, to some extent, still exist within the police force, whether overt or covert. The social construction of race within different institutions can explain both a shift in the treatment of minority ethnic recruits but also a shift in which minority groups of officers are targeted by prejudice. One scholar raised the issue that 'diversity was increasingly intolerant of Asians as a result of 9/11' (Rowe, 2007, p.

31), and suggested a shift from prejudice against black officers towards Asian officers.

Taking this investigation further, it would be interesting to consider the current changes in EU legislation with regards to immigration of more residents from Eastern Europe (Rowthorn, 2013); this could create another shift in racism amongst officers. One survey participant explained; 'one underlying issue is that new minority groups become the focus of discrimination. Things have improved for black and Asian citizens, but much discrimination is aimed at Eastern European residents. The situation appears to be a cycle of such behaviour'.

One participant in the study claimed '*I think there are many people who are not even aware I am mixed raced*'. This statement could, perhaps be an interesting perspective to consider with regards to Rowe's claims that racism is experienced primarily because of distinct differences in appearance. It would be particularly interesting to take this research further using Rowe's argument that racism 'is about the visual aspect of it' (Rowe, 2007, p. 94), bearing in mind that a lot of Eastern European immigrants are white and therefore obvious differences in appearance will not be the primary factor contributing towards racism.

6 Conclusion

This research project has sought to explain some of the experiences of racism BME officers encounter within the police force. Findings from this study have shown that officers still believe that racism within the police force exists to some extent, whether it is demonstrated covertly within the complaints or promotion procedures, or overtly in the form of language or snide comments, directly or indirectly aimed personally at officers. This demonstrates the fluidity of race as a socially constructed concept, which changes within institutions and amongst officers (Barron and Holdaway, 1997). It isn't possible to make assumptions from this research as to whether racism has completely shifted from being expressed overtly to covertly, although it has demonstrated some clear examples of both overt and covert racism for some members of the force.

However, what has been shown is that both BME officers in this study and researchers believe that necessary changes are still needed to be implemented in order to encourage further positive changes within the workplace (Souhami, 2012), particularly with regards to recruitment. Some have questioned the effectiveness that increasing the number of BME officers will have on tackling racism within the police force (Cashmore, 2002), however, the study clearly demonstrates that some BME staff disagree with these claims, expressing strongly how this should continue to be the way forward for policy makers. One comment which can be stated is the need for recruitment drives expressed by BME officers in the study. However,

researchers have questioned the effectiveness of these drives unless other areas, where racism is evident, are tackled simultaneously (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007).

What has also been acknowledged is that this area of research presents extreme complexities due to issues regarding the constantly changing concept of race within different social settings, government policies and the subjective experiences of officers relaying incidents of racism (Souhami, 2012). Evidence from the study, paired with the recent literature on the topic of racism, demonstrates the 'subjective and intangible nature of discrimination' (Souhami, 2012, p. 13), which can vary depending on a persons' experience and within different environments.

This topic of research has included a variety of areas where racism has been experienced and where policies ought to be put into place. However, with hindsight, this may have been a too broad in scope for the length of the research project, given time and word constraints.

It has been argued that institutional racism within the force will not be changed until society's attitude towards minority ethnic members of the population change altogether; 'it's not an institution, but I think society is racist' (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2006, p. 357). Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) support the view that racism within the police force is simply a smaller sample which is proportionate to society's prejudice held towards minority ethnic members of society. Perhaps what should be considered is that race relations within institutions, such as the police, will not

improve until minority groups within society feel that they are an integral part of British society.

One matter which could be focused upon for further research on the topic is the representation of minority ethnic officers within the force as a proportion of minority ethnic citizens within the total UK population. A vast number of researchers highlight the significance of having a proportionate amount of BME officers within the police force compared with society. However, minority groups in general are overrepresented at all levels of the criminal justice system (Newburn, 2007), so perhaps this proportion should actually be representative of the population that the police has contact with most frequently. Newburn (2007) explains how a black member of society is more likely to be stopped whilst on foot than a white citizen, whilst groups of Asians in vehicles are more likely to be searched since the introduction of Section 44 of the Terrorism Act (2000). It could be considered further as to whether the proportion of minority ethnic officers within the force should be representative, not of the population it polices, but the population who enter all levels of the criminal justice system, which is significantly over-representative of minority ethnic groups (Newburn, 2007).

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Appendix

Figure 1.

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. It should take around 20-30 minutes to complete the 20 questions; please provide any extra details you may feel will support your answer, where it is available to do so. Any personal details revealing the identity of any officer will be excluded from the write up or replaced with an appropriate code to protect their identity. I really appreciate your help in completing this questionnaire but if you feel there are questions you do not want to answer for whatever reason, that is perfectly fine.

1. Age
Enter number here:

2. Gender
Please state your gender here:

3. Ethnicity –please tick whatever is applicable:
 - Black/Black British
 - African
 - Caribbean
 - Other (please state)

 - Asian/Asian British
 - Bangladeshi
 - Indian
 - Pakistani
 - Other (please state)

 - Mixed
 - White and Black African
 - White and Black Caribbean
 - Other (please state)

 - Prefer not to disclose

4. Please tick which branch of the service you are in:
 - Uniform
 - C.I.D.
 - Traffic
 - Other – please state the department’s name

5. Rank – please tick whatever is applicable and where the rank is an ‘acting’ or ‘temporary/acting up’ could you please indicate that:

Special Constabulary
Constable/Detective constable
Sergeant/Detective constable
Inspector/Detective inspector
Chief inspector/Detective chief inspector
Superintendent/Detective Superintendent
Chief Superintendent/Detective Chief Superintendent
A.C.P.O. rank or similar
Prefer not to disclose

6. Length of overall service in years

Enter number here:

The Oxford English Dictionary defines racism as; ‘prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one’s own race is superior’. This definition can be used to help answer the following questions, which are relevant to the time you have spent in the police. If however you have an alternative definition of racism and would like to use it please feel free to do so but it would be very useful for me if you could give a short piece of detail on that definition here:

7. Have you ever:

- a) Heard racially abusive/offensive language being used by other officers in a situation where they were *unaware* of your presence?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

- b) Heard racially abusive/offensive language being used by other officers in a situation where they were *aware* of your presence?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

8. Have you ever been subject to racially abusive/offensive comments or behaviour which has been directed at you personally?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

9. Have you ever considered leaving the police force due to any discrimination you have faced because of your ethnicity?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

Please explain your answer...

10. Do you believe that black and ethnic minority officers are fairly represented:

a) In your constabulary?

Yes

No

Unsure

Prefer not to disclose

b) In the police force as a whole?

Yes

No

Unsure

Prefer not to disclose

11. Have you ever:

a) Been interested in applying for a promotion within the police force?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

b) Applied for a promotion within the police force

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

If 'No' continue to question 11, if 'Yes' continue to question 10.

12. How strongly do you believe that your ethnicity would be/ was taken into account when applying for a/this promotion?

Not at all

Moderately

Neither agree nor disagree

Fairly strongly

Strongly

Very strongly

Prefer not to disclose

Please explain your answer...

13. Have you ever made a formal complaint about another officer because they have demonstrated the use of racially offensive language or behaviour which has offended yourself or another colleague?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

If 'yes' please answer question 15., If 'no' please proceed to question 16.

14. How was this resolved? Please give some detail if you can:

15. Have you ever wanted to make a formal complaint about another officer because they have demonstrated the use of racist language or behaviour, but felt that doing so may result in conflict with your colleagues?

Yes

No

Prefer not to disclose

16. 'There is an adequate complaints procedure in place which deals with complaints about racism fairly and effectively'. How strongly do you agree with this statement?

Not at all

Moderately

Neither agree nor disagree

Fairly strongly

Strongly

Very strongly

Prefer not to disclose

Please explain your answer...

17. During your time in the police force, do you feel there have been any significant, positive changes made to the way minority ethnic officers are treated in the workplace?

Yes

No

Please explain your answer...

18. Do you feel that there are necessary, positive changes *which need to be made* in order to improve the workplace for ethnic minority officers?

Yes

No

Please explain your answer...

19. 'The police force is still to this day a racist institution'. How strongly do you agree with this statement?

Not at all

Moderately

Neither agree nor disagree

Fairly strongly

Strongly

Very strongly

Prefer not to disclose

Please explain your answer...

20. Based solely on your own experiences, would you recommend serving in the police as a career choice for anyone from minority ethnic communities?

Yes

No

Unable to make this decision

Prefer not to disclose

Please explain your answer...