

**Identity negotiations of biracial women of Pakistani and White  
parentage: An interpretative phenomenological analysis**

**Humaira Mannan**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of  
the West of England, Bristol for the degree of Professional Doctorate in  
Counselling Psychology

Department of Health and Social Sciences  
Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences  
University of West of England, Bristol

January 2018 (amended May 2018)

# Contents

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Introduction	5
Literature Review	7
Theorising biracial identity	23
Relevance of research for counselling psychology	25
Research aims	32
Method	34
Results and Discussion	48
Super-ordinate Theme 1	51
Super-ordinate Theme 2	63
Superordinate Theme 3	73
General discussion	90
Implications for counselling psychology	94
Limitations of research project and suggestions for future research	98
References	103
Appendices	124

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my research supervisor Victoria Clarke for all her guidance, expertise and the support she has given me throughout this project – I have valued her feedback hugely and could not have done this without her. Thank you to Miltos Hadjosif for his keen support, feedback and positive encouragement throughout.

I would like to thank my participants for their time, for sharing their stories with me and for making this research possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my mum for her encouragement, my boys for understanding and my husband for being there to support me through the ups and downs during this journey!

This acknowledgement would be incomplete without mentioning Frisky, my feline companion during this research. He was a peaceful, loving presence in my life and in my office - on my lap and across my papers (and sometimes keyboard too!).

## Abstract

Counselling psychology has a commitment both to understanding and working with difference and to promoting social justice for socially marginalised groups. Biracial people are one such group and therefore a focus for social justice work in counselling psychology. Even though identity is a significant theme in psychological research, the identities of biracial people, and the intersecting identities of biracial women in particular, have not been of significant concern both in the field of counselling psychology and the wider discipline of psychology. Research has been mostly limited to stage models of biracial identity development (e.g. Kich, 1992; Kerwin & Poterotto, 1995, Poston, 1990); explorations of the lived experiences of biracial women are less common in psychology. Qualitative research within women's studies has explored the lived experiences of biracial women and has identified the salience of physical appearance, a desire for belonging and acceptance and a shifting sense of identity are all significant components of the experiences of this group of women (e.g. Hall, 2004; Root, 1997).

In order to further promote understanding of, and give voice to, the unique experiences and identities of biracial women, this research explored the lived experiences of women with Pakistani fathers and White mothers, a group yet to be explored in the feminist qualitative literature. Semi-structured interviews with eight women were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Three super-ordinate themes were identified: (1) The multiple meanings and experiences of Whiteness; 2) The role of parents in biracial identity negotiation; and 3) Conceptualisations of dual heritage and what it means to belong. The findings illustrate the multiple, complex and contradictory meanings of Whiteness for the women, which provided an important context for the women making sense of, and living out, their biracial identities. The important role of parents in the women's identity negotiations, and particularly how their parents' capacity, or lack thereof, to support them in making sense of and living out a biracial identity is highlighted. The unique way in which women made sense of their dual heritage and what 'belongingness' meant to them is illustrated. The implications of the knowledge gained for counselling psychologists' effective practice with biracial women are discussed.

**Word count: 38,168**

## Introduction

This research will explore, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), how women of mixed parentage, specifically Muslim Pakistani and White European, experience their sense of identity. Crenshaw (1991) coined the term intersectionality to denote the various ways in which race and gender intersect to shape people's experiences and highlighted the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering people's lived experience of identity. This study aims to acknowledge and explore the intersecting nature of race and gender by examining how women of Pakistani and White mixed parentage understand and make sense of their biracial identities. This research was initially motivated by my own background and personal connection to the subject having a Pakistani father and White mother.

Many different terms have been used to refer to people of mixed race backgrounds from terms such as 'half breed', 'half caste' and 'mulatto', which are now considered unacceptable to terms such as 'dual heritage', 'mixed race', 'biracial', 'multiracial', 'interracial' and 'interethnic'. I will primarily use the term biracial as in my view, it best describes individuals whose parents are of two different socially designated racial groups. Where describing models or research findings, I will use the same terms as used by the authors (e.g. mixed-race, mixed parentage, biracial, multiracial, interracial, inter-ethnic). Whilst some academics distinguish between the terms interracial and inter-ethnic (e.g. Gaines, 2009; Malesevic, 2004), in the context of this research, these terms have the same meaning.

The US appears to have a greater tradition of writing about the biracial population than the UK and whilst my focus in this introduction is primarily on the UK context, I will draw on US literature when UK literature is lacking or limited. One of the key ideologies in relation to biracial people is the 'one-drop rule', which is particularly evident in the US cultural context. A person with any amount of black racial heritage, or 'a single drop' of Black blood, was legally designated as Black and over time most people who had some black heritage identified as black (Davis, 1991). Prior to 2000, the US Census did not allow people to identify with multiple racial categories. In the UK, mixed ethnic categories were first included in the 2001 census in England and Wales and consisted of White and Black

Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian and Other Mixed. As a result of the 'one drop' rule and dichotomous racial classification systems, biracial individuals have been somewhat invisible and therefore ignored in both the US and in the UK. As the 'one drop' rule is slowly losing power over racial identity construction, alongside the emergence of new hybrid categories of identity, a more porous colour line has emerged that is fluid enough to allow for ambiguities, choices and self-understandings (Rockquemore, 2002). This is important for biracial people, including the group in this study because it opens up a whole new way of thinking about identity that was previously not socially legitimised. In addition, in relation to the contemporary context, the former US actress and biracial woman Meghan Markle, has married into the British Royal family and represents a biracial role model for today's biracial youth and it is hoped that she inspires new discussion about mixed-race identity and the acceptance of mixed race people for all of their identities rather than categorising them into one fixed box (Gaither, 2018a).

The current study is important because evidence suggests that biraciality more broadly is an increasingly common experience in the UK and elsewhere. The results of the UK Census (2011) for example, show that the population in England and Wales has become more ethnically diverse with 1.2 million people (2% of the population) identifying themselves with a mixed or multiple ethnicity, increasing from 1% in 2001. This figure has doubled in ten years which in my view represents a significant increase that needs to be noted. Nearly 1 in 10 people who were living as part of a couple were in an inter-ethnic relationship and 7% of dependent children lived in a household with an inter-ethnic relationship. The census provides useful insights into the patterns and trends of an increasingly ethnically diverse population and how ethnic identities are changing over time. People in the mixed/multiple ethnic group were the most likely to be in an inter-ethnic relationship and this is likely to be the result of inter-ethnic relationships that have emerged in the last 60 years from post war immigration patterns (UK 2011 Census). Specifically related to this study, migration of people from Pakistan to the UK was encouraged because of post war labour shortages and many young Pakistanis, mainly men, came to the UK during the 1950s and 1960s before the Commonwealth Immigration Act in 1962 (Richardson & Wood, 2004).

Despite increases in the numbers of biracial people in the UK and identity being a significant theme in psychological research and theorising (e.g. Erikson, 1968; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Gergen, 1999; Kroger, 2000; Wetherell, 2010), the biracial population generally has been overlooked in the psychological literature on identity (Hall, 1980). What little research there is either offers stage models of biracial identity development or explores, using qualitative methods, lived experiences of biracial identity (e.g. Barn et al., 1997; Tizard & Phoenix, 1993; Wilson, 1987); the latter also includes research from the inter-disciplinary field of women's studies. Feminist researchers have been critical of the failure to engage with gender in most mainstream psychological research on biracial identities. Feminist research on the lived experiences of biracial women spans several disciplines (including psychology, sociology, anthropology), and my review of the literature encompasses both psychological and non-psychological research on lived experiences. These literatures – models of identity development and lived experiences of biracial identities – are explored further below. I will then outline the broad identity theory informing my research and discuss the relevance of the research for counselling psychology.

## **Literature review**

### **Psychological models of biracial identity development**

Researchers have attempted to explore the processes through which biracial people make sense of their identities and have conceptualised the identity development of biracial people in various ways. Several racial identity development models were developed during the 1970s and 1980s; however, these were either based on monoracial identity (Cross, 1971) or were general 'minority' identity development models (Morten & Atkinson, 1983). Many have questioned the applicability of mono-racial identity models and general minority identity development models to those of biracial heritage (e.g. Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Kich, 1992; Poston, 1990; Root, 1990). There are a number of limitations in applying these models to biracial people, not least the fact that these models do not allow for recognition or integration of several ethnic identities. In addition, minority identity models suggest that people may first reject their minority heritage identity and then the dominant culture and this becomes more complex when applied to biracial people as individuals may come from

both of these groups. In response to these shortcomings, and recognising the unique experiences of biracial people, a number of stage models have been proposed over the past eight decades that specifically describe biracial identity development. I will first focus on one of the classic models to illustrate the historical view of biracial people within psychology and then shift to reviewing more contemporary research in this area.

One of the first models of biracial identity development – the ‘Marginal Person Model’ - developed by a sociology professor, Stonequist (1937), is based on the conceptualisation of biracial individuals experiencing marginalised existences because they have association with two cultures but never fully live in either. This model suggested that mixed heritage is problematic and leads to difficulties in identity development creating uncertainty and ambiguity in individual identification with parents, group identification with peers and social identification with a specific ethnic or racial group (Gibbs, 1987).

Key elements of Stonequists’ (1937) model are quoted in the box below. The language used conveys the tone of the theory.

**Box 1: Overview of Stonequists’ (1937:10) biracial identity model**

“The most obvious type of marginal man is the person of mixed racial ancestry. His very biological origin places him between two races. Distinct physical traits mark him off from both parent races. He also frequently possesses some characteristics of manner, thought and speech, which are derived from both lines of his ancestry and because of these peculiarities the ‘mixed blood’ presents a special problem for the community: what is to be his place in the social organisation. As he matures he will become aware of his problematic and anomalous social position. There is something universal in the problem of racial hybrids. While emphasising this fact, it would be misleading not to recognise the important differences between one situation and another....

A comparative study of evidence suggests that the marginal person has at least three significant phases in his personal evolution:

1. A phase when he is not aware that the racial or nationality conflict embraces his own career



2. A period when he consciously experiences this conflict and it is in this stage that he becomes marginal. It constitutes a crisis situation in which his usual habits and attitudes break down to some extent. The individual must then find himself again.
3. The more permanent adjustments, or lack of adjustments which he makes or attempts to make to his situation. He may reach a successful adjustment which permits him to be at ease again; he then evolves out of the marginal class. He may fluctuate from one position to another – reaching satisfactory adjustment then being thrown back into a conflict again or he may assume a role which, while it organises his life, does not completely free his consciousness from his situation. Or lastly the difficulties may be so overwhelming, relative to the individual's resources that he is unable to adjust himself and so becomes disorganised".

Poston (1990) argued that a flaw with this model is that it places identity challenges solely within the individual and fails to recognise that marginality is the result of cultural, environmental or societal pressures.

Since Stonequist's marginal model, and Gibbs' (1987) later deficit model of biracial identity, numerous other stage models have been developed, mainly in the US. These authors have been critical of the marginal/deficit view of biracial individuals, which suggest that they are lacking in some way and have proposed a more affirmative view of biracial identity. These models are based on research and clinical practice and all involve 3-7 stages of identity development that move from the biracial person being aware of differences, accepting these differences and then eventually adopting a biracial identity (e.g. Jacobs, 1992; Kich, 1992; Kerwin & Poterotto, 1995, Poston, 1990).

To illustrate these affirmative models, I now provide an example - Poston's (1990: 153) 'new and positive model' of biracial identity. Five key stages were identified by Poston:

- 1) Personal identity is when a child's sense of self is independent of his or her ethnic background

- 2) Choice of group categorisation is when an individual chooses either a multicultural existence emphasising the racial heritage of both parents or chooses one parent's racial heritage as dominant over the other
- 3) Enmeshment/denial is characterised by confusion and guilt at having to choose one identity that is not fully expressive of one's background. Parental and community support are an important factor here
- 4) Appreciation is when individuals begin to appreciate their multiple identities and broaden their reference group orientation, however they may still remain committed to one racial group
- 5) Integration is when individuals may still identify with one racial group but experience wholeness and tend to recognise and value both of their ethnic identities

This model highlighted the uniqueness of biracial identity development, compared to monoracial identity development, and emphasised that individuals need to value and integrate multiple cultures. It also specified the social, personal and status factors important in this process. Poston described the fullness of life that can be attained once the biracial individual begins valuing and integrating the multiple cultures that constitute their identity and argued that for most people, the developmental process progresses in a healthy fashion.

### **Critiques of stage models**

Several criticisms have been made of stage models of biracial identity development centring on the important role of individual context, the limitations inherent in the concept of linear stages, questioning an integrated identity as an ideal and the lack of consideration of intersections of identity.

Some researchers argued against progressive, developmental stage models of identity development on the grounds that they may underplay the influence of experience and personal, societal and environmental factors on identity development and they have cautioned against attempting to fit individuals neatly into a stage (e.g. Helms, 1995; Storrs,

1999). It has been argued that linear stage models lack fluidity and may act as an unhelpful yardstick against which people judge themselves or that therapists use with clients (Clarke, Ellis, Peel & Riggs, 2010). It has been argued that many of the theories of identity development have not taken context into account, resulting in these models having limited utility (Helms, 1995; Peterson, 2000).

Another limitation of some of the stage models of biracial identity development is the assumption that an integrated identity (one that encompasses all aspects of one's racial background) is the psychologically healthy ideal (e.g. Gibbs 1989, Poston 1990). The existence of a single 'one size fits all' model of healthy racial identity among Black-White mixed-race people has been questioned (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2003). Recent findings of several researchers illustrate that racial identity in mixed race people is complex and involves the interaction of psychological and social factors and these people make a multiplicity of choices about their racial identities and the researchers argue that no one choice is necessarily better than another (Gillem, 2001; Rockquemore & Brunson, 2001; Storrs 1999). An exception to the stage model approach was Root (1996), a US clinical psychologist who, based on her research and clinical practice, proposed that instead of identifying one healthy resolution of identity conflicts applicable to all multiracial individuals, there are four different strategies that may be used to negotiate identity development issues. These are: (1) the ability to carry multiple cultural perspectives simultaneously; (2) developing a situational identity or shifting identity in different environments or context; (3) claiming an independent multiracial reference point apart from family or peers; and (4) maintaining a monoracial identity in different cultural environments. Whilst this model moves away from a stage approach for biracial identity development and recognises different possibilities, it still presents a limited range of options.

A further criticism of stage models is that they do not take into consideration the multiple facets of identity and intersections of race with other aspects of identity such as gender, class and sexuality (Gillem & Thompson, 2004). They argue that it is time to move away from linear models of identity development that only examine how one deals with racial oppression or ethnic identification to a multidimensional framework that conceptualises, for

example, biracial women as racial/ethnic beings, gendered beings, sexual beings, mothers, daughters, partners and friends. Rather than applying or testing stage models, my research will aim to listen to women's voices and explore the sense of identity developed through the interweaving of various elements in the lives of the women participating in this research.

### **Lived experiences of biracial identity**

In addition to developing stage models of biracial identity, research has explored lived experiences of multi-racial identity. Some research had focused on young people, mostly of Black and White mixed parentage in Britain (e.g., Barn et al., 1997; Tizard & Phoenix, 1993; Wilson, 1987) and the US (e.g. Renn, 2000; Rockquemore, 1998;). Key themes in the literature centre on impact of family and socialisation, different ways of making sense of biracialness and the influence of environment and context. Other studies have explored the experiences of biracial women (none of these studies have focused on women with Pakistani and White parents), and a number of common themes have emerged. These include the salience of physical appearance, dating, marriage and choice of partners (Hall, 2004; Nishimura, 2004; Root, 1997), and belonging and acceptance within cultures of origin (Bettez, 2010; Hall, 2004; Root, 1997,). In addition, uniqueness and self-esteem were highlighted by Root (1997), and the ways in which they may surface in therapy and combine with one another. The importance of the mother-daughter relationship and its impact on identity development has also been highlighted (Nishimura, 2004). I now summarise findings relating to each of these themes.

***Impact of family and socialisation:*** In the 1950s and early 1960s young Pakistani men who migrated to Britain mainly lived in all male households and concentrated on either earning and saving money to send home or attaining a higher education (Richardson & Wood, 2004). They saw themselves as temporary visitors who would return to Pakistan, although after the passing of the Commonwealth Immigration Act many chose to settle in the UK (Richardson & Wood, 2004). During this time, some of the men who had relationships with White women would have decided to move back, taking their wives to Pakistan and this provides an important context when considering the impact of family and socialisation. For the White women concerned this would have meant they moved away from their families and support system to a completely new culture.

Research indicates that a key feature in the development of a positive racial identity is the quality of parenting people experience. British research focused on adolescents with one black and one white parent has found that biracial adolescents in two parent middle class families demonstrated a positive racial identity (Tizard & Phoenix, 1993). The researchers found social class, the type of school the adolescents attended and the amount of family communication about race significantly informed their identities and experiences. Tizard and Phoenix (1993) found that being mixed race is not problematic unless the child demonstrates a negative internalisation of marginalised ethnic groups and cultures. One study found that many of the British mixed-race children who had one Black and one White parent in the participant group seemed to have found a happy and secure, positive mixed-race identity for themselves. This was particularly true for children in multiracial areas who were able to draw support from the existence of other mixed race and 'brown' children in their area (Wilson, 1987). Research focused on adolescents of mixed-Black and White parentage has reinforced the key role of parents and found that those adolescents who lived with both parents, had contact with both Black and White family members and witnessed positive interactions between them, received more proactive racial socialisation messages and this had a positive impact on the biracial adolescent and how they understand their biracialness (Fatimilehin, 1999; Rockquemore, 1998; Thompson, 1999). Thompson (1999) took the fundamental role that family plays further and explained that experiencing the most intimate human relationship (that which exists between a parent and child) with someone who is a different race plays an important role in developing the understanding that all people are equal and young people can carry this view into subsequent interactions with others. She found it was important to use messages learned in the family to externalise negative feedback the children may get from others and maintain a solid self-image and strong sense of personal identity.

There are some mixed parentage children, however, whose experience gives cause for concern. Research shows that there is a high representation of mixed parentage children in foster care and the majority of those entering the care system have a White biological mother and Black father (Barn et al., 1997). The family structure is predominantly one parent, where the White mother is the sole carer, and a sizeable number of these young people entered care as a result of family relationship problems or offending or because they

were believed to be beyond parental control (Barn et al., 1997). Similarly, other research has shown that children of mixed parentage struggle to deal with their dual or multiple racial/cultural heritage and social marginality (Gibbs, 1987). Whilst this literature is focused on children, this may be relevant if it is reflected in the experiences of participants in this research.

***Parenting of biracial children:*** Many young people turn to parents for guidance and advice but biracial children may not always receive culturally-sensitive guidance and support they need from their parents. The parents may not be biracial themselves and may have a limited understanding of what it means to be biracial (Crawford & Alaggia, 2008; Laszloffy, 2008). As a result, they may feel unsupported which may increase opportunities for loneliness and a reduced sense of belonging.

Edwards, Caballero and Puthussery (2010) studied thirty-five parent couples from different racial, ethnic and faith backgrounds to explore how they understood and negotiated difference and belonging in bringing up their children. They identified three typical approaches: open individualised, mix collective and single collective. The key feature of the open individualised approach is that their children's identity and sense of belonging is not necessarily rooted in their particular racial ethnic or faith backgrounds and they are encouraged to think beyond these labels or categories. In the mix collective approach, the children's racial, ethnic and faith background is understood as a rooted and factual part of their identity. There are two aspects to this - one that children should be encouraged to acknowledge and engage with the different parts of their heritage and the other is engagement with difference and belonging through a notion of mixedness as an identity. The key feature of the single approach is that only one aspect of children's background is stressed and a sense of belonging is promoted for them through that. Each approach involves sets of underlying discursive motifs. For example, one of the aspects of the single approach emphasises the importance of the set of rules and values for living life that a single aspect of the child's heritage supplies. The authors provided the example of one participant Maryam, a white British woman, to illustrate the single approach. Maryam experienced a complex and chaotic family upbringing in her youth, and often truanted from school. On meeting her Pakistani Muslim husband, she converted to Islam, and they brought

up their three sons as Muslims. The family lived in a city suburb with a large Asian population. For Maryam, a Muslim identity and practice was important in bringing up her children, helping her to instil in them an institutionalised set of values. The authors argued that there are no universal and 'right' ways in which parents do – or indeed should – understand difference and belonging for their children. This is because their understandings are developed and situated in different contexts related to individual biography, geographical and class locations, gender, and the relevance of religion in their lives, as well as other social and material factors. Other considerations that are part of everyday parenting – such as safety, discipline, health and finances - can have greater significance and implications for parents of, and parenting biracial children, than the parents' own and their children's mixed backgrounds.

Lorenzo-Blanco, Bare and Delva (2013) compared family characteristics of adolescents of a mixed-race background with those of a monoracial background. Mixed race youth reported feeling less supported by their mothers (but not their fathers). The researchers argued this could be because mothers may be more affected by the challenges of parenting biracial children due to the gendered nature of child rearing (Paquette 2004), and gendered parenting expectations in children may have led them to expect higher standards from their mothers (Moloney, 2001). White mothers of biracial children who were married to Black, African-American men, have often not had to confront issues of race or ethnicity until they got married and were raising a biracial child (O'Donoghue, 2004).

Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2005) stated that strategies for healthy racial socialisation of biracial children, with a Black and a White parent, include talking honestly and openly with children about race, giving children the opportunity to be curious, ask questions and share observations. It involves challenging racial views and attitudes that perpetuate inequalities and helping children develop skills for negotiating situations where biracial children may feel isolated or targeted. It requires parents to provide children with information, examples and role models and involves creating an environment that teaches children how to love and value themselves racially so they may draw on this in adverse situations. Nakazawa (2003) argued that parents need to convey that they see how their children's biracial status

provides both the benefit of being able to relate to Whiteness and Blackness and the challenge of never feeling completely a part of either world.

***Different ways of making sense of biracialness – influence of environment and context:***

Research with people of mixed race/ethnicity have revealed a wide range of self-understandings of biracialness. Rockquemore's (1998) study of middle class biracial students found that they interpreted their identity in four different ways: (1) border identity which was neither Black or White but a unique biracial category; (2) protean identity that shifted according to cultural context; (3) transcendent identity involved avoidance or rejection of any type of racial categorisation as the basis of personal identity; and (4) traditional identity which was exclusively Black or White. Similarly, other studies of undergraduate students highlighted how some identify mono- racially with a single group, some choose a multiracial description, others shift between these options, whilst others still opt out completely from identification along racial lines (e.g. Renn, 2000). Research indicates that the choice of how biracial people identify themselves is dependent on many factors including the particularities of age, gender, sexuality and place, including the ethnic composition of their schools and neighbourhoods. Studies focused on mixed race/ethnicities provide an insight into identity as a lived experience formed by the complex interaction of many different factors and subject to continual negotiation (Aspinall, 2003). Some researchers have argued that the amount of validation or invalidation one receives relative to his/her identity choice is more important than the particular racial identity he/she chooses and those who are consistently invalidated in their preferred racial self-identity are likely to exhibit psychological distress (Franco, Katz & O'Brien, 2016; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2003). Miville et al.'s (2005) study of multiracial adults emphasised the simultaneous adoption of multiple labels or categories to describe racial identity. Many participants seemed to identify both as a monoracial person and as a multiracial person. Social pressures and availability of a visible community meant the monoracial label was publicly acknowledged and socially supported. This identity seemed to provide a way of connecting with others, provided a buffer against racism and helped build a sense of community. A multiracial identity was one that seemed to be more private, sometimes even unspoken and the authors argued that a lack of a visible multiracial community or social network is one of the challenges facing multiracial people in their negotiation of a positive multiracial identity.



Additional concerns from the literature that focused specifically on experiences of biracial women and the intersections of identity are explored below.

### **Intersections of identity – the experiences of biracial women**

‘Intersectionality is the idea that social identities such as race, gender and class interact to form qualitatively different meanings and experiences’ (Warner, 2008:454). The term was coined by black feminist legal theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), but it has a long history in black feminist thought, dating back to the work of anti-slavery campaigners such as Sojourner Truth. Intersectionality theory provides a way of theorising difference that moves away from traditional additive models of discrimination, oppression and social marginalisation. Brown (2009) stated that each of us are more than the most obvious component of our identity and that these mixtures of aspects of self-occur in a myriad of ways. Rather than seeing ethnicity as the primary marker of human difference, she highlighted the multiplicity of ‘social locations’ that contribute to the development of identity. These factors intersect in a multiplicity of ways: ‘They are not simply additive, or even multiplicative, nor necessarily layered. They are sometimes the sum of their parts; they are on occasion, more than, or different from that sum’ (Brown, 2009:346). In Crenshaw’s (2016) recent Ted Talk, she emphasised the urgency of recognising intersectionality, stating that ‘many of our social justice problems are often overlapping, creating multiple levels of social justice’. She argued that when facts do not fit available frames, people have difficulty incorporating new facts into their way of thinking and as a consequence without a frame that allows us to see this, many issues fall through the cracks. She described the effect of intersectionality as ‘impacted by multiple forces and then abandoned to fend for yourself’. In drawing on Hooks’ (2015) feminist perspective, she also emphasised the need for feminists to consider gender’s relation to race, class and sex. Root’s (1999) construction of racial identity explicitly considers the interactive role of geography, history, gender, class, sexual orientation and generation on the construction of racial or ethnic identity.

Feminist researchers have emphasised the role of gender when researching biracial identity. Women’s need to be accepted and belong, the salience of physical appearance and sexist nature of beauty standards all effect biracial women’s experience. Key themes in research on the experiences of biracial women are expanded on below.

### ***Issues of acceptance and belonging:***

Women's experiences of not being accepted by one or more ethnic groups of which they are members has been highlighted. Being questioned about one's identity and affinity, ridiculed and not be fully accepted by one's own racial group can be painful (Hall, 2004). Evidence shows that challenges are raised when external views differ from individual's self-definitions and the individual can experience periods of cultural homelessness and rejection, especially during times of transition to a new environment (Buchanan & Acevedo, 2004).

Research focused on women with Black and White parents has found that the overarching conflict for many of these women was related to 'who am I?' They did not receive sufficient socialisation about race to deal with the challenges they faced and as a result coped with this by denial and minimisation of the importance of race. The researchers argued that denial does not allow the individual an opportunity to explore and accept both sides of her racial heritage, which many scholars argue is key for healthy biracial identity development (Buckley & Carter, 2004; Root, 1990). Other studies of mixed race women have also highlighted the complexities around issues of belonging and found that how the women defined themselves racially or ethnically varied both situationally and over time (e.g. Bettez, 2010). Gaither (2018b) highlights the need to explore the multiplicity of belonging and argues that the influence of the intersectional nature of having multiple identities simultaneously has been underestimated.

In some studies, women have described an unusual and creative 'reversal of stigma' surrounding Whiteness. The mixed-race women in one study saw whiteness as 'empty', 'bland', 'prejudicial' and 'oppressive' and the women found a sense of belonging and home in non-whiteness (Storrs, 1999:194).

### ***Physical Appearance:***

Physical appearance is one of the central factors in the lives of mixed race women (Hall, 2004; Nishimura, 2004; Root, 1997). Mixed race women may look like no other particular ethnic group – racially ambiguous (Root, 1994) - or may look like all of them, what Hall (1996) refers to as ubiquitous. Hall (2004) stated that this may cause difficulty for people unable to categorise the individual: 'What are you?' 'Are you one of us?' 'Can we trust you?'

This line of questioning and the need to constantly authenticate herself can cause stress, emotional pain and anger for the multiracial woman. The ambiguous nature of their appearance with regard to race affects biracial women in different ways. Some do not enjoy looking different, whilst others may enjoy the attention that their perceived 'exotic' look provides (Root 1994). US research indicated that mixed race women may be seen as more attractive if they possess 'best-of-both-world' features where ethnic features of both groups are subdued. For example, African nose and lip features or Asian eyes, which are less appreciated in the US, may be softened by mixing with another group and although these are profoundly racist measures of beauty, they can powerfully shape women's experiences of their biracial identity (Hall, 2004). In research on multiracial women college students, Harris (2017) reported multiracial women students were stereotyped as exotic and more attractive than monoracial women. Other studies have also explored issues facing racially ambiguous women who identify with an ethnic/racial group that is incongruent with their physical appearance and this is relevant to this study as it is similar to the experience of many biracial women who find how others view who they are differs from how they see themselves (Buchanan & Acevedo, 2004).

The prevalence of colourism, prejudice on the basis of skin tone, has been highlighted in research on women of colour (Nkansa-Dwamena, 2010; Phoenix, 2014); racism and colourism lead to the privileging of light skin. Furthermore, patriarchal patterns of desire mean women are still judged disproportionately on their appearance (Hooks, 2003). The existence of a white supremacist beauty hierarchy means that multiracial women with light skin are perceived as 'more attractive' and 'better than' women who had darker skin and references to skin colour preferences highlighted the normalisation and internalisation of colourism (Harris, 2017:485). Light skin placed them closer to Whiteness and nearer the top of the beauty hierarchy that confers more capital such as jobs and educational opportunities than it does to women with darker skin (Hunter, 2005). The beauty queue fuels colourism, maintains White supremacy and divides women of colour as they compete for White-dominated resources (Harris, 2017).

The choices that biracial people make about their racial identities and their social experiences of race are fundamentally gendered because they occur within the cultural

valuation of white defined beauty standards and the patriarchal structure of choosing partners (Rockquemore, 2002). In line with this, Root (1997) explored the way a multiracial existence and gender co-construct each other and highlighted that the social valuing of and resultant pressures of physical appearance adds an extra dimension to being multiracial for women. She stated that multiracial women are often seen as unique by others, initially due to the ambiguity of racial features and subsequently due to their racially mixed heritage; they are often regarded as an object (e.g. exotic) or a curiosity. She found that this uniqueness could mean multiracial women felt isolated and outside a group and this was particularly relevant for women, who more than men derive validation from their shared experiences with significant people in their environment

### ***The role of visibility in categorisation and 'Othering':***

Liladhar (1999), who is White and English and with a British Indian partner, argued that labelling her darker skinned son as Asian and being forced to tick the 'other' box on an ethnicity questionnaire was inaccurate and unhelpful as he defines himself as both Indian and English. Narayan (1997) stated that 'for those of us who are mixed, the darker element in our ancestry serves to define us with or without our complicity'. Liladhar (1999) emphasised the relevance of visibility when it comes to categorising and Othering people. Her darker skinned son was categorised as Asian because he looks Indian, whereas her other son was not because he does not look Indian. Visible markers are unreliable indications of identity and yet biracial people are often identified by such markers. Literature on biracial women has highlighted the distress faced by being placed in a racial category that does not align with how they personally identify their racial identity (Franco, Katz & O'Brien, 2016; Lou, Lalonde & Wilson, 2011). No simple assumptions can be made about the appearance of a 'race' of people and any visible markers of race are read differently according to context. In her home town of Loughborough, in the English Midlands where there is a sizeable community of people of Indian origin, Liladhar's son looks Asian. However, when he has been in southern Spain, local people assumed he was Spanish. She emphasised the need for a way of thinking and use of language around race and identity that can encompass the complexity of many peoples' identities. Ang-Lygate (1996) highlighted the issue of visibility when trying to gain access to a group of Chinese women living in Scotland by making

contact with the group leader by telephone. The leader was reluctant to let her attend their meetings. Ang-Lygate realised that 'because she could not see me over the telephone line, she had assumed from my anglicised first name and my local Scottish accent that I was Caucasian' (Ang-Lygate, 1996: 54). It was not until she declared herself as Chinese, that she got a welcoming response.

Gaither, Babbitt and Sommers (2018) state that racially mixed individuals do not fit neatly into just one racial category and people take longer to categorise racially ambiguous individuals. In a study on the impact of racial ambiguity in social interactions, she found that when people were unaware of a person's racial background, those interactions were more taxing, and biracial people perceived more negativity.

### ***Other Intersections:***

In addition to gender, there are other intersections that are important to explore in relation to biracial women's identity, although only some have been examined in research to date. Root (2004) described the differences in experiences of biracial women relating to the generation to which they belong and the sociohistorical context of their experiences. Based on her research on biracial women, she highlighted the impact of the socio-historical context on their experience, options and choices relating to self-expression and self-definition. Root distinguished between three different cohorts of biracial women: the exotic (born before the late 1960s), characterised by isolation, difference and self-consciousness, the vanguard (born between the late 1960s and 1970s), who exemplify situational identity - the ability to move between or identify with multiple ethnic groups in different situations, and the biracial baby boomers (born after the late 1980s), who are empowered and reject the rigid rules of race.

Research on the experiences of biracial lesbian and bisexual women (Israel, 2004; Stanley, 2004) highlighted the need to consider simultaneous interactional processes among multiple identities such as race, gender and sexuality and how these identities intersect and inform each other rather than exist as parallel processes. Biracial lesbian and bisexual women have the challenge to simultaneously negotiate being biracial and the identity

struggles associated with being a member of a marginalised non-heterosexual group in a heterosexist society (Gillem and Thompson, 2004).

In focusing on the experiences of women, it is useful to briefly consider how this may be different from the experiences of biracial men. However, in reviewing major masculinity journals, it would seem that whilst men have been included in more general research on biracial people, there does not appear to be a parallel to the women's studies literature on the experiences of biracial women in masculinity literature, so it is difficult to comment on any differences in experience. One recent US study that included high school boys and girls reported that multiracial boys received attention and admiration, were also asked the 'what are you?' question and were objects of racial dissection (Newman, 2017). Within the black community, whilst for black men there is a weaker association between attractiveness and lighter skin tone (Hill, 2002), this study linked perceptions of the boys' attractiveness to their mixed-ness. Their multiraciality, blackness and masculinity were not read in isolation from one another but colluded to construct the part-black multiracial male as exotic and desirable and therefore it is important to explore the intersections of mixed-ness and masculinity (Newman,2017).

Stage models provide a very limited, linear view of identity development for practitioners, academics and indeed for the participants in this research that does not take into account the multiple aspects of identity and the intersections between them. Some of the research on lived experiences of biracial individuals has focused on young people with Black and white parentage and suggests there are a number of themes in their experiences including the impact of family and socialisation, parenting and different ways of making sense of biracialness. Other research that focuses on the experiences of biracial women draws on several disciplines and includes women's studies. Themes particularly evident for biracial women center on physical appearance, visibility and acceptance and belonging. However, no existing research has focused on the experience of women with one White (western) and one Pakistani parent. By exploring the experiences of women with Pakistani/White western parentage in an open-ended way, this research explores the extent to which existing themes apply to these women's experiences. From my perspective as a counselling psychologist, this research goes beyond the existing literature to give voice to this group and explore the

sense of identity developed through the interweaving of different elements in the lives of the participants. Next, I will describe the broad identity theory that informed my research.

## **Theorising biracial identity**

This research focuses on identity – psychology offers numerous ways of making sense of identity and Identity Process Theory was used in this research, alongside IPA, as a broad framework to explore the identity experiences of biracial women with Pakistani and White parents. Identity Process Theory has been used to explore identity issues in a range of contexts (e.g. Bennett & Coyle, 2007; Coyle & Rafalin, 2000; Johnson & Robson, 1999). It was chosen as a framework for this research as its concepts of identity structure and processes are flexible and can be applied to a wide range of different identity situations. In addition, it combines both psychological and social factors and its principles resonate with existing literature. Similar to Bennett and Coyle (2007), the framework has been used ‘lightly’ so when combined with IPA, it does not compromise the phenomenological focus of the research and the analytic approach.

Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1992, 2001; Vignoles et al., 2002) proposes that the structure of self-identity should be conceptualised in terms of its content and value/affect dimensions and that this structure is regulated by two universal processes, namely assimilation-accommodation and evaluation. In the context of higher education, Jaspal (2015) illustrates these processes with an example. The assimilation-accommodation process refers to the absorption of new information in the identity structure (e.g. becoming a student) and the adjustment which takes place in order for it to become part of the structure. For example, being a factory worker may initially be an important element of identity for an individual, but after enrolling on a university course she may begin to view herself primarily as a student rather than a factory worker. The accommodation of the student identity may require an attenuation of the factory worker identity. The evaluation process confers meaning and value to the elements of identity. For example, the university fresher may originally have viewed the factory worker identity as positive because it enabled her to pay rent, but she may later come to perceive it as negative, as it impedes her progress in her university course.

Breakwell (1986, 1992) identified four identity principles that guide these universal processes: continuity across time and situation (continuity), uniqueness or distinctiveness from others (distinctiveness), feeling confident and in control of one's life (self-efficacy), and feelings of personal worth or social value (self-esteem). Continuing with the higher education example (Jaspal, 2015), the factory worker who enrolls on an undergraduate course may have derived self-efficacy on the basis of her factory worker identity because it enabled her to pay the rent and support her family financially. But her student identity may subsequently make her feel good about herself (self-esteem), different from others in her occupational community (distinctiveness) and optimistic about her future job prospects (self-efficacy). However, whether any given identity element serves the identity principles will be determined largely by social factors (Breakwell, 1986). For example, the factory worker perceives her student identity as enhancing self-esteem, distinctiveness and self-efficacy because other people in the social contexts in which she is embedded view her as special and different and speak of the job opportunities associated with her student identity (Jaspal, 2015).

Extending IPT, Vignoles and colleagues (Vignoles, Chrysochoou & Breakwell, 2002) have proposed two additional identity motives: belonging, which refers to the need to maintain feelings of closeness to and acceptance by other people; and meaning, which refers to the need to find significance and purpose in one's life. More recently, Jaspal and Cinnirella (2010) proposed the psychological coherence principle, which refers to the motivation to establish feelings of compatibility between interconnected identities.

A core prediction of IPT is that if the universal processes cannot comply with the identity principles mentioned above, for whatever reason, identity is threatened, and the individual will engage in strategies for coping with the threat. Coping strategies can function at three levels: intrapsychic (e.g. denial), interpersonal (e.g. isolation) or intergroup (e.g. social mobilisation) (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). Some forms of threat may induce coping at multiple levels in order to optimise identity processes (Jaspal & Sitaridou, 2013). IPT provides a holistic model of :1) the structure of identity, namely its content and value dimensions and the centrality of identity components; 2) the interaction of social and psychological factors in the production of identity content; and 3) the interrelations



between identity and action (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). A key assumption of the theory is that in order to understand the processes that drive identity construction, it is necessary to examine how individuals react when identity is threatened (Breakwell, 2010).

According to the theory, identity is the product of social and psychological processes. Breakwell (1986, 2001, 2004, 2010) has acknowledged the role of social representations in determining the content of identity and the value of its components. Social representations determine how individuals assimilate, accommodate and evaluate identity components, what is threatening for identity and how individuals subsequently cope with threat (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014). IPT recognises that individuals have agency in the construction and management of identity. In interaction with relevant social contexts, individuals construct systems of meaning for making sense of their lives, experiences and identities.

Whilst IPT offer a useful perspective, there is however a limitation of this model. The two universal processes on which IPT is based are nomothetic which is somewhat out of alignment with the idiographic approach that IPA espouses. In the next section, the relevance of the research for counselling psychology is discussed.

## **Relevance of the research for counselling psychology**

In order to explain the relevance of this research for counselling psychology, I begin with a review of the existing literature on multicultural counselling and therapy before considering the relevance of this research specifically for counselling psychologists working with members of the biracial population.

### **Multicultural Counselling/therapy**

In reviewing the literature on multicultural counselling/therapy, the importance of the relationship between the person, the familial system and the cultural context has been stressed (Eleftheriadou, 2010). Multicultural counselling and therapy can be defined as both a helping role and a process that uses modalities and defines goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of clients. It also recognises client identities to include individual, group, and universal dimensions, advocates the use of universal and culture-specific strategies and roles in the healing process, and balances the importance of

individualism and collectivism in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of client and client systems (Sue & Torino, 2005).

Sue and Sue (2013) define a culturally competent therapist as firstly one who is actively in the process of becoming aware of his or her own assumptions about human behaviour, values, biases, preconceived notions and personal limitations. Second, a culturally competent therapist is one who actively attempts to understand the world view of his or her client who is culturally different to the therapist. In other words, what are the client's values and assumptions about human behaviour, biases and so on. Third, a culturally competent therapist is one who is in the process of actively developing and practicing appropriate, relevant and sensitive intervention strategies and skills in working with his or her culturally different client. These three attributes make it clear that cultural competence is an active, developmental and ongoing process and that cultural competence resides in three major domains –attitudes/beliefs, knowledge and skills.

Most large studies of multicultural evidence-based practice have found that people who are members of ethnically and racialised marginalised groups prefer therapists of the same racial or ethnic background (e.g. Cabral & Smith 2011; Coleman, Wampold & Casali, 1995). This tendency is particularly strong for African Americans who significantly more often than other ethnic groups prefer to be treated by African American clinicians and perceive them more favourably (Cabral & Smith, 2011). Zane and colleagues (2005) suggested that cultural matches are consistently related with positive outcomes. Other smaller size reviews, however have found no or significantly smaller differences on preferences for ethnic match compared to the bigger studies above (Maramba & Hall, 2002). There is, however, generally a higher drop-out rate from therapy from racially and ethnically marginalised clients than from White clients (Fernando, 1995).

There is some support for the effectiveness of culturally adapted interventions. Cultural modifications include factors such as matching the clients racial or ethnic language, incorporating cultural values in the specific treatment strategies, utilising cultural sayings or metaphors and considering the impact of environmental variables, such as acculturation conflicts, discrimination and income status. A meta-analysis of predominantly US studies that adapted empirically supported treatments to client's cultural background revealed that

adapted treatments for clients of colour are moderately more effective than non-adapted treatments and the most effective therapies were those that had the most cultural adaptations (Smith, Rodriguez & Bernal, 2011). Organista (2000) found that by making cultural modifications to empirically supported cognitive behavioural strategies when working with low income Latino clients' suffering from depression, this resulted in a lower drop-out rate and better outcome compared to nonmodified therapy. Similarly, Hall, Hong, Zane and Meyer (2011) suggested that the theoretical grounding in East Asian philosophies of mindfulness and acceptance based behavioural therapies, has meant these therapies are particularly culturally responsive to the needs and values of Asian Americans.

There has been debate about whether cultural adaptations of empirically supported therapies are sufficient to respond effectively to cultural differences and there is concern that such adaptations as still fairly minor in nature, result in the imposition of euro-American norms on racially and ethnically marginalised groups (Sue & Sue, 2013). Other factors such as the therapeutic relationship, client values and beliefs and the working alliance also impact treatment outcome (DeAngelis, 2005). As when working with White clients, the therapeutic alliance is of critical importance when working with clients of colour (Constantine, 2002; Mulvaney-Day, Earl, Diaz-Linhart & Algeria, 2011) and the therapeutic alliance can be adversely affected when racially and ethnically marginalised clients perceive a therapist to be culturally insensitive or believe that the therapist is minimising the importance of racial or cultural issues or pathologizing cultural values or communication styles (Constantine, 2007; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal & Torino, 2007). Racially and ethnically marginalised clients may differ in the relational style preferences, for example US researcher La Roche (2011) found that as Latino clients tend to be more relational, they had larger decreases in anxiety symptoms when using relational treatment approaches. In a US qualitative study involving Black, Asian, Latino and multiracial clients, most preferred an active counsellor role, which was categorised by the counsellor offering concrete suggestions, providing direct answers, challenging the client's thinking and providing psychoeducation regarding the therapy (Chang & Berk, 2009) and counselling psychologists therefore need to be able to adapt their approach based on client preferences.

Research has also examined how cultural processes influence the development of interventions. For example, the western emphasis on individualism is reflected in many treatment goals such as self-esteem, self-actualisation, ego strength and self-development (La Roche, 2013). Cultural differences (e.g. collectivism) can be seen as deficits or psychopathologies (e.g. enmeshment, immaturity etc.) La Roche, Batista and D'Angelo (2010) found relaxation techniques are highly influenced by individualistic assumptions. Such techniques that typically involve taking time off for oneself may for example go against the value of connectedness or putting the needs of the family ahead of oneself. La Roche (2011) argued that effectiveness of such cultural bound interventions may be limited with clients who endorse alternative beliefs.

Sue and Sue (2013) argue that the broader and more recent focus on evidence-based practice (EBP) in therapy includes cultural sensitivity as an essential component when working multiculturally. EBP refers to three pillars - 'the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of the patient characteristics, culture and preferences' (American Psychological Association, 2006:273). The search for the best research evidence begins with a comprehensive understanding of the client's background and presenting problems and goes on to consider which therapeutic approach is most likely to provide the best outcome. The selection of intervention occurs only after individual characteristics such as cultural background and values and preferences are assessed. This allows for individualising of therapy with strong consideration given to client background and characteristics. The focus is on the client and the consideration of cultural variables, evidence-based practice sets the stage for a multiculturally sensitive counselling relationship.

In working with biracial women in therapy a number of different approaches have been used and suggested. Some researchers have emphasised the richness, wealth and multiple facets of a client's dual heritage and advocate that the therapist can use these as resources in the therapeutic process (Fatimilehin, 1999). When working with biracial people, activating flexible, multifaceted self-views and a multiple identity mindset for the client can have a positive impact on flexible behaviours (Gaither, 2018b). The richness of a dual heritage should be celebrated and positively acknowledged and therapists should build on clients'

strengths and assets associated with being biracial (Edwards and Pedrotti, 2004). They proposed that strengths-based approaches to therapy are particularly valuable when working with biracial women and highlight two particular approaches - narrative techniques and solution-focused therapy - that may be useful. Narrative therapy is underpinned by a social constructivist view point (Neimeyer & Stewart, 2000) which states that each individual creates her own reality and understands it from her unique perspective. This reality is in constant flux, changing as the individual gains new experiences and information therefore constructing reality is an ongoing process in which the individual is constantly organising, elaborating and revising her own life story. Narrative therapy encourages multiracial people to tell their unique story of their individual realities, while acknowledging that these realities are dynamic and are affected by a range of contextual influences (Root, 1990). Solution focused therapy (De Jong & Berg, 1998) is based on strengths and client empowerment and respect for the client's unique frame of reference or world view. The biracial woman's unique world view is then used as the basis for growth.

Nishimura (2004) proposed incorporating two counselling perspectives - multicultural counselling and therapy and feminist therapy - as a comprehensive approach for working with biracial women. Feminist and multicultural approaches share many common principles (Corey, 2001). These include consideration of how who the counsellor is as a person impacts the counselling relationship, acknowledging and valuing multiple aspects of the client's identity and creating a therapeutic alliance that allows the client to work with the counsellor in choosing an appropriate intervention (Nishimura, 2004). Nishimura (2004) argued that it is vital that counsellors who are working with these women are: 1) aware of their own beliefs and attitudes about interracial marriages and biracial children; (2) knowledgeable about historical events and current issues that impact biracial women; and (3) skilled in creating a working alliance that empowers biracial women and acknowledges the many aspects of their lives. Having reviewed the literature on multicultural counselling and therapy, in the next section, I now outline the relevance of this research for counselling psychology.

## Counselling Psychology

Given the growing multiracial population, counselling psychologists need to be aware of unique issues that may emerge in clinical practice when working with the biracial population and strive to continually develop and maintain high standards of competence in line with the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009). However, evidence suggests that as well as being overlooked in psychology more broadly, biracial experiences are also neglected in counselling psychology. A content analysis of counselling literature on multiracial individuals in top tier counselling journals (such as the *Journal of Counselling and Development* and *Journal of Multicultural Counselling and Development*) found only 10 published articles across 4 journals that addressed biracial and multiracial individuals from the years 1991 to 2013 (Evans and Ramsay, 2015). Generic models of counselling, are founded on a predominantly White, western view of what is the norm (Lago & Thompson, 2002). Such models are not necessarily appropriate for use in working with biracial women. It is necessary for clinicians to have awareness and knowledge about research highlighting the unique aspects of multiracial identity in order to work effectively with clients (American Psychological Association, 2003). There has been some acknowledgement of this in the profession of counselling psychology. For example, the American Psychological Association Division for 'The Society for the Psychological study of culture, ethnicity and race' along with the Counselling Psychology Division have published guidelines on *Multicultural education, training, research, practice and organisational change* for psychologists (APA, 2003). Although the British Psychological Society does not have a section dedicated to the multiracial population, a recently published 'proposal to include race, culture and diversity in counselling psychology training' (Ade-Serrano & Nkansa-Dwamena, 2015) outlines the ways in which these values may be incorporated into each stage of the training programme. The new practice guidelines on 'Culture and difference within and across ethnic minorities' (BPS DCoP, 2017) highlights significant progress in the profession in striving to ensure this area become part of mainstream dialogue and is addressed from many different angles. The guidelines discuss race, culture, difference and ethnicity and the intersections however, it does not make specific reference to the biracial population or indeed the issues relevant to biracial women. Whilst it seems that counselling psychology has acknowledged this is an important area, there remains limited research on the biracial population. In my view, the

current research has the potential to play an important role in filling this gap and promoting the importance of these guidelines by addressing a key area within 'Culture and difference within and across ethnic minorities' and bringing a less visible group to the fore. My study aims to extend the limited body of research on the experiences of biracial people, and specifically biracial women, in the counselling psychology and broader psychological literature. It contributes to feminist theory as it gives voice to this marginalised group.

The literature reviewed above raises several important points for counselling psychologists. Whilst generally, research has found that biracial individuals tend to be psychologically healthy (e.g. Cauce et al., 1992; Jacobs, 1992; Poston, 1990), they do suffer stresses due to their mixed race. For example, as noted above, the physical appearance of mixed race women may mean people are unable to identify them as mixed race (Root, 1994).

Therefore, the need for the biracial woman to constantly authenticate herself can cause stress, emotional pain and anger (Hall, 2004). It is important for counselling psychologists to understand the world of the biracial woman and support their clients as they claim their own experience and develop a sense of their authentic self.

The ethnicity of the therapist is also significant here as some therapists may be biracial or multiracial too. Brown (2009) argued that most psychotherapy training assumes cultural competence centres on a therapist working with a client who is 'diverse' (i.e. non-white) and the 'Other' - the therapist needs to understand their own standpoints, engage with them mindfully and bring their realities into the therapeutic process. Whether the client and therapist have the same ethnic background or not, it would be worth exploring what it means to be perceived by the client as 'being different' or 'the same' (Brown, 2009). Ade-Serrano and Nkansa-Dwamena (2016:6) argue for the need to 'voice the uncomfortable' - discussions and exploration around race, ethnicity and culture are not as open and consistent in comparison to other themes that are explored in the counselling psychology field. This subject is still approached with hesitancy and fear which not only impacts our development as practitioners but also 'silences the narratives of the individuals we work with'. I believe this needs to be a critical component in the education and training of counselling psychologists and we need to actively take steps to challenge the taken-for-granted Eurocentric western way of being (Sue & Sue, 2013). We need to sit with this sense

of the 'uncomfortable' and explore it through experiential learning, reflecting on our values and assumptions rather than merely via lectures on theory.

Women of colour are not a homogenous group to be understood collectively or dealt with stereotypically (Comaz-Diaz and Greene, 1994). It is important that counselling psychologists 'make themselves knowledgeable about the diverse life experiences of the clients they work with' (Division of Counselling Psychology, Professional Practice Guidelines, 2006:7). They need to make sure they are aware of and sensitive to the social and cultural factors encountered by this population and my study aims to provide counselling psychologists with an understanding of the particular needs and challenges for the biracial Pakistani and White woman to enable them to work effectively with this population in a therapeutic setting.

This research is relevant to counselling psychology as it attempts to apply a reflective-phenomenological methodology to an under-studied population, in the hope of extending the field's focus on intersectionality in relation to phenomena of clinical relevance such as identity. As Brown (2009:349) stated aptly "cultural competent practice 'diagnoses' the person through a sensitive understanding of her various strands of identity". The Division of Counselling Psychology states that 'Counselling psychology draws upon and seeks to develop phenomenological models of practice and enquiry in addition to that of traditional scientific psychology' (Division of Counselling Psychology, 2006:1). In addition, 'Counselling psychology pays particular attention to the meanings, beliefs, context and processes that are constructed both within and between people' (British Psychological Society, 2003:13).

## **Research aims**

One of the key assumptions guiding the current study is that the interaction of gender and race in the lives of women with one White and one Pakistani parent cannot be overlooked. This is important as the experiences of this group of women are likely to be unique and interwoven with cultural, ethnic and racial influences, therefore it is important to hear their voices. This study aims to extend the research literature on the experiences and identities of biracial women by enhancing our understanding of the experiences of women with White and Pakistani parents and considering the implications of the knowledge gained for



counselling psychologists' effective practice with biracial women. I will contextualise my results in relation to existing literature and draw out any similarities or differences between this group and other biracial groups in order to better understand what is unique about the experiences of women with a White western mother and a Pakistani father.

As the focus of this research is on biracial women with a Pakistani father and White mother who grew up in Pakistan before moving to the west, it is important to provide some background information on Pakistani culture for the reader unfamiliar with this cultural context.

## **Pakistani Culture**

The traditional structure of Pakistani society is patriarchal in nature (Isran, 2012). The unequal status of women in Pakistan is partly due to various forms of exclusion including expectations of conformity to stereotypical domestic roles, religious perspectives, cultural norms and practices (Roomi & Parrott, 2008). However, they argued that there is considerable diversity in the status of women across classes (the socio-economic status of a woman's family) and geographical regions. Nevertheless, regardless of class or region, women's status relative to men is one of subordination. Zahid (2011) stated that the two most important messages children are given at birth in Pakistan are the importance of belief in God and the importance of respecting and looking after parents, with sayings of Prophet Muhammad that reinforce compliance with these principles as the gateway to heaven. Pakistani society is based on strong family ties and kinship. Kinship, in the context of Pakistani culture refers to the family, extended family, members tied into bonds of mutual support, obligation, common identity and endogamy - the practice of marrying within a similar social group or community (Zahid, 2011). Traditionally, the joint family system, (a family in which a man is head of the household and lives with his wife and unmarried as well as married children and their family) was the norm however, in more recent years this has evolved as mobility has increased and people move further away from their family of origin for work, although they still have strong links to the family home. This has meant there is a greater number of nuclear families in the larger cities in Pakistan, however rural areas still predominantly retain the traditional family structures (Zahid, 2011). Mothers focus on looking after the children and when women work, children are looked after by their

grandmother, aunt, sister or, in wealthier families, the maid. Fathers do not usually take on the caring role for children or elderly and sick relatives and are the decision makers in terms of health care, education and finances (Hirani, 2008). When a woman becomes a mother or a mother-in-law, the power dynamics within the family shift (Qadeer, 2006). Becoming a mother brings a certain amount of power but the mother-in-law, who was the oppressed woman in her own marriage, typically takes on the role of oppressor of the new mother (Zahid, 2011). There is a perception within the community that the most common form of 'mixed marriage' is when a Muslim man marries a non-Muslim woman and this type of mixed marriage, on which I will focus, is likely to have an influence on participants' experience as gender roles and expectations intersect with race and religion in various ways (Ibrahim, 2014).

## **Method**

### **Methodology**

The field of Counselling Psychology acknowledges the scientist-practitioner model; however, Counselling Psychology has recognised alternatives to the positivist-empiricist philosophy and draws on a range of rigorous, qualitative research methods that are more appropriate to the study of subjective experience (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010). Counselling Psychology emphasises the need to engage with clients as collaborators, seeking to understand their inner worlds and constructions of reality (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010) and develop phenomenological models of practice and enquiry in addition to that of traditional scientific psychology (British Psychological Society Division of Counselling Psychology, 2005). McLeod (2001: 2) defined the nature of qualitative research as focused on developing: 'an understanding of how the world is constructed'. Using a qualitative method for this research project gave me access to participants subjective worlds. Braun and Clarke (2013) state that qualitative methods generate rich data and detailed accounts from each participant and as this study focused on women's experience, this was clearly a good 'fit'.

My ontological position is that of critical realist, which posits a real and knowable world that sits 'behind' the subjective and socially located knowledge a researcher can access (Madill, Jordan & Shirley, 2000) and therefore we can only ever partially access this. My

epistemological stance is contextualism (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1994), which broadly aligns with critical realism. It does not assume a single reality and views knowledge as emerging from contexts and reflecting the researcher's position, so knowledge produced by research is local, situated and therefore provisional (Madill et al., 2000). IPA has been identified as a critical realist and contextualist approach (Larkin, Watts & Clifton, 2006).

In line with this epistemological stance, this research uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the experience of biracial women; it is an appropriate choice of approach for this research as it is concerned with the detailed examination of lived experience (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), and identity has been an important theme in IPA research to date (Bennett & Coyle, 2007; Clare, 2003; Coyle & Rafalin, 2000). IPA is a methodology, rather than just an analytic method, specifying guiding theoretical principles, appropriate research questions and ideal data collection methods. It allows a focus on individual experience and the detail of individual experience (Braun & Clarke, 2013). IPA emphasises the use of qualitative interviews as a data collection technique, allowing the researcher to focus on individual experiences and the flexibility to probe further in certain areas and adapt or tailor the questions as the interview progressed (Smith et al., 2009). In addition, with the emphasis on smaller sample sizes, this made IPA pragmatically suitable for using in research limited by time and scope such as this.

### **What is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis?**

IPA is a qualitative research approach that aims to explore in detail how participants make sense of their personal lived experience (Smith et al., 2009). The main currency for an IPA study is the meanings particular experiences, events, and states hold for participants (Smith & Osborne, 2003). Typically, IPA studies explore existential matters of considerable importance for the participant – such as a concern with identity and a sense of self, a focus on participants' meaning making and interpretation (Eatough & Smith, 2008). IPA has been informed by concepts from phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Smith et al., 2009). Phenomenology centres on the study of experience and IPA is phenomenological as it involves detailed examination of the participant's lifeworld; it attempts to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or event as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object

or event itself (Smith & Osborne, 2003). IPA recognises that when people are engaged with 'an experience' of something important in their lives, they will reflect on the experience and attempt to make sense of it and interpret it. This leads to the second major theoretical underpinning of IPA – hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). IPA acknowledges that access to the participants' experience is dependent on what participants tell us about that experience, and that the researcher then needs to interpret that account from the participant in order to understand that experience. IPA therefore involves a 'double hermeneutic' – the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is also idiographic – it is committed to a detailed examination of a particular case (Smith et al., 2009). It focuses in detail on how particular experiential phenomena has been understood from the perspective of particular people, in a particular context. This is in contrast to most psychology which is 'nomothetic' and concerned with making claims at the group or population level and with establishing general laws of human behaviour (Smith et al., 2009).

The role of the researcher in IPA is of significance as the researcher brings their own history, values, assumptions and perspectives into the research. Heidegger (1962: 191-192) argued that 'whenever something is interpreted as something, the interpretation will be founded essentially upon the ...fore-conception'. The researcher brings their fore-conception (prior experiences, assumptions and preconceptions) to the interaction and cannot help but look at any new stimulus in the light of their prior experience. Whilst the need to 'bracket' or put to one side one's own assumptions has been highlighted in some qualitative research so that research is not automatically shaped by these, Smith et al. (2009) suggested the need for a more enlivened form of bracketing as both a cyclical process and as something which can only be partially achieved. This leads on to the importance of reflexivity and this is discussed later in this section.

Whilst IPA clearly has much to offer, there is a limitation regarding the concept of homogeneity, a requirement of IPA sampling. Whilst effort may be made to find a homogenous sample based on a number of key factors relevant to the study, it may be hard to predict all the ways in which the participants may vary from one another prior to data collection and how much of that variation can be contained within any analysis. IPA

recognises, however that the extent of 'homogeneity' and how it is defined will vary from study to study and emphasise that homogeneity in sampling is 'not seen as treating the members of the sample as an identikit' but instead makes it possible to examine variability within the group (Smith et al., 2009:49).

In addition to IPA, other approaches considered included Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). TA is a systematic approach for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns and themes across a data set and one of the main strengths of TA is its flexibility. It can be used to answer almost any kind of research question and used to analyse almost any kind of data and can be applied to data in different ways from experiential to critical (Braun & Clarke, 2013). TA, however, is only a method for data analysis and does not prescribe a method for data collection, theoretical positions or epistemological frameworks and may have limited interpretative power if not used within an existing theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Due to the focus on patterns across data sets, the 'voices' of individual participants can get lost (Braun & Clarke, 2013). IPA combines a thematic with an idiographic approach and is concerned with the specifics of individual experiences, and therefore was more ideally suited to the current research.

Grounded theory (GT) was another option also worthy of consideration. Like IPA and TA, some versions of GT aim to identify a set of themes or categories from data (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997). GT, however, is particularly concerned with social and social psychological processes (Charmaz, 2006) and as the focus of this research was on individuals' lived experience, IPA was viewed as more appropriate. In addition, GT generally aims to generate a theoretical-level account of a particular phenomenon and this often requires large samples (Smith et al., 2009). IPA on the other hand is more focused on the detailed analysis of the lived experience of a small number of participants.

IPA is arguably consistent with the philosophy and practice of Counselling Psychology. Counselling Psychology seeks to engage with subjectivity and intersubjectivity, values and beliefs (BPS, Division of Counselling Psychology, 2005). Counselling psychology emphasises the need to engage with others as collaborators, seeking to understand their inner worlds and constructions of reality, being-in-relation with, rather than 'doing something' to, clients. The role of self is acknowledged as an active ingredient in this process (discussed further in

the section on reflexivity below) and the process of therapy is a shared exploration into which the counselling psychologist brings their own history (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010). With regard to the practitioner as researcher, 'it is expected that there will be congruence between the model of research chosen and the values expressed in Counselling Psychology. Research will be designed and conducted in the spirit of the ways of working emphasised in Counselling Psychology' (BPS, Division of Counselling Psychology, Professional practice guidelines, 2005: 6). This research has endeavoured to ensure this.

## **Participants and recruitment**

Between four and ten interviews are recommended for a professional doctorate IPA study (Smith et al. 2009) and for this project eight participants were interviewed. The richness and complexity of the data was reviewed after every two to three interviews. After eight interviews, it was decided the data set was appropriately rich and complex to develop meaningful points of similarity or difference between participants but not too much that the data generated became overwhelming and it became difficult to retain a focus on individual experiences instead of thematic patterning. Purposive sampling (Patton, 2002) was used to identify and recruit participants who met the criteria for the research: namely, women who have a Pakistani father and a White Western mother, grew up in Pakistan and subsequently moved to the West. The focus on women for this research project is important because, as discussed above, gender is a salient aspect of biracial experience (Root, 1997) and it is also consistent with the requirement for homogeneous sampling in IPA. Smith et al. (2009) argued that by making the group as uniform as possible one can then examine in detail psychological variability within the group, by analysing the pattern of convergence and divergence that arises. Participants were identified through my own network and contacts. Snowballing sampling is a common technique of convenience sampling in qualitative research, involving the sample being built up through the networks of the researcher and other participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A limitation of snowball sampling is when this confines research participants to the 'usual suspects – the educated, white, middle-class, straight people who tend to dominate psychological research' (Braun & Clarke, 2013: 58). This is an appropriate choice of recruitment strategy for this study as the research area is

quite specific and defines the boundaries of the relevant sample and did not result in the recruitment of the 'usual suspects'.

Participants were asked to complete a demographic form to enable me to 'situate the sample' (Elliott, Fischer & Rennie, 1999) (see Appendix A for the demographic form).

Women between the ages of 23 and 61 participated in this research. Seven of the women grew up in Pakistan and later (aged 16+) moved to the west while one lived in Pakistan from ages two to seven and then moved to the west (having spent her very early life in a small town in Pakistan). Six of the women lived in the West at the time of interview, whilst two of the women had recently moved back to Pakistan. Four of them stated Islam as their religion whilst the remaining four stated they had no religion. They described their mothers racial/ethnic background as White English or White European; their fathers were all described as Pakistani (some had gone to Pakistan from India at the time of partition, one mentioned her father was of Kashmiri origin). Seven of the women described their class as middle class, whilst one stated she had no class. Five of the women were married and of these, three had Pakistani husbands, one described her husband as British Asian and one was married to a White English man. The remaining three women identified their relationship status as single, however data relating to sexuality was not obtained.

## **Data Collection**

Interviews are ideally suited to experience type research questions (Smith 1995) and most published IPA research draws on interview data (Smith & Osborne, 2003). An interview schedule was prepared in advance of the interviews that captured the broad range of issues the researcher was interested in exploring and included possible probes and prompts (see Appendix B). Areas covered included family history, the positive and negative aspects of having one Pakistani and one white parent, responses the women received from others around them and pressures, challenges or conflicts they might have faced growing up and how they managed these. This interview guide was developed based on a review of existing literature and was also informed by findings from a pilot study completed in my second year of study in which I interviewed three women with Pakistani fathers and white mothers. I analysed the data from this pilot study using IPA and four key themes were identified: (1) the multiple meanings of whiteness: This theme encapsulated the complexity of the

meanings of whiteness and the prejudice participants experienced being, in their words, “half” White and the negative associations of white, western culture, and the simultaneous privileges that came with this. (2) the contextual nature of difference: This theme captured the ways in which the women spoke of their sense of otherness and difference (as biracial women) as contextual, fluid and informed by place and relationships with others. (3) the tensions between restriction and freedom afforded by a biracial upbringing: This theme addressed the simultaneous freedoms and restrictions afforded by a biracial identity and upbringing and (4) the gap between the inner and outer self: This theme captured the difference between how the women appeared to, and were perceived by, others on the outside and how they felt on the inside. Based on the findings from this study, I included questions about being aware of difference, how others perceived them, the role of appearance and positive and negative experiences of being biracial.

Prior to starting data collection, the interview guide was piloted on one of my family members with dual heritage parenting. My director of studies also interviewed me about my experiences as a biracial woman with Pakistani and White western heritage using the guide. This enabled me to experience the interview process as a participant prior to interviewing participants and demonstrated the use of an interview schedule in a flexible manner, which was very helpful. The interview schedule was used as a guide rather than to dictate the course of the interview so that I was able to respond to and ask further questions about what I heard (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This approach to interviewing enabled me to be flexible and responsive to the participant. Questions were used to encourage participants to give as much rich detail about their experience as possible.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim (Willig, 2008). Interview data were anonymised and any information that could identify participants was removed or changed in the transcript. All participants were given pseudonyms to protect their anonymity. The duration of each of the interviews was between one hour and one and a half hours. Participants were all based outside of the local area so virtual face-to-face (video-calling) interviews via *Skype* were used and this enabled the researcher to reap the benefits of both face-to-face interviews (rich, complex data) and virtual interviews (convenience, decreased cost, geographic reach) (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Hanna, 2012;



Janghorban, Latifnejad & Taghipour, 2014). There are also the benefits Holt (2010) suggested telephone interviews bring to interview research such as both researcher and researched are able to remain in a 'safe location' without imposing on each other's personal space. The visual element of nonverbal and social cues offered by *Skype* means interviews can remain to a certain extent a face to face experience (Stuart & Williams, 2005; Sullivan, 2012), whilst preserving the flexibility and 'private space' elements offered by telephone interviews. Following advice in the literature, technical and practical factors that could affect the nature of the interviews were considered and all participants had access to high speed internet, were familiar with online communication and interviews were conducted at a time and in a location where participants were free from distractions (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014).

### ***Ethical considerations***

Ethical approval for this research project was obtained from the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) of the Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences. Prior to starting data collection, participants were emailed a Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix C). This explained the focus of the research, what participation involved, how data would be used and participant's right to withdraw. Contact details of myself and my main supervisor were also provided. Participants were emailed a consent form prior to the interview explaining that participation was voluntary; they were free to refuse to answer any question and were free to withdraw from research within the timescales outlined in the information sheet (see Appendix D). They were asked to sign the consent form and return it as an email attachment. If participants wished to withdraw from the study, they were asked to contact me via email. They were encouraged to make contact within a month after participation if they wished to withdraw their data and were advised that once the report was submitted it would not be possible to withdraw from the research.

It was understood that in interviewing participants known to me there was a dual relationship involved and I was mindful of this. I followed the guidance offered by Braun and Clarke (2013) that pre-existing relationships should not be used to pressurise someone to participate or disclose information in the interview. Furthermore, if the acquaintance

discloses something in the interview that is new to the researcher, this should remain confidential and one should not gloss over relevant information that is not new.

## **Data analysis**

The process of analysis followed the step by step approach outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). The first step involved reading and re-reading the first transcript to ensure immersion in the data and the participant's world and to allow new insights to emerge. It is recommended that transcripts are printed with wide margins on both the left- and right-hand side. The right-hand margin of the transcript was used to note initial comments on what was analytically interesting or significant. Smith et al. (2009) stated that some comments will have a phenomenological focus, describing things which mattered to the participant and the meaning of those things for the participant and some will include more interpretative noting that examines the language they use, and the context of their concerns. I used phenomenological, conceptual and linguistic noting in my analysis of the transcripts. The next step was to analyse exploratory notes to identify emergent themes and these themes were noted in the left-hand margin. The main task at this stage was to produce a concise statement of what was important in the various comments relating to a piece of the transcript. In the next stage, emergent themes were collated into a list and then clusters of related themes were formed. In order to ensure I captured the participants voice, the participant's words and phrases were noted that related to particular themes. A table of emergent themes was then produced highlighting super-ordinate themes with themes under each heading.

The next participant's transcript was then reviewed repeating this process using the themes from the first case to orient (but not constrain) the subsequent analysis. Smith et al. (2013) emphasise the need to treat the next case on its own terms and do justice to the participant's individuality in line with IPA's idiographic commitment. This process continued for each of the transcripts. The final stage involved looking for patterns and connections across the participants and these were captured in the form of a table of superordinate themes for all the participants. Consultation with research supervisors took place to examine themes carefully and determine the final themes that were to be presented. The final themes were then written up as a narrative account for the 'Results' section. Themes

were explained and verbatim extracts used to illustrate how the theme applied to each of the participants. Notes were made in the researcher's reflective journal throughout this process in order to reflect on the implications of any assumptions that may shape the research. Three key themes emerged from the data: i) The multiple meanings and experiences of Whiteness; ii) The role of parents in biracial identity negotiation; and iii) Conceptualisations of dual heritage and what it means to belong. Although IPA studies normally separate discussion from analysis, it is possible not to have a clear demarcation between these two sections and to relate themes to existing literature as you are going along (Smith et al., 2009). Whilst the analytical process I followed was phenomenological, there were many micro connections between my findings and existing literature. Rather than having to come back to each of these points separately, when writing up, it was more appropriate to contextualise the findings and incorporate literature in an integrated section.

### **Quality considerations in qualitative research**

Smith et al. (2009) discussed how Yardley's (2000) flexible open-ended criteria for determining the quality of qualitative research can apply to IPA research and each of these will be discussed in turn with focus on how this research has addressed them.

#### ***Sensitivity to context:***

This was demonstrated at all stages in the research process from the choice of IPA as a methodology and close engagement with the idiographic and particular, showing empathy to and putting the participant at ease during the interview and showing sensitivity to the data by ensuring incorporation of a significant number of verbatim extracts to give participant a 'voice' in the project (while recognising that this voice is filtered through my interpretative lens as researcher) (Fine, 1992). Smith et al. (2007) state that the analysis may take the researcher into new and unanticipated territory and therefore new literature may be introduced for the first time in the discussion. Relevant existing literature was reviewed and in addition, new literature, not discussed in the introduction, was included in the interpretation of the results in the results and discussion section in order to fully make sense of the data.

### ***Commitment and rigour:***

This was ensured by attending closely to the participants during the interview process, picking up on cues from the participant and 'digging deeper' where appropriate. In the analysis, attention was given to important points relating to individual participants as well as the themes they shared in common, and I have attempted to include interpretation and not simple description in my reporting of the themes.

### ***Transparency and coherence:***

I have attempted to show transparency by describing how participants were selected, how the interview schedule was developed, the interview conducted, and the steps followed in the process of data analysis. The research is also consistent with the underlying principles and assumptions of IPA.

### ***Impact and importance:***

Smith et al. (2009) stated that the research needs to tell the reader something interesting, important or useful. It is certainly my hope and intention that this research does that by promoting an understanding of and giving voice to the unique needs and experiences of this group and outlining the implications of the results for counselling psychologists' effective practice with biracial women.

## **Reflexivity**

As a researcher, I have a personal connection to the research topic as I belong to the ethnic group that is the focus of this research and therefore approach my research from an insider perspective (Gallais, 2008). This research relates to my own subjective experience and this is significant as the role of self in relation to research and practice is acknowledged within counselling psychology (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010).

The importance of reflecting on insider/outsider researcher positions has been stressed in the qualitative methodological literature (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Watts, 2006). A researchers' position has been viewed as an epistemological concern, as when the researcher enters the research as an insider – somebody whose biography gives them a

lived familiarity with the group being researched – that tacit knowledge informs their research potentially producing a different knowledge than that produced by an outsider (Griffiths, 1998). Researchers have also highlighted the ‘insider advantage’ at all stages when conducting qualitative research and this includes designing interview schedules, accessing and recruiting participants as well as data collection and analysis (Bridges, 2001; Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Griffiths, 1998; Miller & Glassner, 2004). Insiders can use their own experiences to develop research questions and these questions may not occur to outsiders. Insiders may have more knowledge about where to find participants and people may be more open to participating in their research. The researcher and participants’ shared language and knowledge potentially facilitates rapport and allow deeper more meaningful analyses (Clarke, Ellis, Peel & Riggs, 2010).

Whilst there are clearly many advantages of being an insider researcher, there are also challenges that need to be considered. Shared positions may mean that participants may have high expectations of insider researchers (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1997) and researcher/researched boundaries may break down (Watts, 2006). Assumptions may be made about shared understandings and data may be overlooked if the content is taken for granted (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015). The participants’ perception of the researcher as an insider may be affected by the researchers’ expert role, and that can have more power and influence on the research process and how the researcher is perceived by participants than their insider status (Clarke, Kitzinger & Potter, 2004). In addition, fear of ‘loss of face’ and participants concerns about anonymity or disclosing information to a member of their group may inhibit open discussion (Clarke et al., 2010). Furthermore, having certain commonalities does not guarantee that an insider will understand a participants’ perspective any more than an outsider will, particularly if their lives are different due to personal, social, and situational characteristics, which outweigh what is shared (Bridges, 2001).

It has been suggested that intersections of sexual identity, race, class and age can influence whether a researcher is an outsider and insider (Tang, 2007), and a researcher can simultaneously be both an insider and an outsider (Hayfield & Huxley, 2015; Hellowell, 2006; Narayan, 1997). It is restrictive to emphasise being either/or, one or the other, an insider or outsider research; rather the idea of ‘the space between’ challenges the dichotomy of

insider vs. outsider status (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009: 60). As qualitative researchers, an appreciation for the fluidity and multi-layered complexity of human experience is key, recognising that being a member of a group does not imply complete sameness within that group. Likewise, not being a member of a group does not imply complete difference. In addition, even when researchers are from the same groups as their participants, there will always be a boundary between the researcher and the researched (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). At all stages in the research process, researchers can benefit from a blend of involvement (based on their inside knowledge) and detachment from the research topic, and the subtleties of being both an insider and outsider make it critical that researchers reflect on the multiple positions and identities they hold (Perry, Thurston & Green, 2004).

I experienced many moments of connection and shared similarities with my research participants and feel this did facilitate deep rapport, yet I was also aware that there were differences too. I was aware on a few occasions when discussing the interviews with my Director of Studies that this experience of similarity and sameness that resonated for me may have distanced me from exploring some assumptions. An example of this was assumptions relating to cultural expectations about reading the Quran that I did not unpack, assuming I knew what the participants meant. Whilst, on this occasion I would say this assumption was justified, I could see how aspects could be overlooked if meanings were taken for granted. On the other hand, I was also struck, particularly with one or two participants, by how their lives were so different from my own due to personal and social factors, and that this difference seemed so much more significant than what we had in common. Thus, I was simultaneously both an insider and outsider in relation to my participants.

My mother is White (English) and my father was Pakistani. I grew up primarily in Pakistan and have always been aware of being different, never quite 'fitting in' – a sense of being 'in-between' Pakistani and English culture. I was particularly aware of periods where I experienced a sense of disconnection from others around me and I was curious to hear other people's stories and whether any of these experiences resonated for them. I have been mindful of the potential of reading other women's experiences through the lens of my own and overlooking important aspects of their experience that do not resonate with mine.

Also, I was aware of over-identifying with participants and assuming I implicitly understood their meanings. I attempted to 'bracket off' my own experiences, and the interview with my Director of Studies at the start of the data collection process was particularly helpful in this regard, so that the interviews were shaped and guided by the participants' experiences. I was conscious when a participant known to me shared information I was not aware of and I ensured that this did not detract me from other equally relevant information that was not new to me. As previously noted, I also kept a research diary to capture my personal reflections throughout the process of data collection.

IPA recognises the interviewer plays an active role in the interview, co-constructing meaning with the participant. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) stated that the researcher only has access to the participants' experience through what participants' report about it and is also seeing this through the lens of their own experience. As such a two-stage interpretation process is involved as the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their experience (Smith et al. 2009) and I reflected on how my experiences growing up in Pakistan as a young, middle class girl with a fairly conservative father were similar or differed from the participants and how this may have shaped how I engaged with the participants and interpreted and made sense of their experiences.

I think many of the women who chose to participate were drawn to my research topic and like me, had a genuine desire to explore their experiences and sense of identity. I believe the fact that I also had a Pakistani father and White mother meant my participants felt there was a shared understanding and as a result were able to share so much of their story. Several of the participants were genuinely curious about my experience and were keen to ask me questions at the end of the interview. Being able to have these conversations and share any similarities or differences in our experiences helped to break down some of researcher/participant barriers. One area that came up in these conversations was the impact of how liberal or conservative our upbringing was and the freedoms, restrictions and choices available as a result of this and I found myself reflecting on my own life and the impact this had on my choices about lifestyle, career and relationships.

## **Results and Discussion**

Three key themes emerged from the data as shown in Table 1 below: i) The multiple meanings and experiences of Whiteness; ii) The role of parents in biracial identity negotiation; and iii) Conceptualisations of dual heritage and what it means to belong. Each of these themes are discussed in turn below.



**Table 1: Overview of themes and illustrative data extracts**

<p><b>Super-ordinate Theme 1</b></p> <p>The multiple meanings and experiences of Whiteness: Positive and negative</p>	<p><b>Emergent themes:</b></p> <p><b>1a Positive:</b> Whiteness as a celebrity status <i>'I was like a white woman in a brown country. I was fair compared to my peers around me so I think that did always make me get more attention' (Zara)</i></p> <p><b>1b Positive:</b> Whiteness as beauty <i>'I became a bit of a sensation over there because everybody was looking at this new, hot girl who has blue eyes, is tall and has white skin' (Tanya)</i></p> <p><b>1c Positive:</b> Whiteness implies good English <i>'It (good English) gave me a sense of superiority' (Anita)</i></p> <p><b>1d Negative:</b> Whiteness means hyper-visibility and being public property <i>'we were like these cute zoo animals that they couldn't figure out' (Tanya)</i></p> <p><b>1e Negative:</b> Whiteness equals low moral worth <i>'They would say things like you know 'your mother's white so you probably haven't read the Quran' and 'you can't speak Urdu' and 'you can't do this and that' and we did do all those things' (Farah)</i></p>
<p><b>Super-ordinate Theme 2</b></p> <p>The role of parents in biracial identity negotiation</p>	<p><b>Emergent themes:</b></p> <p><b>2a</b> Parents helping their daughters to negotiate their identity <i>'I think I was insulated because my mum and dad, both - they were not the kind to really buckle under' (Zara)</i></p> <p><b>2b</b> Lack of attunement to their daughters needs <i>'She'd tell everyone as well- she'd be like ...we are doing this for Christmas and we have put up the tree- it honestly used to make me sweat inside.....I was very self-conscious and wanted to be accepted ..... and I was just so embarrassed and I</i></p>

	<p><i>hated my mum doing that to me even though it wasn't really anything....and yeah and my dad would you know.... He was a drinker and he still is a drinker so that would just mortify me'. (Anita)</i></p>
	<p><b>2c</b> Absence/distance of father</p> <p><i>'My father has no interest whatsoever' (Sara)</i></p>
	<p><b>2d</b> Mother and daughter having different ethnic and racial backgrounds</p> <p><i>'If my mother had been able to convey to me that there are certain things you don't do in this country, maybe my choices would have been different' (Zara)</i></p>
<p><b>Super-ordinate Theme 3</b></p> <p>Conceptualisations of dual heritage and what it means to belong</p>	<p><b>Emergent themes:</b></p>
	<p><b>3a</b> Never being read/never being seen</p> <p><i>'we don't look too Pakistani or too white. We can pass off as anybody' (Tanya)</i></p>
	<p><b>3b</b> The gap between the inside and the outside</p> <p><i>'I was constantly changing my stripes to suit where I am' (Natasha)</i></p>
	<p><b>3c</b> Contextual shifts in the meaning of identity</p> <p><i>'everywhere we went we just had such a warm welcome and it felt like I had come home, it really did' (Maria)</i></p>
	<p><b>3d</b> What it means to be 'home'</p> <p><i>'so, you feel like an ethnic minority, but it's in your own country' (Natasha)</i></p>

## **1) The Multiple Meanings and Experiences of Whiteness**

This theme is about the multiple, complex and contradictory meanings of Whiteness for the women, which provided an important context for the women making sense of, and living out, their biracial identities. Fine (1997) argued that Whiteness is coproduced with other skin colours/races; it is created in symbiotic relation to Blackness and need to be studied as a system. This is relevant as this research explores the meanings of Whiteness in relation to biracial women who are also non-white Pakistani.

This theme encapsulates both what the women framed as the 'positive' meanings and experiences of Whiteness, including the privileges (although some of the women were critical of these), special status and access to opportunities associated with whiteness, and the negative meanings and experiences of whiteness, particularly with regard to being perceived as white (or fair-skinned) in Pakistan. The negative meanings included being hyper-visible and seen as public property, with others feeling entitled to comment on their appearance and assumed low moral worth, and (negative) assumptions relating to biracial women's competencies and abilities.

### **The 'positive' meanings and experiences of Whiteness**

#### **1a) Whiteness as a celebrity status**

White privilege is defined as any unearned advantages that come from being a member of the white race (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). McIntosh (1988:1) referred to White privilege as 'an invisible package of unearned assets' and highlighted the existence in Western cultures of taken for granted privilege and status based on race. This sub-theme relates to the unearned advantages women experienced in relation to their (perceived) whiteness or fairness. Five of the women presented themselves as having fair skin and in a couple of cases, very fair to the extent they were read by others in Pakistan as White and therefore experienced White privilege. Others were read as biracial but were fair and received what might be termed 'courtesy' privilege as a result – public approval evoked as a consequence of being associated with Whiteness and therefore privilege. There is a parallel here to the concept of 'courtesy stigma', a term that refers to the stigmatisation a person perceives or experiences due to their association with a stigmatised individual or group (Birenbaum,

1992; Goffman, 1968). Many of the women referred to the special 'celebrity status' Whiteness afforded them (and their white parent and relatives) when growing up in Pakistan. Looking back to her early life in Pakistan, Zara framed 'standing out' as positive; she believed it made life 'easy' for her and it seemed that receiving attention from others was important to her:

*that was because I was like a white woman in a brown country. I was fair compared to my peers around me so I think that did always make me get more attention than I would have if I had not been fair, you know that kind of thing. I just stood out and I didn't realise it because over here I just blend in and I don't get that naturally, that kind of... So, there were certain things that were a given, being different in Pakistan but I just took for granted - there were pluses. And I look back and I think life was easy - when you look different, I didn't really need to do much to get attention.*

Later, however she stated: '*I don't feel like I have a celebrity status anymore*'. Although she laughed after saying this there was a sense of sadness around this. Zara's account suggested it was as if the Whiteness had faded away - the extent to which she is seen as White was shaped by her context. In the US (where she currently lives), she is perceived as brown, her relative fairness is not seen and is not meaningful, it is her otherness and difference that is the most important thing in shaping other's perceptions of her. She enjoyed being 'White in a brown country'; in her eyes, it went in her favour, but her children are now growing up with a skin colour that marks them out as different and 'other' and this seemed to be a concern for her and something that was different from her own experience: '*they're brown in a white country whereas I was white in a brown country*'.

Reema similarly felt her Whiteness afforded her privileges - a special status and special access to opportunities not available to more brown-skinned Pakistani girls. Her account suggested she seemed to thrive on the attention she got even though she realised that it was 'unfair attention', evoking jealousy in others. She was aware that perhaps it was the influence of her mother, and the fact that her mother was friends with the headmistress, had presence and a powerful personality, that meant she got to be the princess in all of the school plays:

*she would always want me to be little red riding hood or snow white and looking back I feel terrible for all those other beautiful little girls who probably really wanted to be snow white or little red riding hood but you know maybe I got this unfair attention.*

When Anita's white grandmother visited her family in Pakistan she became the star attraction of the neighbourhood and took on this special identity – almost a celebrity status:

*so, all the neighbourhood knew that my grandmother was visiting and we called her nanny and nanny did actually look like the Queen of England. She had soft white curly hair and she was a bit plump and so everyone knew..... And she was quite like this mystical creature for everyone, very English - she had like this little carpetbag she had a beret and clip on earrings. She was really fascinating for the whole neighbourhood and they'd be like 'when's nanny coming?' and she'd bring all these things from England and so that was that kind of experience - it was very special.*

Farah was also aware of her privileges growing up as the daughter of a White woman, including access to opportunities, networks, schooling - *'it felt like quite a celebrity sort of status'* - and she framed this as being and feeling special and admired. Yet Whiteness, it would seem, also had other, different contextual meanings. Farah's mother's Whiteness was somewhat morally tainted in the UK and she was aware of how her White mother's identity meant something different in the UK after living in Pakistan and being married to a Pakistani man: *'I think she had a much harder life when she came back to England than she ever had in Pakistan'*. This highlights the shifting nature of biracial identities and the experience of racism and how these are shaped by place and relationship with others (this will be explored further in theme 3).

### **1b) Whiteness as beauty**

Another aspect of White privilege is the Whiteness of the beauty standard – Whiteness is used as a yardstick of beauty (Hunter, 1998) and still remains the dominant ideal of beauty (Wade, 2012). Whiteness is the norm and standard against which the identities of 'others' have been produced and judged (Frankenberg, 1993). Phoenix (2014) highlights the prevalence of colourism (prejudice on the basis of skin tone) and the practice of skin

whitening. Advertisements in the Middle East (and indeed Pakistan) about whitening cream not only sell the product, but the idea that Whiteness is positive, desirable and beautiful (Ghannam, 2008) Several of the women talked about Whiteness being associated with beauty, attractiveness and being sexually desirable and their accounts provided a sense of how Whiteness and beauty are intertwined. Tanya's account suggested her Whiteness was related to beauty and receiving attention from others and this was important to her sense of self: *'I became a bit of a sensation over there because everybody was looking at this new, hot girl who has blue eyes, is tall and has white skin'*. Tanya indicated that people were jealous of her 'good looks'. Her appearance (i.e. her Whiteness/fairness) was often complimented on social media: *'For example, if I post pictures on Facebook um they'll say "oh it's because you're half white that you are so gorgeous". I don't know whether there is some resentment there'*.

Tanya indicated that her Whiteness also influenced her husband's choice to marry her and played a key role in her mother-in-law accepting her even though she had the moral stain of being a 'divorcee': *'he is attracted to Caucasian women so he has told me that because of the look he was attracted to me'*. Her husband used her appearance and his knowledge of how this would influence and win his mother's approval of his choice of wife, to secure his mother's agreement to their marriage. Tanya also used this knowledge as 'ammunition' when dealing with her mother in law (a 'good-looking' wife means good looking and thus high value grandchildren): *'she took one look at me and I know what she was thinking - tall, fair skin and blue eyes – check'*.

Anita framed the attention she got as a fair skinned woman as curiosity, she was a puzzle and special rather than something more threatening: *'special attention given to me, people would be more inquisitive - I mean not in a malicious way'*. She also mentioned the sexual attention she (and her sister) received as she got older: *'we got stared at even more by men'*, which highlights the sexual capital of white skin (Michael, 2004) – the social value accrued as a result of having White skin, which, as previously noted, is seen as the standard of beauty and sexual attractiveness (Hall, 2006). This also relates to the most common, yet subtle, sexualised evaluation – one that is enacted through the gaze or visual inspection of the body (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

In contrast, this notion that simply having White skin meant you were beautiful, even if you were 'hideous' looking, was problematic for Sara and she was critical of the equation of Whiteness and beauty and made every effort to get suntanned:

*I never thought of myself as being pale or anything but my one issue was I absolutely hated the way people thought of associating beauty with the lightness of your skin and when I was very small I don't know why, I was very aware of it and I would go out of my way, I was used to sort of - well not conforming, when I was younger my parents would encourage me to spend a lot of time outside in a healthy way of getting rid of my excess energy so I used to spend a lot of time climbing trees ...I used to go out of my way to get as tanned as possible and sort of then people would look at me and would turn over the palm of my hand and say you're so white, why the hell do you go out in the sun and ruin your complexion.*

The women's accounts highlight the individual ways in which they experienced the ways in which Whiteness was associated with beauty in Pakistan and this links to the next advantage associated with the meaning of Whiteness.

### **1c) Whiteness implies good English**

Another advantage the women experienced was related to language, as language has a particularly important function in signifying membership of a racial group (Rockquemore, 1998). Whiteness implied a good standard of English and speaking English shaped others' perceptions in positive ways and ensured privileged treatment. For Tanya, speaking English meant: *'I always got full marks [in school] so I felt good about myself'*.

Tanya reported that her in-laws could not believe Urdu could be spoken so fluently by someone so White and her children's friends were also amazed she could speak Urdu when she had such White skin. Language can be strategically used by an individual to gain support from others for a particular identity (Goffman, 1959). Tanya took advantage of how the combination of Whiteness and speaking English is perceived, almost putting her in a superior position that was above the law, so she was 'let off the hook' by a policeman and ensured different treatment:

*He asked me in Urdu 'show me your licence', which I didn't have and I just said something in English – 'oh I'm so sorry excuse me I don't have...' I just said some random stuff in English and basically, he didn't know what to do, he just waved me off so I have done that a few times. I have abused this look thing.*

Similarly, good English gave Anita, 'a sense of superiority', but the drawback was that it made her stand out, which she did not like (discussed further below). Reema found that her teachers made allowances for her when it came to Urdu classes and she was automatically put in the 'easy Urdu' class. She framed this positively as 'getting an easy ride': *'they put me into easy Urdu class you know. They were like oh it's okay she's half.... It's almost like I got it easy'*.

In summary, some participants experienced Whiteness as affording them (and their white relatives) a celebrity status and special attention in Pakistan. Furthermore, they were perceived as beautiful and attractive because of their fair skin and had an advantage socially because they spoke 'good' English.

### **Negative meanings and experience of Whiteness**

#### **1d) Whiteness means hyper-visibility and being public property**

This sub-theme captures the visibility that the women experienced based on their Whiteness and the sense of being public property where others felt entitled to make comments about their moral worth or behaviour and 'keep watch' on them – 'police' them to ensure they behaved appropriately.

Reports of staring, making comments and asking unsolicited questions are common for people who are visibly different (Rumsey, 2002) and most mixed-race women have experienced being stared at a countless number of times (Root, 1997). Being biracial women made the participants highly visible when growing up in Pakistan and they indicated that looking White meant they were public property – people felt entitled to comment on their appearance all the time. Lansdown, Rumsey, Bradbury, Carr and Partridge (1997) explored being visibly different due to disfigurement and there are interesting similarities between the experiences of their participants and the experiences of the women in this study.



Lansdown et al. (1997:28) reported that often it is not possible to hide or disguise difference and people 'must wear it like a badge'. Complete strangers regarded the fact that someone looked different as an entitlement to walk up to them and demand intimate details about their disfigurement and seemed to believe they have a right to ask them personal questions whether they know them or not.

In talking about her appearance, Natasha framed her experience of hyper-visibility in terms of looking White, rather than looking biracial: *'I think it makes a huge difference if you are born looking like one parent vs the other. So, if you look white, you will have that pointed out to you every time you step out of the door'*. Natasha found being a woman and being very fair (passing as White) made her doubly 'stand out'. Natasha was not only stared at because she was a woman, but she was stared at even more because she was White and this made her very self-conscious: *'being a white woman is a double whammy'*.

Growing up in Pakistan, Natasha's account suggested that she had learnt to self-police, acting as if she was being stared at, even if she was not. This brings to mind Foucault's (1975) notion of disciplinary power, whereby social control is not imposed from an external source, instead power is imposed from within and an individual regulates their own behaviour, assuming responsibility for their own discipline and surveillance. It would appear that she has internalised the wider culture's perception of her as 'other'. As Natasha reported:

*You feel like you're being stared at all the time. So even if you're not being stared at, it just builds inside you. You become very conscious. And I think that it's fair to say that women in Pakistan generally feel more conscious and have to be more careful so you just end up having an exaggerated awareness, even more so than your average Pakistani woman.*

In contrast to Zara for whom growing up in Pakistan *'life was easy – when you look different'*, Natasha tried very hard to reduce how much she was seen and attempted to melt into the background and this may be a reflection of the impact of the unique family contexts of both women. Research has found that people with visible difference often yearn for privacy and anonymity (Rumsey & Harcourt, 2005). For Natasha, there seemed to be some ongoing trauma for her around visibility, she literally stays at home to avoid being seen. Her

account seemed to suggest it was as if she was trying to reduce the visibility handed to her by her parents. Farah was made aware of her visibility as a result of having fair skin when she was out in public places with her White mother and she equated Whiteness with US imperialism:

*my mother and brother and the car would get attacked by swarms of people shouting 'Americans go home!' So that really hit home - the political association of being white, wherever you're from in the developing world.*

The women's accounts suggested that others felt an entitlement to test them, to police their difference and keep watch on their actions. Korgen (1998) argued that mixed race women must pass the 'racial litmus test', methods members of groups use to help distinguish members from non-members and the authentic from the fake. Tanya was asked to prove her knowledge of religion and competency in prayers to others: '*we were often asked to recite the kalima - the proclamation of Islam*'.

In Tanya's experience, when she and her siblings were children they were something exotic, a puzzle, and stared at by others. She drew a parallel to zoo animals who are in cages and people are entitled to look at them. Her account seemed to suggest that they are passive and have no choice but to accept 'the gaze' of others, which points to a power relation between the gazer and the gazed upon. There is a parallel here to Quinn's (2002) reference to the male sexual gaze, a precise yet subtle form of sexual harassment which cannot be avoided as it is not under a woman's control. The male uses the gaze to display the right to sexually and physically assess the woman. Tanya reported: '*We look different, our English was different, our Urdu was different... we were like these cute zoo animals that they couldn't figure out*'.

Even though Tanya reported that she 'acted' Pakistani - wearing Pakistani clothes, eating Pakistani food and speaking Urdu, her White skin meant she was treated differently; people could not read her - mistaken-identity (when someone incorrectly thinks they have recognised a person's race): '*Even now when I go to the mall, everybody sees me and they speak English as the first language and then I always answer in Urdu*'. Whiteness is seen by others who are non-White as the primary identifying characteristic - a master status (Becker, 1963). The term master status relates to the potential effects upon an individual of

being labelled as deviant. A deviant label functions in a similar manner to a social status in that it structures the course of social interaction. The deviant label (i.e. White) becomes a 'master status' – a status overriding all others in shaping social interaction and explains how Tanya appeared to make sense of the response she received from others: *'I think oh she must be thinking that I'm white that's why she's talking English to me or was asking if I was familiar with the tradition'*.

In the context of Pakistan, the women felt that Whiteness meant people perceived as white were assumed to do 'quirky' things – they are more direct and talk about things as they see them. Tanya framed Pakistani people as being two-faced and inauthentic; but that they saw her as 'the problem' and felt entitled to point this out: *'It's because of your mother that you are like this. You are not diplomatic enough, you are too direct - if you don't like something you say it'*. As Root (1992:161) stated, many mixed-race women will suffer in the communities in which they live because they do not 'look right', 'think right' or 'act right'.

Whiteness was also seen as something that marked the women out as foreign and other in Pakistan; they did not belong. Natasha spoke about her Urdu teacher: *'In his mind, we were foreign as soon as there was a drop of white blood in us'*. This account inverts the 'one-drop rule' which relates mainly to the US cultural context where a person with a 'single drop' of Black blood was legally designated as Black (Davis, 1991). In Natasha's case, a single drop of white blood made her be perceived as White. Despite her Urdu being fluent, because of how she looked, Natasha felt she would never be fully accepted as a 'proper' or 'real' Pakistani and this seemed to be very frustrating for her as she tried to disprove people's assumptions: *'But I know every time I failed to come up with a word in Urdu, I'm just confirming some view in their head of white people or people who are not quite Pakistani'*.

When a woman is biracial and can 'pass' as a member of another racial group, she may be privy to the conversations and behaviours of others who do not recognise her ethnicity/ethnic affiliation (Buchanan & Acevedo, 2004). Natasha reported that not only was she stared at, but because she spoke Urdu, she knew people were talking about her and could understand what they were saying. For Natasha, being stared at would have been more bearable if she was on holiday in a country where people spoke a different language and people were talking about her. She would not have understood what they were saying

and therefore would not realise what was happening. Her account suggested that when people were talking in a language she understood (but they assume she did not) and their meaning is unmistakable, this created a feeling of difference, of standing apart.

Staring is a way of strongly reacting to another and communicates to others that they are different (Garland-Thomson, 2006). Visible difference (from a culturally defined norm) can have a profound effect on the person who is different, impacting not only their thoughts, feelings and behaviour, but also influencing the behaviour of other people (Rumsey & Harcourt, 2005). This has clearly had this impact on Anita as she tried to compensate for feeling different:

*We got stared at a lot and when I was younger. I wanted to kind of tone that down because I was very conscious and I hated being stared at..... So, I would always try and look extra Pakistani*

There is a possibility that the core beliefs (the essence of how we see ourselves, other people and the world) of the participants could have influenced how their views of staring may have been shaped as they made sense and attempted to negotiate their biracial identities.

From the above stories, it would seem that being biracial meant the women were always visible to the public - their biracial background that they were given by their parents was always on show to others whether they chose this or not. People believed they had a right to draw attention to their difference and this was uncomfortable and distressing for some of the women. This links closely to the next sub-theme of negative meanings and experience of Whiteness.

### **1e) Low moral worth**

Whilst having White skin is associated with beauty and attractiveness, an illustration of White supremacy (Wade, 2012), it is also associated with immorality in some non-western contexts (Klausen, 2010) and this is evident in the women's accounts of their experiences. A lot of people Natasha knew in Pakistan, including her grandmother, held the view that White women have loose morals – it was almost as if they possessed an immorality gene:

*They had this really warped view - White women walk around naked, will sleep with anyone – that kind of attitude.....my grandmother wrote me a letter and stuck it in one of my books so that I would find it saying that I should remain a virgin before I get married as if she thought I was going to walk through Heathrow lounge and be pounced upon by the next good-looking guy to walk past.*

Normative Pakistani ideas about gender and sexuality have left Natasha confused and she suggested that because she is part White; Pakistani men almost expect her to be sexually 'loose', which: *'really messes up your head in terms of what you think about these things. It messes up your interactions with men'*. She goes on to say *'because you have absorbed these Eastern ideas of what westerners are like and it produces this really strange schizophrenia within you'*. Her account seemed to suggest she had internalised the wider cultures perception of westerners and there may be a suggestion of a fractured sense of self (Scardnzio & Geist-Martin, 2008) coming through here.

In Farah's experience, Whiteness meant others thought she could not possibly speak the language or read the Quran. It was as if Whiteness shaped her moral worth – the assumption being that 'good' (moral) people read and know the Quran, and speak Urdu:

*They would say things like you know 'your mother's white so you probably haven't read the Quran' and 'you can't speak Urdu' and 'you can't do this and that' and we did do all those things.*

Tanya described how being biracial somehow meant to others that she and her family did not do normal things like washing clothes, implying that they were in some way unclean, morally flawed, and their mother was somehow failing in her duties. Others seemed to think they had the right to intrude and ask questions about her and her siblings', and their mother's, behaviours:

*They'd ask 'do you wash your clothes?' 'Does your mother wash your clothes?' I don't think..... I felt insulted. I don't think they were asking all the other kids who were running around in shalwar Kameez if their mother washes their clothes or not.*

Natasha reported that her grandmother had been shamed and humiliated by her son marrying a white woman. She tried to compensate for her grandchildren having a white mother by making them as 'brown' as possible through immersion in a fairly conservative version of Pakistani culture, forcing her and her siblings to wear Pakistani clothes, eat Pakistani food and read Urdu books: *'They are half white but I'll make them as brown as I can'*. Natasha's description of this as 'a constant tug of war' reflected the psychological battle she appeared to have fought to have some power and control over her life.

Implicitly Whiteness was seen as a threat to female morality, though for Anita perhaps the desire to conform was partly a gendered issue for her and her sisters: *'Maybe as girls we felt more need to conform and were worried about.... Well maybe it is about girl's images and we have to be protected and that kind of thing'*. Maria found that on the one hand her male Asian colleagues in the UK treated her like a typical Pakistani woman – there to support and serve their needs, yet on the other hand, being 'half White' meant she was also seen as different. She was perceived as more open to engage in 'banter' and jokes (perhaps amounting to experiencing the worst of both worlds):

*In a way, I guess they thought they could just banter with me because of the English side of me... they wouldn't go as far as sexual connotations but kind of you know she'll take it because she is half white and it's okay to make jokes like that in front of her.*

In addition to looser morals, Whiteness also implied having more liberal values, particularly in relation to (heterosexual) relationships and dating. Sara stated:

*people thought or expected that I might be a little more liberal because I had a foreign mother..... people would tell me when they were dating for example - they thought I'd be less horrified.*

Farah gave her own sociological analysis of how colonialism has shaped the view of Whiteness in non-western countries:

*because of the impact of imperialism and colonialism et cetera white skin is really held quite highly in a place like Pakistan..... but some people we didn't know associated whiteness with immorality*

Whilst Whiteness was clearly seen as conferring special privileges, the women's stories also highlighted the prejudice they experienced as a result of being associated with Whiteness and the key part it had played in how they have experienced life as a biracial woman. The next theme moves on from the meanings of Whiteness to consider the role of parents in the women's identity negotiations.

## **2) The role of parents in biracial identity negotiation**

This theme captures the important role of parents, and sometimes grandparents, in the women's identity negotiations, and particularly how in their early lives in Pakistan, their parents' capacity, or lack of capacity, to support them in making sense of and living out a biracial identity seemed to have had a lasting impact on how they negotiated and made sense of their biracial identities, even today. The women's parents had created for them an experience different from their own – being biracial – and it was striking the ways in which the women felt their parents were attuned to (or not), and even aware of, this, and how their parents were able to support them (or not) in negotiating the complexities of being biracial. One thing that all of the women talked about, and that profoundly shaped their upbringing, was the liberalism or conservatism of their parents or 'surrogate' parents (such as a grandmother in one instance). However, what cut across growing up in both a liberal or conservative home was the extent to which the parents were attuned to their child's relatively unique circumstances and were able to help their child to negotiate living in Pakistan as a biracial girl and young woman.

There are several sub themes relating to this theme that have emerged from the women's stories that I will discuss in turn – how parents have helped and supported their daughters negotiate their identity, the lack of attunement to their children's needs, the absence and distance of the father when they were growing up and the effects of mother and daughter having different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

### **2a) Parents helping their daughters to negotiate their identity**

Some of the women's parents played an active role in supporting them to negotiate the complexities of a biracial identity. This included speaking up against conservative

viewpoints, insulating them from societal pressures and listening to and standing up for what they wanted in relation to what they valued and their lifestyle choices.

Reema's mother was 'very Western' - she did not learn the language and associated mainly with other Western people in Pakistan - and Reema felt more like an expatriate when she was growing up. She described her upbringing as having an unusual liberalism compared to other Pakistani families and this was something she particularly noticed when her father and brothers met her boyfriend – an unusual event in most Pakistani families. Her parents supported and protected her when her teacher made a hurtful comment about her mother's moral worth; although from her account it would appear that they took steps to remove her from the difficult situation rather than actively support her in exploring these issues:

*'if you're not Muslim, all the non-believers will go to hell' or something like this and I challenged her and said 'my mother is..... how dare you' and you know after that I remember going home and being very upset and told my dad about this and I don't know what he said to my teacher (laughs) but I got an A and then either I skipped Islamic classes after that or I don't know what it was but I never had that um you know, 'you must conform'.*

Another example of this progressive approach, of Reema's parents being responsive to her and supporting her, was in relation to one of the key Muslim religious rituals of sacrificing a goat or cow on the festival of Eid and distributing the meat to the poor. Recognising her upset at the idea of slaughtering a goat she had grown fond of, as an alternative to this, her father supported a women's charity that helped empower women:

*so instead of the tradition of slaughtering a goat, my father would give money or buy sewing machines for these women so that was his charitable gesture ..... so I was happy that he had switched to this.*

Reema's mother stood up for her when she wanted to 'date' boys, as this is not something that would be usual for most Pakistani girls, and when her father and brothers objected: *'and my mother had to fight them. I am so grateful to her because she eventually took on four men and said if Reema wants to date, Reema will date..... My mum was like a*



*superhero*'. She felt that her father had not really thought through what it meant to be Western:

*You know my father was very, he brought me up to be like my mother and I think he didn't really think it through (laughs). You know he was like 'oh whoops! She actually now wants to date' like my mother did.*

Trusted and supported by her parents, Reema was allowed to live on her own in the UK – again, she felt this was evidence of their liberal outlook. She was taught religious tolerance through exposure to more than one religion and this was symbolised by having both religious texts by her bedside. The family celebrated both Muslim and Christian festivals. Similarly, Zara's parents also seemed to have played a significant role in insulating her from the pressures of the wider society and from her wider family – she was allowed to participate in a fashion show (this caused moral outrage for some family members, but her parents protected her from this): *'I think I was insulated because my mum and dad, both - they were not the kind to really buckle under'*.

Farah framed her upbringing as marked by openness, advantage and opportunity. It seemed her parents had given having a biracial child some prior consideration and they had a shared approach to dealing with issues that arose. Urdu was Farah's first language until she was two years old and her early fluency in Urdu was helped by the fact that she had lived with her father's family and Urdu was spoken by everyone around her. Farah's mother was also committed to learning Urdu herself. Like Reema's parents, Farah's parents also stood up for their daughter's biracial identity and did not succumb to social pressure to conform to conservative social values, in this case to get their daughter 'married off' before leaving Pakistan. Farah was aware of full parental support that enabled her to participate in activities that others could not: *'I knew that my parents were standing up for me and were allowing me to do things that most other girls my age, with my sort of privileged background, were not doing'*. Sara also reported that her mother stood up for her and did not let the neighbours' gender conservatism influence how she behaved as a child:

*I used to bike around and the neighbours were more conservative and they were quite horrified by this. I believe when I was 11 or 12 and I was biking around the neighbourhood, one lady marched up to the house and apparently told my mother*

*that I should be restrained and that I was attracting the unwanted attention of the young boys of the street - to which my mother sort of replied that I was still a child and so could they please not interfere.*

For Sara, her parents not conforming gave her quite a strong message - it gave her freedom and choices. Sara felt that the fact that mother was comfortable with her own complex cultural/ethnic identity (having been born in one country, grown up in another and having parents from a third country). Her father, who himself had a complex background, was also at ease with this – and together her parents passed down a comfort with ‘identity complication’ that Sara seemed to have assimilated: *‘my parents are both very strong in their own ways and they were always very comfortable with who they were and I suppose that helped’.*

Interestingly, the parents of all the women discussed above who helped and supported their daughters in negotiating their biracial identity, were liberal in their upbringing (in one instance it was only one of the woman’s parents who was liberal).

## **2b) Parents’ lack of attunement to their children’s needs**

Throughout the women’s stories, there were accounts of a range of different styles of upbringing, but what came across strongly was that even if the women perceived their parents to be quite liberal in their thinking and approach themselves, this did not change the fact that they handed a certain reality and cultural context to their children that was different from their own. Where the parents were not attuned to their children’s needs, they were unable to shelter them from the outer world and prepare them for the challenges they faced as biracial women.

Tanya’s upbringing was shaped by her father’s death and was conservative and full of restrictions:

*My mother was already strict – then suddenly she became even more strict. So basically, we would wake up in the morning, go to school and then come home, that’s it. There was nothing extracurricular - we didn’t do any sport, we didn’t do any swimming, everything stopped.*

Tanya's account suggested her mother tried to do what was expected by Pakistani society and rather than give consideration to her daughter's needs, she gave in to societal pressure to 'protect' her daughters from people talking. She went to the extreme of becoming almost more Pakistani in her behaviour and thinking than Pakistani women:

*Till that point, when I was 20, we had been totally protected by my mother. We were not allowed to wear make-up, or step out of the house without a dupatta (shawl) which was strange because my friends, with Pakistani mums - they were supercool, they wore jeans and heels and make up and they went to parties but we did none of that.*

Her brother had a say in her upbringing because he was male and therefore had more power and influence than her mother. He was like her mother's 'attack dog' set on her when she did not listen to her mother. Tanya felt very alone with being biracial and there was a sense of blame and resentment towards her mother during her interview. She portrayed her mother as almost obsessed with ensuring her virtue by policing her every move. She seemed to resent her mother's extreme control, almost suffocation: '*So, I blame my mother for not believing in me enough and not giving us any freedom*'.

Unlike most of the other women, Maria indicated that neither of her parents were really involved in her upbringing and her mother did not encourage her to speak Urdu or Punjabi: '*I was losing my Pakistani side while my father was not there, quite quickly*'. This may be due to the challenges faced during this period when her parents lived separately. She felt strongly that parents should nurture both aspects of a child's heritage:

*by the time my father came back neither me or my sister spoke any Urdu or Punjabi which was a bit of a shock for him but I think that because we were actively encouraged not to - which I think was so wrong.*

Maria experienced a lack of parental support for her biracial identity, having no cultural or religious input from either parent, and having to rely on her own exploration and discovery: '*So we really didn't know either side and I think we just kind of found our own way*'. It was as if her father just suddenly turned up and expected them to be Pakistani girls – Maria felt his view was that they had one racial identity, they did not have a dual/biracial identity. Maria's

account seemed to suggest she had an identity handed to her – this is what you are: ‘we were still told we were Muslims’. It comes across as almost being a synthetic Muslim – there was no real substance to the identity until she created this for herself. There was a sense of heaviness in her voice when she spoke about this, slowing down and pausing as she spoke about the complexity of what she had to make sense of.

Natasha’s sense of her mother was, whilst she was essentially liberal, she was unable to stand up to her paternal grandmother and play an active role in helping her daughter negotiate her biracial identity:

*my mother was also finding her feet in the country, she couldn’t stand strong against my grandmother because she was a young woman. She had never come across anybody like my grandmother who is very strong and gets her way a lot. So unfortunately, it meant I was exposed to my grandmother a lot so picked up lots of unfortunate notions.*

Use of the word ‘unfortunate’ seems very mild, perhaps minimising her experience – Natasha’s mother had arguably profoundly let her down. Despite recognising that her mother had travelled the world and had exposure to a broad range of different experiences and environments, there was a sense that her mother had failed her by being unable to protect her from her grandmother who was focused on trying to get rid of any signs of western influence and this is likely to have been very wounding.

Zara’s mother ‘indoctrinated’ her which sounds somewhat like she was brain washed and Zara had a sense that she was not given a choice in her cultural identification. Her mother wanted to ‘fit in’ with Pakistani culture, and compelling her children to conform was her way of doing this, but her father’s liberalism (in some ways) trumped her mother’s desire for conformity:

*She indoctrinated me a lot more than my father. I think she wanted me to behave a certain way - behave like Pakistanis and do what Pakistanis do. She was trying to fit in and she wanted me to fit in so yeah, I think this pressure was more from my mother than it was from my father. My father was very liberal so at the end of the day, we were a liberal family because my father was liberal.*

Zara saw her mother's influence as key in her biracial identity and it was her mother who was the one who really wanted her to conform and 'fit in'. Her father's liberalism seemed somehow separate from her mother's desire for conformity.

Anita's account suggested her parents created and passed on difference but did not help her to negotiate and manage that difference. She was desperate to conform and be like her peers, but reported that her parents were dismissive of this and it appeared did not seem to hear or see her need for support:

*so, they'd be like 'oh my goodness do you not say your prayers' and 'by this age you should have read the Quran'. So that would always stress me out because my parents, they never ever did any of those things and so sometimes I would lie and say 'yes I am fasting' and 'of course I read the namaz' (prayers) and then sometimes there were rumours spread that I was Christian and I'd be so affected by that. I would be like 'no I'm not a Christian, I swear'. Really, I wasn't. And my parents would be like 'no you're not Christian, but you're not Muslim either'.*

Anita learnt from a young age to hide the life she had with her parents – she learnt that she had to keep it secret and it could not be shared with others around her. She was hiding and covering up the actions and behaviour of her parents and almost pretending to be from a family she was not. There is a link here to social control strategies used by children of gay fathers (Bozett, 1988), that is, the behaviours children employ vis-à-vis their father so that the children are perceived by others as they want to be perceived. Bozett (1988) argued that these strategies serve to help avoid the embarrassment the child feels because of the father's differentness, are a way of keeping one's identity from becoming contaminated, keep relationships intact and prevent children from becoming social outcasts. From Anita's perspective, her parents did not seem to have any awareness of what it was like for her growing up:

*My sister and I taught ourselves the namaz (prayers) and yes, we made sure we had a janamaz (prayer mat) so stuff like that would stress us out when we had friends come over and we would tell my dad to hide the alcohol.*

Anita experienced resentment towards her parents for not really considering the impact of their actions on her. From her accounts there was a sense of her being very alone with this and her parents had little presence in her struggles:

*I was very self-conscious and wanted to be accepted yeah whereas before that I didn't really care, but it was around that time in my life and I was just so embarrassed and I hated my mum doing that to me even though it wasn't really anything....and yeah and my dad would you know.... He was a drinker and he still is a drinker so that would just mortify me.*

Anita felt a pressure to conform, but in her view, had no support in conforming. She wanted her parents to conceal aspects of their behaviour that she felt would trouble others and her father was reluctant to do this. She and her sister taught themselves prayers so they could conform. It was as if they were seen as wanting by the wider community because of their parentage. It is striking that whilst Anita's parents have given her this background, they did not seem to want her to express it:

*Now I can tell my mum, it sucked when I was a kid and you know I always wanted to conform and now she goes, I'm so glad you haven't (laughs) but at the time I knew if I had come to her she would be like aww..... I know, but sometimes she would also get angry so that was another reason I didn't want to tell her. It would upset her but she would also get annoyed, yeah.*

Farah reported that her mother took responsibility for her Muslim education even though she did not convert to Islam – she helped Farah to manage and negotiate her racial identity, whilst her father was removed from this process: 'so, she made sure that we had extra Urdu classes and Islam classes and we read the Koran and all those sorts of things'.

When Sara attempted to conform to societal expectations and the rules of her college (college is equivalent to sixth form and the first two years of university in the UK) by wearing a dupatta (long scarf), it was her father who objected and had concerns about this. She was on her own when it came to negotiating this situation:

*we used to get anonymous questions during assembly as to why a certain council member (prefect) hadn't bothered to wear a dupatta for the last three weeks - is she not meant to be setting a good example for the rest of us....*

At Christmas time Sara 'disappeared' from her usual activities and interactions with others to avoid having to discuss Christmas and be questioned by others: *'Christmas, as we celebrate, I used to go underground'*. It appeared her parents were unaware of what this was like for her and did not provide any support in terms of how to manage this.

The women's accounts highlighted the different ways in which they experienced their parents' perceived lack of awareness of their needs as they were growing up and this links to the next theme that specifically focuses on the absence of the father.

### **2c) Absence/distance of the father**

Most of the women indicated that their fathers were somewhat distant or absent when it came to helping them to negotiate and make sense of their biracial identity. Farah's father was a more remote figure than her mother: *'my father would just sort of go to work, pay the bills and have a few nice things obviously these were important things but I didn't see him, his influence'*. When talking about religious education, Sara stated: *'My father has no interest whatsoever'*. Tanya stated in a very matter of fact way about her father: *'he never had time for us though but was a good, kind father'*. This lack of time has stayed with her but apparently did not diminish his status as a good father. Her assertion is a reflection of male privilege (Case, 2007) - unearned advantages or rights granted solely on the basis of their sex. Maria portrayed her father as a distant and remote figure who insisted on some restrictions that reflected cultural norms, but he did not actively participate in religious rituals and celebrations: *'My father kept emphasising that we were Pakistani..... So, it was just a kind of theoretical upbringing'*. Maria indicated that she was told by her father that she was Pakistani and Muslim, yet there was no religious practice in the home and no connection with other Muslim families. At the same time her father banned her and her siblings from engaging with their mother's religion but did not support them in their development as Muslim.

Natasha's upbringing was dominated by her grandmother and throughout her detailed descriptions of the daily battles that took place with her grandmother, her father was absent from this and seemed distant and yet there is no sense in her view that he failed her. She portrayed him as a gentle person who was not vocal and did not appear to articulate any strong opinions: *'I really worshipped my father, I thought he was wonderful'*. He seemed to have instilled this sense of freedom of thought, options, open mindedness: *'my father was an awesome influence in that he showed me how it was possible to quietly be who you are because he didn't talk at us'*. From Natasha's account it seemed that whilst her father does not appear to have stood up to his mother, he still seems to have had a powerful impact on his daughter.

## **2d) Mother and daughter having different ethnic and racial backgrounds**

An aspect of the mother-daughter relationship that has been discussed in literature on biracial women's experience is that many biracial daughters feel that their monoracial mothers do not have a sense of what life is like for someone who has parents from two racial/ethnic groups (e.g. Nishimura, 1998). As a result, they are unable to turn to their mothers for 'been there - done that' guidance and mothers are unable to be a role model for their daughters. Biracial women have to forge their own paths in regard to topics such as romantic relationships, peer groups and personal identity. This was certainly the case for the women in this study who have had to work through their own challenges and find their own ways forward. Anita felt she could not talk to her mother about wanting to conform and how she found her parents' actions desperately stressful for fear of hurting her mother's feelings. She could share this with her sister, as they had the same challenges, but otherwise she felt alone with her biracial identity.

Zara suggested that perhaps her mother was unable to bring her up appropriately in the Pakistani culture. Had concepts like boyfriends been clearly not allowed, she would have avoided doing certain things *'that could have had serious consequences'*. As she did not have the same cultural/ethnic background as her mother, she felt her mother could not quite prepare her for growing up in Pakistan as a biracial woman. There is a sense of her being alone with her biracialness: *'If my mother had been able to convey to me that there are certain things you don't do in this country, maybe my choices would have been different'*.



Natasha did not appear to be able to turn to her mother as she had her own challenges finding her feet as a White woman in Pakistan and this meant Natasha felt she was left on her own to cope with the pressures from her grandmother. Similarly, Maria also seemed very aware that she had a different background to her mother and was unable to share the challenges she faced with her mother. Other women had different experiences - despite the fact that Reema is biracial and her mother is White European, she was brought up to be like her mother – Western, an expatriate, and from Reema’s perspective, even her father appeared to want her to look like and think like her mother (until it came to ‘dating’).

From the above accounts of the women in this study, the role of parents in helping their children negotiate their biracial identity is clearly an important one. How attuned and supportive they were or not to their children’s needs has had a profound impact on the women’s experience and this has remained with them even today. The role of parents in the women’s biracial identity negotiations links to the next theme – how they made sense of their dual heritage and belonging.

### **3) Conceptualisations of dual heritage and what it means to belong**

This theme captures how women made sense of their dual heritage and what ‘belongingness’ meant to them. What is striking across all the participants, is the very individual, unique way in which each of the women experienced their dual heritage and made sense of it. What is clear from the richness of their stories is that how they experienced and negotiated their biracial identities is a continual and ongoing journey for each of them, shifting and changing as they move through life.

A number of emergent themes have been identified including how these women are not able to be ‘read’ by others for who they feel they are and as a result are never really ‘seen’, the gap between how they perceive themselves on the inside and how they look and are perceived by others on the outside, the contextual shifts in the meanings of identity and the sense of never fully being home. Each of these emergent themes will be explored in turn.

### **3a) Never being 'read', never being 'seen'**

In the women's accounts, biraciality was presented as something that was hard for others to decipher, like a text people cannot quite read. There is a sense of being somewhat invisible, as people were unable to place them. There was some distress associated with never really being seen for who you are. As Nakashima (1992) stated, to present a visual image that confuses the viewer is equal to feeling misidentified or 'in danger of having no identity' (p.164).

Whilst Natasha could pass as either Pakistani or English in some contexts, her account suggested she was not able to 'just be', because people were unable to read her, she had to decode herself for them and in addition to this being tiresome, there is a sense of this being quite distressing for her. Omi and Winant (2015) stated that race is used to provide clues about who a person is. They argued that when people are unable to conveniently code, categorise and attach racial meanings to obvious visual classifications, this becomes a source of discomfort and 'What are you?' questions are prompted. 'What are you?' is a common question asked of many mixed-race women (Gaskins, 1999; Root, 1992; Williams, 1996). These constant questions can be tiresome and stressful for biracial woman (Hall, 2004) and biracial people may feel doubly 'othered' by such constant interrogation (Bradshaw, 1992). What the person who asks this question conveys is their inability to identify a label that fits them and therefore needs to know 'what' they are to ease the discomfort they experience.

Not wanting to disclose personal details, where Natasha could 'get away with it', she used explanations that shut down the conversation. Being biracial means you have to explain and account for yourself in a way that (some) monoracial others do not:

*If I'm in Canada, the accent is good enough to pass as British. I can just casually say 'oh I'm British'. And you know sometimes, you just don't feel like going into details. You know you are just at a party or something and you are moving on, so you know you just say 'I'm from London' and in fact London is a great catch-all.*

Similarly, Farah felt her background was complex – there is a short version to describe her background, which she told people who she had no on-going relationship with or were not

meaningful to her. Some of the women found that 'What are you?' encounters gave them a platform from which to articulate and declare their identities during the interaction (Williams, 1996) and whilst telling people who they are took effort, and was tiring, it could also be a way of taking a political stand against people who have a rigid view of racial boundaries. For example, Farah commented that:

*so it's always a shorthand that I would give to somebody at the first meeting. Sometimes I'll just say 'I'm British and have lived here, their or whatever'. Sometimes one feels it's worth telling people a little bit more about oneself but other times you just think, 'I can't be bothered .... I probably won't be meeting this person again' or unless I want to make a political statement about something.*

Root (1996) argued that at the core of the need to belong and be accepted is connection, how one interpersonally experiences and is experienced in the world. Connection is difficult when one is the object of curiosity, or suspicion. Tanya, Anita, Maria and Farah all also talked about being unable to be read by others, they were like a puzzle or a mystery that could not be solved, they were dislocated and out of place. Tanya explained: *'it's something about my appearance that they have not fully understood..... we don't look too Pakistani or too white. We can pass off as anybody'*. Experiences of this nature could result in what Vivero and Jenkins (1999) referred to as 'cultural homelessness', which they defined as a sense of not belonging and not being accepted as members by any existing group, and there is a sense that several of the women felt that they did not fully belong anywhere nor were they fully accepted by others.

The women's racial ambiguity was framed as threatening and unsettling for others, particularly for Pakistanis, who as Anita stated, have fixed ideas about race and this led to an *'air of some kind of mistrust'*. Anita, however, helped people solve the mystery of who she is: *'people want to know what is different about you rather than what is the same'*. At the same time, she did also desperately want to fit in and often felt like saying *'go away, I just want to be normal'*. The dislike of feeling different and the desire to achieve a state of 'normalcy' is strong among many people with a visible difference (Rumsey & Harcourt, 2005). Anita felt she was also transracial in appearance in that her appearance extended across two or more races and she was able to alter her presentation of self to promote a

particular racial identity. Anita took on an 'exotic' persona in both Pakistan and the UK. For example, she became a sexual stereotype in the West – an exotic princess: '*So, my background does get fetishized quite a lot in the West*'. Multiracial women may be viewed as exotic because of their racially ambiguous appearance and features and this is linked to the stereotype of them being unusual sexual beings and often imagined as sexually promiscuous (Nakashima, 1992).

In contrast to Natasha and Farah, Reema did not experience conversations with people as tiring or intrusive, but positive, a way to connect with people. She found people like, and were fascinated by, difference – again this is framed and experienced as being special and different in a positive way. When living in the UK, her Pakistani heritage was the important difference. She reported that people she knew were:

*fascinated with Pakistan, fascinated with the culture. I mean one of my friends, he just loves Pakistani music. He loved everything about it, he was just really into it. And they just love that difference. And it wasn't so much the New Zealand bit that they like to talk about but Pakistan.*

Whilst there was variation in how the women were read in different contexts, all the women shared the experience of being unreadable by others around them and each of them managed this in their own individual way.

### **3b) The gap between the inside and outside**

This emergent theme is about the difference between how the women felt they looked on the outside and how they felt they were perceived by others and how they experienced themselves to be on the inside (their self-identity). Holliday (1999) discussed the comfort of identity, in relation to sexual identity, and the degree of fit between one's understanding of oneself on the inside and one's expression of that self on the outside. This conceptualisation of identity is useful for making sense of the women's accounts of biracial identity in the current study. Where disjuncture appears between the inner and the outer self, discomfort is produced and this 'gap' can get in the way of belonging. As Farah explained:

*English people won't think I'm Pakistani - they'll think I'm Greek or Iranian ..... I suppose that gets a little bit wearing at times ..... You know this whole thing about belonging and where are you from and why do you look different.*

Clothing and appearance can become 'a kind of visual metaphor for identity' (Davis, 1992, p.25) and a marker of our wider identities (Gleeson & Frith, 2003). Natasha's account suggested that her appearance and clothing had become a battleground for her identity as she constantly had to fight with her grandmother for the Western part of her background. Later on, when she moved to the UK, she changed her outer appearance to fit in: *'I was constantly changing my stripes to suit where I am'*.

Growing up was about being different and 'standing out' for Zara, but later when she moved to the US she described how she felt different on the inside to the outer appearance she portrayed to others. In the US she wanted to blend in, pass as Pakistani and keep her religion hidden, particularly the strength of her religious belief. There is a sense of conflict in her religious practice and how it is seen by others: *'I don't appear devout, it's all on the inside, so I just blend in. They don't notice me as a Muslim, they only notice me as a Pakistani because of my accent'*.

Maria did not choose to wear Hijab but wore what she considered 'modest' clothing. She attempted to achieve a 'fit' between her inner and outer self by ignoring the suggestions from her family and friends to wear more figure hugging clothes and said *'no, because that's not me, I don't feel comfortable like that'*. Her outer-self seemed to almost be scaffolding her inner self:

*I started going into what Islam was about and started finding out all about it. I started fasting and then my father did as well and then we started to do Eid and celebrating Eid and I think by that stage there were some community events that we used to occasionally go to and we came back with a whole lot of clothes as well so we were able to wear shalwar kameez as well - that kind of felt, you know, this feels right and that had an important bearing and this was when I was about eighteen onwards*

When Farah moved to the UK, just before she was due to sit her 'O' levels, she experienced discrimination based on where she came from, and people totally disregarded her actual level of English. This mirrored and inverted the assumptions in Pakistan – there it was assumed she could not speak Urdu, in the UK, it was assumed that she could not speak English, and as a result was not allowed to take an 'O' level in English. It was also assumed that she would neither pursue a career or further education. In her experience, racial discrimination was salient:

*I was really shocked by the presumption, without a test or anything that my English was not good enough to sit an O-level..... The 1970's career officers saying 'oh well I'll cut your session short because you will be leaving to get married' or 'you won't be wanting to go to university so you can go and sit over there'*

Farah experienced distress by not being treated the way she experienced herself to be and this seemed to be an ongoing challenge for several of the women as they strived to achieve congruency between their inner experience and outer appearance.

### **3c) Contextual shifts in the meaning of identity**

This emergent theme captured the shifting nature of the women's identities. The meaning of identity was not static for the women; it shifted in relation to context, it was fluid, informed by place and relationships with others. As Bhavnani and Phoenix (1994) explained, identity is not 'one thing' for any individual; rather each individual is both located in and chooses between a number of differing and at times conflictual identities depending on various aspects of their situation. Natasha explained that she did not want to draw attention to herself by 'looking good' or dressing in fashionable clothes. She seemed to manage her identity by changing how she appeared in order to fit in and fade into the background: *'I just want to pass'*.

Zara framed the typical biracial experience as one of facing challenges, but her experience was also different and positive: *'I'm not one of your typical biracial women in that way in that I don't think I was challenged at all while growing up'*. She saw her biracial heritage as a gift. Making friends and social interactions with others was helped by being biracial when she lived in Pakistan; however, the meaning of her identity shifted as her Pakistani Muslim

identity came to the forefront and she experienced more challenges in the US: *'I'm more challenged now after marriage and moving to another country - I think this has been much more of a challenge than living in Pakistan ever was'*. She found making friends hard in the US; she framed herself as a minority in the US (but not in Pakistan, where she would technically would have been too). Her account suggested it was as if her biracial identity and associated 'celebrity status' had faded into the background in the US and she had stopped being biracial in her own mind and also in terms of how she was viewed by others. What was a 'gift' in Pakistan was no longer a gift in the US and this highlights the impact of racism on how the women thought about themselves and the meaning of their identity. Zara really seemed to be 'owning' her Pakistani Muslim identity and her Whiteness seemed to have disappeared almost completely. Living in Pakistan and having a White mother made her a celebrity. However, in the US having a White mother mitigated the effects of having a Pakistani father and gave her acceptance, but not the celebrity status it conferred on her previously: *'having a Caucasian mother gave me a celebrity status but in this country, it's not the same'*.

That the concept that identity was not fixed was also illustrated by Reema - the extent to which she felt Pakistani or Western changed. Her connection with Pakistan seemed to be on the level of fun cultural activities and food rather than any deeper sense of identity. Furthermore, this connection was triggered by small things; memories and thoughts of eating a meal could connect her to a facet of her identity:

*I might feel more Pakistani when I want to. Yes, that is something I wanted to mention to you because at times I will feel more Western and other times I might feel more Pakistani and I think that depends on what I'm thinking about - or my memories.*

There is a sense of shifting identity here, but as shifting between being either Pakistani or White – not both at the same time in an integrated way. This is relevant as a number of the stage models of biracial identity development suggested an integrated identity that includes all aspects of one's racial background is the ideal (e.g. Gibbs, 1989; Poston, 1990). However, many of the women in this study seem to have had a different experience. Anita explained

the part of her identity that marked her out as different and again, this shifted depending on the context:

*I think it depends where I am so in London I say I'm half Pakistani which is what makes me stand out rather than I'm just English. I can tell people are curious as to what my background is - I mean I could be from anywhere with my colouring so I just tell them that I'm half Pakistani whereas over here, it's the opposite. I'm half English. So yeah, I do this little switch.*

There is a link here to the phrase 'situational ethnicity' which refers to the ability of biracial and multiracial people to flexibly move in and out of different cultures by 'identifying themselves differently in different situations depending on what aspects of identity are salient' (Root, 1996: 11) and to 'water different sets of roots at different times' (Root, 2008: 25).

When Maria went on a visit to Pakistan when she was 18, she described a sense of finding home – a sense of belonging: *'everywhere we went we just had such a warm welcome and it felt like I had come home, it really did'*. On her return to the UK she: *'started suddenly immersing myself in everything Pakistani'*. She experienced quite a shift in the UK from feeling adrift, and not knowing who she was to immersing herself in Pakistani culture, developing a political consciousness and becoming critical of Britain's colonial past. She framed this as rebellion, which could potentially be interpreted as a coping mechanism to help her manage not knowing who she was. When she went to university, she took on cultural notions of female passivity – wearing this identity because of not knowing who she was and lacking confidence: *'I went into this kind of passive Asian woman'*. In reflecting on the different meanings of identity, Farah on the other hand highlighted the difference between her husband's perspective and her own: *'he grew up in England and has been here since he was five so his sort of view of faith and religion is quite different to mine'*. She located her experience and view of religion as shaped by her Pakistani upbringing.

Each of the women, through their own unique journey, all referred to shifts in identity they experienced at different stages in their life, in different situations and in relation to different people.



### 3d) What it means to be 'home'

This final emergent theme captures the multiple meanings of being 'home'. This includes the women feeling like they were never fully at home, and never quite belonging or 'fitting in' with the surrounding culture. What is evident from their accounts is that the biracial woman is both a member of the culture and not a member (both yet neither) – they occupy an 'in-between' place. Miville, Constantine, Baysden and So-Lloyd (2005) referred to the 'chameleon experience' of multiracial people - having flexible social boundaries and being able to adapt to the expectations of their cultural surroundings, and flexible and open attitudes towards others who were different from them. Whilst this points to one of the positive attributes of the biracial experience that many of the women in this study have referred to, one limit of this approach that Miville et al. (1999) highlighted was the experience some multiracial people had of fitting into both groups at some level, but never really feeling a complete part of either group. Whilst some women saw 'home' as something singular, denoting just one option and therefore this meant they were never truly home, this emergent theme also encompasses the competing ideas felt by other women that they were inter-cultural – being between cultures, or always being at home because they were transcultural – transcending dualism, moving across boundaries – and thus had a sense of home that was mobile.

Being biracial, for Natasha, conveyed a sense of her being at home, but not at home: '*so, you feel like an ethnic minority, but it's in your own country*'. Natasha talked about feeling like an insider as well as an outsider in Pakistan and London and this reflects what Streeter (1996) referred to as the simultaneous sense of being an insider and outsider for biracial people:

*on the one hand, I think it's fun being part of these rituals and on the other hand, you're always on the periphery of them for example with the fasting and so on - I did fasting, I found it a very fun experience, I enjoyed the whole eating and enjoying your food after and waking up very early in the morning and having whatever keeps you going through the day. That works really well when you're in a country where everyone is doing it and maybe it has its own charm in London as well because there*

*is a sufficient community and you can be around them to do these things but I think for me it was it was always a game.*

She drew parallels to a man she met at the Pakistan high commission in London who suffered from albinism and also felt like an outsider and that he did not quite belong. There is a sense of this being an experience they both shared. Being biracial seems to have had a profound impact on how Natasha made sense of her identity. When interviewing her, the experiences of talking about her identity felt quite painful and difficult for her. She described not quite 'fitting in' culturally in either Pakistan or England because of her biracial background – never fully belonging and it seemed she was unable to get away from that:

*It's because I'm half English she thinks I'm not going to know as many swear words or she should know more about the things. It's like a double helping of Pakistani makes you doubly competent in Pakistani*

Daniel (1996) discussed mixed Black and White identities as being 'betwixt and between' – a midway position, not fully or properly one thing or the other and there is a parallel here to this idea. Natasha had no entitlement to speak the language fluently or indeed more fluently than someone who is not biracial - she has only a 'single helping' of Pakistani, whereas others have a double helping, and therefore race seems to equate to language competence in this way of thinking. Both her ability to be seen as authentically White or Pakistani are tainted (by the other); she is neither fully White or really Pakistani enough, yet she is both at the same time:

*She mentioned me by name and I thought oh that's great I've done really well. I received my mark and it was 20/50 so then that's like a C or D - it's just a pass basically. So, I went up to her and said 'I thought you said I done really well' and she said 'oh but that's the best I can expect from you'.*

Natasha constructed her biracial identity, as having two sides or halves, but there did not seem to be a whole:

*I could literally be on one side and then I could be on the flipside and see things from both points of view. And that very ability or attempt to look at things from at least*

*two angles if not more, I think has only been helped by being biracial because you see evidence for it so much more clearly and so early.*

Also, Natasha's account suggested she was unable to have a sense of security in the world and this is quite profound: *'your security is threatened right from the get go but then on the other hand maybe when you're faced with complication from day one, you are used to complicated'*. Her home was the only space where she could feel safe and was not visible to others: *'I think of my home, when I am on my own, as my safe space where I can go crazy and just do what I want'*. Holliday (1999) explored the ways in which sexual identities function in work, domestic and social spaces. Natasha's view brings to mind Holliday's description of home as the perceived haven in which one can truly be oneself and where one has at least some control over who enters, who one spends time with and how one's home is organised. Natasha experienced a lack of personal authenticity in Pakistan - two very separate sides – the person in Pakistan where *'I can't engage as me'* versus *'the package I present in England'*. There is an overall sense of not being 'at home' with all of the different parts that make up who she is.

Zara presented a biracial identity as complex, something that involved more than a simple tick of one box. She explained that it takes time to 'get into' her identity: *'Well it depends how much time they have to get into this otherwise I'll just say I'm Asian'*. She stressed the importance of 'fitting in' and of being in the middle of Pakistani Muslim and Western cultures: *'It does help me to blend in with people - I want to stay in the grey zone I don't want to be in black or white zone where things are either right or wrong'*.

For Reema, on the other hand, having lots of different mixed-race friends at school was an important part of her story:

*I made friends, I connected with people who are mixed like me so made friends with lots of mixed guys who were either half American half Pakistani, Afghani and half American, you know all sorts of mixes.*

She experienced acceptance and framed her biracialness as positive, inviting curiosity:

*so, I had that from the very beginning so I didn't feel like I had any challenges and of course I was accepted by people. It wasn't a negative in the slightest, it was a positive thing..... maybe almost had it easy, I had it good.*

In contrast to Natasha, Reema had a strong sense of being both Pakistani and White and not having to choose one aspect of her background. This links to Williams' (1999) concept of 'simultaneous reality' that suggested in every context and every interaction Reema was in, she was both White and Pakistani, experiencing both not as split but as fluid, seamless parts of who she is – 'both/and' rather than 'either/or'. Reema could blend both together and like both parts of herself:

*be aware of um that they're dealing with somebody who is multicultural um they don't necessarily have to choose. It's not like they are either one or the other. It's not like you do this or do you do this. It should be almost more open-ended.*

Tanya saw herself almost as holding a 'pick and mix' racial and ethnic identity – neither Pakistani nor White and yet both: '*well we look different, our English was different, our Urdu was different*'. She described having taken some very good things from her father and some very good things from her mother. She seemed to have carved out an identity for herself that is in the middle of both cultures, neither extremely White nor extremely Pakistani. Differences in appearance, culture or religion were not important to her, instead openness, being tolerant and accepting of difference was key for her. She presented herself as broad minded and open and believed that was the best way to be. Having lived overseas was part of her 'cultural mix': '*We are in the middle.....For instance, my kids now, if they marry a white girl, Christian or whatever, I don't mind. At this point it doesn't make any difference to me*'.

Belonging is a primary need of all individuals (Maslow, 1968). Anita stated '*my whole life from zero to about sixteen I was back and forth*' in quite a matter of fact way and there was a sense of never being home, not belonging, always being between cultures and countries in her interview: '*I still feel a bit conflicted, because I have two homes*'. She talked about having two homes, and yet home by its nature was perceived as singular, one place. Whilst on the one hand she valued having both Pakistani and White heritage, not having a clear sense of where home was seemed to trouble her and the question of where she belonged preyed on her mind as she believed she cannot belong in two places:

*There's that whole idea of, where is my home. That would be the negative thing. Because I can and I do fit into both worlds but I still definitely prefer London but yeah,*

*no I think actually to be able to be in two very different cultures and to be comfortable in both is quite a privilege*

Living in Pakistan she felt out of place, not fitting in – ‘*a bit of a misfit over here*’ - but she seemed to be more settled at the time of the interview. There was a sense from her account that she perhaps saw herself as having reached an end point, rather than this being on an ongoing journey. She has ‘made her peace’ to some extent with some Muslim rituals and festivals and found a way to engage with other people that suited her. It seemed like she has found a position that she is more comfortable with and a circle of people who are more similar to her and her family. She is no longer having to lead a secret life – a life where she constantly had to hide and pretend she and her family are people who they are not. She drew a contrast between this more ‘balanced’ approach and the orthodox people who were blinkered, and no longer a meaningful part of her life:

*I'm still not religious at all but I'm much more respectful to its religion than I was.....I think there was a point in my life when I thought Eid is so boring and I'm just going to eat my way through it but nowadays I think Eid is a very sweet tradition- it's nice and why wouldn't you take part in it.*

For Anita, each parent represented each culture, so if she chose one culture, she would be prioritising one parent over the other and vice versa: ‘*I think being torn between two cultures, I think that is something a therapist should look out for - that sense of guilt and loyalty to one parent more than another*’. So, the challenge of finding home literally and metaphorically - ‘*where to live in the end*’ goes on for her. For Anita, to be home psychologically meant being home in one geographic place, ‘fitting in’, and belonging.

The availability of a community of other multiracial people has been highlighted as an important source of support for biracial and multiracial people (Hall, 2001; Miville et al. 2005; Poston, 1990; Renn, 2008; Wallace, 2003). Maria reflected on happy memories with families like her own, getting together at Christmas time – she talked about ‘another part of my heritage’ as something that is separate and distinct: ‘*I was aware of my kind of connection there to another part of my heritage*’. She also talked about the importance of having relationships with other biracial people and other mixed heritage families: ‘*I felt most comfortable when I met girls in the same position as ourselves..... I immediately felt that we*

*shared experiences that were pretty unique'. She was proud of her dual heritage: 'there was a new Pakistani girl that came and she couldn't speak any English at all and they wanted me to translate for her and I felt so proud that I could take that kind of role'. Her experience seemed to be of two parts of a whole and there is a clear sense of not belonging, never being at home and not knowing how to make sense of her identity:*

*I was losing my Pakistani side while my father was not there.....I think I just fell between the two stalls. I didn't know what I felt about myself, I didn't feel I belonged anywhere really.*

She also experienced a gap between herself and the context she was in and she appeared to have no 'anchor' and no stable foundation: *'I felt dissonance between where we were living and who I thought I was supposed to be. And I think those were my worst years, my teenage years because I just felt very adrift'*. When Maria was in school in the UK, she tried to conceal her 'Pakistani side' and had feelings of shame relating to it:

*I was trying to hide the Pakistani side of me and I didn't invite people around very often. Occasionally my father did allow me to go to their houses but I think somehow, I must have just felt ashamed of my Pakistani background.*

There is a sense of her being neither Pakistani or White, and yet at the same time, both:

*I just think, I felt that, I had to just kind of get on with it. I knew I didn't feel English but I thought I wasn't going to do anything about my Pakistani side because there was nothing there to make me feel proud of myself as a Pakistani.*

She framed her biraciality as being in the middle, in-between two cultures, and yet there is a sense that she is not truly at home in either. Maria does not talk in terms of wholeness, but being between – inter-cultural:

*I'm back to where I feel I'm in the middle but I have kind of got aspects of both my cultures and I know there are aspects of the English culture, my mother's culture that is important to me because she has had an influence on my life and you know, I kind of don't resist it anymore and just accept it.*

She provided an insightful description of what she holds on to from both cultures. For the UK, it is culture (literature, history, nature), for Pakistan, it is the collective culture and the passionate commitment to beliefs and values. She framed herself as a 'container' for the influences of two different cultures, 'pick and mix' – but there is a strong sense that whilst she appears to be 'picking', she is not really 'mixing': *'I am the best of both worlds (laughs) I have picked out the best things'*.

Maria was aware that she would never be seen as White in the UK, but always as non-White: *'I know that at the end of the day I'm never going to be white, I'm never seen as white but I'm always going to be seen as an ethnic minority'*. There is a suggestion here that perhaps she wants to be seen as White even though she is not. This links to positions of privilege White people have and possibly members of 'ethnic minorities' feeling they need to fit in in order to be seen (Strach & Wicander, 1993). She talked about comfort when choosing how she dresses, but at the same time, she wears what is expected and is culturally normative. This came across perhaps as comfort in 'fitting in':

*I have kind of withdrawn and just gone back to what I feel comfortable wearing.....the thing is I can fit in - my clothes are again, just fitting in both cultures. I feel that I don't have to..... I feel that I have kind of reached a comfortable level.*

Maria referred to her different sides - 'the English side of me' and in the space of her home where she can truly be herself, she is English as well as Pakistani and her children are too:

*I have to say don't forget I am English as well, I am both. Before perhaps I wouldn't have said this but it's become really important to me now, in our home particularly. They need to know that part of who I am and who they are.*

Identity was a journey for Maria, and a biracial identity was a particularly complex journey. She felt that being biracial meant she is more open to and accepting of difference. She has two backgrounds – double what monoracial people have, yet there is a sense from her account that she is not whole:

*I think, part of what is coming across is where a person is at a particular stage in their life because if you had done this with me before I had children, then maybe the*

*answers would have been different. If you had done it with me kind of when I was in my teens /early adulthood I might have given different answers. It is actually recognising that it is a whole ..... process that you're going through and you are wrestling with because it has taken me years. I have always felt lucky to have two ..... no, I think not always. I think now I think that I'm lucky to have two backgrounds because it has made me more of an open person and has made me able to appreciate other cultures more but I feel that just being ..... It takes a long time to get to the bottom of what is going on.*

Farah seemed to have 'settled down' and found a comfortable position that 'fits' for her at her stage in life. She chooses to participate in cultural and religious rituals that are meaningful and authentic for her and made a distinction between this and those rituals that are merely for show and reflect a superficial engagement with religion and morality. For Farah, rituals were important in faith identity:

*I suppose having this Haji chap coming every day to teach us the Koran, every afternoon as we were growing up which we really made fun of at the time.....but those were quite defining moments in some ways and then I think deaths and marriages..... Particularly deaths I think. People's funerals seem to have quite a big impact on me think.*

She saw being biracial as enriching: *'being able to have two very different views on the world and having access to those two different types of experiences'*.

Whilst in the above quotation Farah appeared to be a container for different experiences, in the following quotation she framed her experience differently. Here things are separate and distinct and do not shape and influence each – she is living between two worlds and there is no whole and this sounds more uncomfortable. She seemed to believe that she has to be an authentic member of two cultures and be the best at everything in order to be seen as an authentic member, because her biracial identity is a threat to authentic membership of both cultures. There was a sense that she is never quite at home:

*Living in two worlds was like a norm for myself and it was great being able to dip in and out of both of those but I think it probably had some challenges as well in terms*



*of having to be very good at both of those. You know our English had to be perfect, our Urdu had to be perfect, so I guess there was some pressure around.*

Bolatagici (2004) argued for the need to move beyond the dichotomous thinking that reduces biracial people to the sum of our parts and instead presented a hybrid space of in-between-ness; as a liberating location that allows freedom and movement. She built on Bhabha's (1991) concept of 'third space' and referred to it as a location that moves beyond definitions such as black and white and opens the possibility to consider a biracial identity not as half of two things but as a whole 'new' entity that is not reducible to its components. Bolatagici referred to movement and fluidity that allows the multiracial person to constantly redefine their position as an individual. There is a similarity here to how Farah framed herself as a 'citizen of the world', and she becomes a container for different influences. Also, she becomes whole, something coherent, that gives her a passport to move freely around the world and belong (which suggests not really belonging in some local contexts):

*'bicultural identity really set me up to be a citizen of the world really rather than being categorised by one particular ethnicity'*. She suggests that her identity is more expansive than people's judgements allow for and she surpasses categories and boxes - she is not marginalised as such, but others cannot think beyond their boxes. She transcends dualism: *'the disadvantage was not for myself but for others who were wanting to box you'*. The notion that she has: *'been everywhere from Texas from the West Coast to the East Coast'* helped her to build her global citizen narrative and *'we used to go abroad on holidays'* builds her world embracing and cultural openness narrative. She clearly framed herself as trans-cultural: *'people like us with our experience, we dip in and out of cultures'*, which is a contrast to Maria's view of herself as being inter-cultural.

To summarise, many of the women felt they were misread and there was a common sense of holding a shifting identity that had movement and fluidity. They felt they did not quite belong or 'fit in' anywhere – they were both yet neither, and it seems like they occupied an in-between place. Several of the women referred to having 'two sides' to their identity and there is a sense of their biracial elements being separate aspects that sit alongside each other and are held separately in the mind, and they move between the two rather than the two blending together or being integrated. The image of 'pick and mix' comes to mind as

what is evident is that some of the women are choosing certain elements from both of their heritages and incorporating them into their way of life and thinking but are not really integrating them.

## **General discussion**

I will start by summarising the findings of this research, next I will contextualise them in relation to existing literature and then discuss the implications of this research for counselling psychology. Finally, I will discuss the limitations of and reflect on the research and make suggestions for future research.

## **Summary of findings**

This research has provided an understanding of the experiences and identities of biracial women with White western mothers and Pakistani fathers. It highlights the key themes that emerged from the women's stories, whilst at the same time recognises the uniqueness of each woman's individual story. It provides an insight into the richness and multiple dimensions of their biracial worlds and the social, cultural and contextual factors that shape their identity experiences. This research has highlighted the many different meanings that whiteness had for the women and captured the privileges and 'celebrity status' they experienced as a result of being perceived as White or fair skinned, particularly in relation to being seen as beautiful and having access to opportunities denied to others. It also encompassed the more negative aspects of experiences the women related in their interviews as a consequence of their fair skin or being perceived as (wholly or partly) white, including being hyper-visible and seen as public property and subjected to the assumption that others had a right to make comments and judgements about their abilities and moral worth.

The role of parents in supporting the women in making sense of their biracial identity and living it out constituted a second significant theme. This theme highlighted how the women's parents had created and passed to their daughters an experience that was different from their own. The participants touched on cultural norms and how liberal or conservative their upbringing was and the freedoms, restrictions and choices they had growing up. There was considerable variation in the women's accounts in terms of how

attuned they felt their parents were to their needs and the challenges they faced (regardless of how liberal or conservative they were), and how much support their parents provided to them in negotiating their biracial identities. What is striking from the women's stories, is the lasting impact this has had for some of them and was a key part of their lives even at the time of the interview.

Finally, the women's conceptualisation of their dual heritage highlighted their experience of being unreadable by others, the difference between their inner experiences and their outer appearance (as perceived and 'read' by others) and their shifting sense of identity as biracial women. Each of the women had a very unique sense of belonging (or not belonging) and sense of what home meant to them. Whilst for some women, there were two 'sides' of their cultural identity that they moved between, for some there was a sense of being in-between cultural worlds, whilst one experienced a multidimensional, global cultural world and an almost transcultural sense of identity. This research brings to light the richness and very individual stories of each of the women that illustrates where they were situated at the time in the interview with regard to their individual sense making but also reinforces the ongoing nature of their identity negotiations.

### **Contextualising the findings**

This very individual sense-making and unique identity negotiation is an aspect of biracial women's experiences not entirely captured by stage models of biracial identity development. The stage models of biracial identity all suggest a process that involve a person making a linear progression through a series of stages and emerging at the end with a concrete (and in many cases, integrated) identity (Gibbs, 1989; Poston, 1990). What this study has highlighted is that identity development is neither a linear or a sequential process for the women (a better term might be 'identity negotiation' to capture the ongoing process of articulating and managing their identities). Indeed, they may not necessarily pass through these stages at all as there is fluidity in each of their stories. In addition, the findings show that social context and surroundings had a key part to play in how the women made sense of their identities and this is not something captured in stage models.

Some of the aspects that this group of women share with other biracial women have been highlighted in the results. For example, the significant role of physical appearance is a theme that relates to the biracial population generally, and has been discussed in previous literature, as noted in the introduction (Hall, 2004; Nishimura, 2004; Root, 1997). The role that skin colour (in this case Whiteness) has to play in women's experience, their 'ambiguous' physical appearance that mean biracial women's racial and ethnic identities are never 'read' accurately by others (Root, 1994) and issues relating to acceptance and belonging (Hall, 2004) are common themes across the literature on biracial women. Specific to this group of women was the prejudice they experienced as a result of being associated with Whiteness, (see Klausen, 2010, on Whiteness being associated with immorality in some non-western contexts). In addition, the way in which some of the women experienced their sense of 'home' in relation to their biracial identity is not something that has been addressed in existing literature in any depth. What is also striking in this study is the women's reports of the critical role of their parents in helping them to make sense of their biracial identity and the amount of support they perceived themselves to have received, or not, from their parents had a profound impact and life-long consequences for some. Whilst some of the previous qualitative and experiential studies conducted in psychology discuss the influence of parents and quality of parenting on the development of a positive racial identity in children (e.g. Fatimilehin, 1999; Thompson, 1999), much literature in this area is sociological in origin (e.g. Rockquemore, 1998; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005). The psychological underpinnings of the IPA approach to biracial women's experiences in this study highlighted the dynamics of parent-child and family relationships and showed the different ways in which the women experienced their parents' perceived support or lack of awareness of their needs as they were growing up. This research also contributes to the biracial literature by focusing on Pakistani and White women, a biracial group that has not previously been studied. It highlights the particular context and environment in which these women grew up, and how this has shaped their experience and later life in the West. It highlights how they perceived they were 'seen' by others, the support they received in negotiating their biracial identity and how they made sense of their dual heritage.

Contextualising the findings through the lens of IPT, two key processes – assimilation-accommodation and evaluation (Breakwell, 1986, 1992) can be seen in the way the women

learnt about their identities through the information they received from others, including the reactions, for example, of their teachers, friends, neighbours. They then had to accommodate that information in order to make sense of their identity. For example, one of the women secretly learnt prayers, whilst another tried not to draw attention to the fact that she and her family celebrated Christmas, to manage how they represented themselves to the world and in order to be accepted by their peers.

IPT is useful as a framework for understand biracial identity, and particularly the identity negotiations of biracial women, as it highlights the challenges biracial women face in making sense of identity. In many cases, the principles that IPT suggests facilitate identity development - continuity, distinctiveness, self-efficacy and self-esteem (Breakwell, 1986, 1992) were either disrupted or threatened for the women. For example, the women experienced their identity as shifting across time and context, and several of the women described a sense of not being in control of how they were perceived by others when they were younger and adopting strategies to help give them some sense of control (e.g. one of the women hid the fact that her father drank alcohol). The findings of this research reinforce two additional identity motives that IPT highlights - belonging and meaning (Vignoles, Chrysochoou & Breakwell, 2002) - as being important for making sense of identity. Both belonging and meanings were profoundly important in the women's stories. Many of the women did not feel a sense of belonging and acceptance and were constantly asked 'what are you?' questions; they reported a sense of never being 'read', a sense of being 'in-between' and never feeling totally 'at home'. Moving countries for many of the women meant they had to start all over again in terms of making sense of their identity.

The women experienced many threats which made identity negotiations complex and they used a number of different coping strategies (Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014) to deal with these threats. Through the stories of the women, it is evident that they employed various strategies both as children and as adults to negotiate their identity. These included: Maria's denial of her white heritage when she immersed herself in everything Pakistani (intrapsychic); Natasha's isolation from others as well as conflict with her grandmother who tried to 'make her as brown as I (she) can' (interpersonal); and Reema surrounding herself

by other biracial friends in an attempt to seek support from others in a similar situation (intergroup).

IPT is useful for exploring biracial identity as the theory sensitises us to expect that biracial women experience many challenges. This group of biracial women's identities could be conceptualised as threatened as they seemed to experience constant threats to their identities. It was clear from their life histories that all kinds of mundane and typical life course events could potentially be a source of conflict and effect the equilibrium they have achieved. For example, loss of religious faith, finding a partner, having children, separating from a partner, and moving country could all potentially shift their sense of identity. The women's sense of identity was an ongoing process and in continual negotiation – it was neither static nor fixed. Compared to stage models of identity development, IPT offers a more flexible and fluid way for clinicians to make sense of the women's experience as it is clear from their stories that they have not arrived at a final destination. Stage models do not capture what happens if a biracial woman experiences a change in circumstances that has consequences for the meaning and experience of her racial/ethnic identity.

I will now consider the implications of this research for counselling psychology.

### **Implications for counselling psychology**

This research has important implications for the field of Counselling Psychology. The role of counselling psychologists as scientist-practitioners suggests the importance of practitioners engaging in research and the requirement for the practitioner to be a producer, as well as a user, of knowledge and understanding (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010). Strawbridge and Woolfe (2010) argued that because Counselling Psychology emphasises the subjective experience of clients there is a need for practitioners to seek to understand clients' inner worlds and constructions of reality and 'being-in-relation' with, rather than 'doing' something to, clients (Strawbridge & Woolfe, 2010:10). With regard to race, Ade-Serrano and Nkansa-Dwamena (2016:8) state that:

'ethically we have a responsibility to support individuals around issues pertaining to race and cross-cultural conflict whether it is in therapy or through supervision. We also have a responsibility as practitioners to highlight the narratives of individuals

who may be completely absent or 'not seen by us' from our psychological literature, practice and research'.

This research addresses this responsibility by hearing the voices of biracial women with White western and Pakistani parents. The dissemination of this research will enable practitioners to support this group of women as they explore their unique experiences and the cultural, ethnic and racial influences on their identities.

When working specifically with this population, there are a number of areas that Counselling Psychologists need to be aware of. The key role of parental relationships and how parents support (or fail to support) their daughters in negotiating a biracial identity needs to be taken into consideration. Therefore, a systemic approach (e.g. Dallos & Stedman, 2013) that includes wider context and family relationships would be particularly relevant when working with this group. In addition, the role of gender in how women make sense of their parental support needs to be taken into account. This study highlights the way many of the women did not express any feelings of anger towards their fathers, who seemed to occupy a position of male privilege, and were almost incapable (in their eyes) of having 'let them down' in any way. Their mothers, however, were more the focus for anger and resentment. This links to the long standing and deep-rooted cultural practice of 'mother blame' amongst health professionals, therapists, lay people and society as a whole (Caplan, 2013; Jackson & Mannix, 2004; McNab & Karner, 2001). Even when a father's absence was described sadly, the father was rarely blamed for being absent. Understanding the life-long consequences of how their parents managed and supported, or failed to manage and support, their daughters to make sense of the identity is important for the counselling psychologist to understand in order to be able to validate biracial women's experiences and support them effectively. This is likely equally relevant for counselling psychologists who work with an individual who has a partner from a different racial background (or indeed a couple who are from different racial backgrounds) and has biracial children (i.e. the parents of biracial women). It would be important to make them aware of the significant influence of parents in helping their children make sense of and negotiate their biracial identities. Counselling psychologists should explore parental awareness and understanding of the unique biracial experiences their children may face and highlight the need to talk openly

with their children in order to meaningfully support their children to manage issues of race/ethnicity and identity.

Root (1997) argued that multiracial women seldom enter therapy overtly to resolve issues that are related to their multiracial heritage, but a therapist's ability to understand and be aware of the issues and themes related to this experience will enable them to support these women in a more holistic and meaningful way. This research highlights that there is no one way of managing a biracial identity. The counselling psychologist, whilst being aware of some of the central themes faced by this population, will need to be aware that there is no single, 'one size fits all' approach to working with this population. What is of fundamental importance is creating a therapeutic environment in which each woman is able to tell her own story and have her voice heard. In exploring the role of research in counselling and psychotherapy, Cooper (2010: 189) aptly stated:

'Research findings have the potential to call us back to the lived-reality of our clients' lives, in all their complexity and diversity. In this respect, research findings can help us stay open to the multifaceted and ever-changing nature of our clients' experiences – attuned, not to any one set of assumptions, but to the unique, unpredictable, indefinable individuals that we meet in the therapeutic encounter'.

This research highlights the experiences of a particular group of biracial women for counselling psychologists. It reinforces the way in which culture, religion, race, gender and context all played a part in the women's lives. Given for the importance of practitioners creating an environment in which biracial women can tell their own stories and explore what is important to them, counselling psychologists will need to hold this in mind particularly if working with clients for a restricted number of sessions, as clients may need time to voice their narratives. What became apparent in considering how the results from this research might be condensed into an article for publication, is that all of the themes are intertwined and to focus on only one of the themes would provide only a small part of the women's stories. In the same way, and particularly when working in therapy in a time limited way, focusing on only one aspect of a biracial woman's experiences may result in the therapist overlooking key aspects that form part of that client's experience.



This research also contributes to the literature on multi-cultural counselling and therapy discussed in the introduction. Whilst multi-cultural counselling provides a broad way of working with clients who are non-white, when working with biracial women, counselling psychologists need to be aware of the specific challenges these women may face. Being biracial means being highly visible and whilst some women may experience this as helpful, others may find it uncomfortable and distressing and attempt to reduce their visibility. The 'what are you?' question requires the individual to justify her existence in a world built on racial purity and mono-racialism (Sue & Sue, 2013). These questions can result in invalidation, internal conflict and confused identity development. In addition, colourism is also relevant here and can have a psychological impact on self-esteem, identity formation and identity validation (Nkansa-Dwamena, 2010).

The stories from the women who participated in this research reinforce the insights and freedom of choice advocated in Root's (1996: 7) Bill of Rights for racially mixed people and it is important for psychologists working with this population to be aware of these rights (e.g. 'I have the right not to justify my existence in this world', 'I have the right not to be responsible for people's discomfort with my physical ambiguity', 'I have the right to identify myself differently than strangers expect me to identify', 'I have the right to change my identity over my lifetime – and more than once').

This research has reinforced the importance in multicultural counselling and therapy of the relationship between the individual, the family and the cultural context. In addition to existing multicultural counselling and therapy literature on areas such as cultural competence, cultural matching and culturally adapted interventions (Sue & Sue, 2013; Cabral & Smith, 2011; Smith, Rodriguez & Bernal, 2011), this research highlights how many biracial children may feel quite isolated and have little support, and their monoracial parents may not fully appreciate the unique challenges they face. As noted above, counselling psychologists need to be aware of the role they can play in helping parents support their biracial children. In addition, many of the women in this study experienced periods of loneliness and isolation and counselling psychologists need to support exploration of this. This research has also highlighted the uniqueness of many aspects of each of the women's identity journeys. Therefore, therapy needs to be adapted based on

the individual's life history and circumstances, rather than therapists simply making broad cultural adaptations of therapeutic models. Sue and Sue (2013) state that it is important to see multiracial people in a holistic way rather than as fractions of a person. This research has reinforced that rather than seeing the person as an assemblage of parts, it is important to recognise the strengths as well as the challenges faced by biracial women. The women who participated in this research have all illustrated the changing, fluid nature of biracial identity and each reached their own understanding of their sense of identity at the time of interview. This emphasises the notion that there is no one ideal identity 'resolution' for biracial women, and identity development is an on-going, context-bound negotiation.

In addition to one to one therapy, counselling psychologists might also consider offering group workshops to biracial women to explore some of the key themes that are relevant and use this as a platform to give them an opportunity to share their experiences, support each other and explore similarities and differences in experience.

As a profession, I believe it is key that we raise awareness as part of the ongoing development of counselling psychologists and other professionals of the themes that have emerged from this research for biracial women. For trainee counselling psychologists, in my view, awareness of the issues that biracial women clients may discuss in therapy, alongside the issues pertinent to the experiences of all people of colour, need to be integrated into all aspects of their mainstream training rather than taught as part of a standalone single module (if at all). It is only then that we will start to give the biracial population greater focus and visibility.

## **Limitations of, and reflections on, the research and suggestions for future research**

### **Limitations of the research:**

Whilst this study has provided a valuable insight into the lived experiences of biracial women with Pakistani fathers and White mothers, it does inevitably have some limitations, which will now be discussed.

Participants were all recruited from my networks and all had particular demographic characteristics – they were all from middle class families and had a high level of education and this may have influenced their sense making, the experiences they had and the wider family environment they were exposed to when growing up in Pakistan. Women with different (less privileged) backgrounds, may have had very different experiences and as a result, told very different stories of their biracial identities. The results should be read with the specific characteristics of the sample in mind. In addition, this research project may have attracted women who were already relatively self-aware, interested and invested in their biracial identity and open and willing to explore it in an interview with a researcher (and someone from their wider personal network or known to someone in their wider network). A few women who were invited to participate, declined without giving any reason, thus I can only speculate about their reasons for not wishing to participate. It may have been the result of our connection (although I did not directly know any of the individuals concerned), or may have been because this was an area they were unwilling to explore and discuss with a researcher at this point in their lives.

IPA requires homogeneity in the sample and this research highlighted the challenges that this brings. It was not until the analysis stage that it became clear just how different the women were, how different their experiences were (both in terms of growing up in Pakistan and then later living in the West) and the difference in perspectives they held. In this study, I hopefully was successful in containing and capturing these differences, but it does highlight that achieving homogenous sampling in IPA is not simply a matter of identifying relevant sample characteristics in advance of recruitment. It can be difficult if not impossible to determine in advance all the ways in which participants are meaningfully different from each other. In order to ‘do justice’ to these differences and honour each participant’s unique experiences, it is important to review the richness and complexity of the data throughout the data collection process and make ‘on the hoof’ decisions about when sufficient data has been collected. It is not enough to simply rely on ‘rule of thumb’ guidance in the existing literature with regard to sample size (e.g. the much cited 6-10 interviewees for a professional doctorate in Smith et al., 2009).

### **Reflections on the research:**

Interviews enabled the collection of rich data and IPA enabled the participants to each tell their own story and however even if recruiting from outside one's own network, I recommend using *Skype* to conduct interviews. It proved to be a very valuable tool to create a safe space where participants could talk in some depth about their experience without the distraction of having another person in the room and yet it still preserved elements of the face to face experience. In addition, it made it possible for participants in other parts of the country and world to participate, where otherwise this would not have been possible (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Hanna, 2012).

This research project is relevant to my own identity as a biracial woman and I have attended to this throughout the course of this study. I have been aware of how conducting this research and exploring the participants' shifting identities has changed the way I think about my own identity and have recognised the parallel between my findings and my own life where different aspects of my identity have mattered more in different contexts. Fine (1994:72), a feminist psychologist, highlighted the importance of 'working the hyphen' in the Self-Other equation – the self being the researcher and the other being the researched. She stated 'the Self and Other are knottily entangled' and 'qualitative researchers are always implicated at the hyphen'. She explains that 'By working the hyphen, I mean to suggest that researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are multiple in all those relations' (Fine, 1994:72). Being aware of how the research process is linked with my own identity and negotiating the hyphen has enabled me to see how by engaging with the participants and their stories, my own feelings about the data and interviews, and the context of the research, I have been able to be fully present and engaged at each stage in the research journey.

### **Suggestions for future research:**

This study focused on women who had been brought up in Pakistan and subsequently moved to the West, taking into consideration the influence of environment on experience and sense of identity, it would be useful for future research to also explore the experiences of biracial women brought up in the West. This would help us to understand further how

the environment impacts on the experiences and unique story of biracial women with Pakistani fathers and White western mothers, and to consider how best to support this population.

This research has emphasised the vital role of parents in the women's experience not just when they were growing up but in their lives at the time of the interview, and particularly the long-term impact of parents on how the women made sense of their identities and felt about themselves. Although there has been some exploration of the role of parents in raising biracial children (e.g. Edwards, Caballero & Puthussery, 2010; Nakazawa, 2003; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005), this is an area that future research could play a role in further unravelling. Again, this could provide vital input for practitioners working with parents of biracial children in helping them understand how their role of parents may have impacted their children's experience and individual story. A few of the women talked about sharing experiences with their sisters when they were growing up. What was suggested from the women's stories is that brothers were likely to have had quite a different experience and whilst a few of the participants touched on this, this would be an area worth exploring to understand some of the gender differences for biracial women and men. While there is some research that includes both men and women participants (e.g. Rockquemore & Brusma, 2004; Thompson, 1999; Gillem, Cohen & Throne, 2001), there is limited research that focuses on men. Future research could expand on this and include men as well as women to understand gender differences in lived experiences or focus exclusively on biracial men's experiences.

In addition, taking into consideration the importance of parental relationships in the lives of the biracial women in this study, future research could include parents of biracial women and indeed other members of the family. This would help to provide a wider perspective on the important role that parents and other family members play in the lives of biracial women and better understand how parents can communicate with and support their children around issues of race and identity. Existing literature on how mothers of biracial youth prepare their children to navigate diverse racial experiences (Rollins & Hunter, 2013) suggests that mothers of biracial children, with Black heritage, were more likely to provide active racial socialisation messages. By contrast, mothers of biracial youth without Black

heritage were more likely to provide silent racial socialisation. Similarly, Crawford and Alaggia (2008) studied family influence on mixed race youth with Black and White heritage and explored the level of parental awareness and understanding of mixed race issues, the impact of family structure, and communication and willingness to talk about race issues within the family. Whilst there is some research in this area, it is in the field of social work and focuses on young people with Black and White heritage. Future research could explore parenting and family influence on Pakistani and White biracial women.

This research did not specifically recruit for fairness of skin, but this is an area that was important in each of the women's stories and had a key role to play in how they were perceived by others around them. Whilst there is some research on the perception of fair skin in South Asia with reference to whitening creams (e.g. Shankar & Subish, 2007), further research could explore broader perceptions of fair skin in Pakistan and the impact of this on the experiences of people with both fair and darker skin. To better understand the lived experiences of biracial women growing up in Pakistan, it would be useful to gain an insight into how people in Pakistan view biracial women (no existing research on this topic was found), using attitudinal measures (e.g. Parnham & Helms' [1981] Racial identity Attitude scale) that could be adapted. This would shed further light on the cultural context that informs biracial women's identity development.

There is existing research on competence in multicultural counselling and therapy and evidence based practice in relation to matching of client and therapist, and culturally adapted interventions (e.g. Cabral & Smith, 2011; Smith, Rodriguez & Bernal, 2011). Research that examines effectiveness of therapy with Pakistani and white biracial clients may provide further insights that can inform effective and culturally competent therapy with biracial women. In addition, more generally, further research with biracial and multiracial people of different heritages is needed to provide a fuller picture of the multiracial experience.

To conclude, this research highlights a number of key themes for biracial women with Pakistani and White western parents. These include the multiple meanings of Whiteness, the role of parents in supporting the women in making sense of their biracial identities and the women's conceptualisation of their dual heritage, sense of belonging and what home

means to them. The women's stories illustrate the individual sense making of each of the women and the unique, ongoing negotiations each of them experienced in living out their biracial identities. In order to work effectively with this group, it is important for counselling psychologists to understand the varied strands that intersect in these women's experiences and sense of identity.

## References

Ade-Serrano, Y. & Nkansa-Dwamena, O. (2015). *Proposal to include race, culture and diversity in counselling psychology*. (Online). Retrieved 10 December, 2017 from: <http://www.bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-microsite/division-counselling-psychology/training>

Ade-Serrano, Y. & Nkansa-Dwamena, O. (2016). Voicing the uncomfortable: How can we talk about race? *Counselling Psychology Review*, 31(2), 5-9.

American Psychological Association (2003). Guidelines on multicultural education, training, research, practice and organisational change for psychologists. *American Psychologist*, 58, 377-402.

American Psychological Association (2006). Evidence-based practice in psychology: APA presidential task force on evidence-based Practice. *American Psychologist*, 61, 271-285.

Ang-Lygate, M. (1996). Waking from a dream of Chinese shadows. In S. Wilkinson & C. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Representing the other: A Feminism & Psychology reader* (pp. 53-56). London: Sage.

Aspinall, P.J. (2003). The conceptualisation and categorisation of mixed race/ethnicity in Britain and North America: Identity options and the role of the state. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(3), 269-296.

Barn, R., Sinclair, R. & Ferdinand, D. (1997). *Acting on Principle, An Examination of Race and Ethnicity in Social Services Provision to Children and Families*. London: BAAF.

Becker, H. S. (1973). *Outsiders: studies in the sociology of deviance*, (Revised ed.). Free Press.

Bennett, C. & Coyle, A. (2007) A minority within a minority: experiences of gay men with intellectual disabilities. In V. Clarke & E. Peel (Eds), *Out in psychology: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer perspectives* (pp. 125-15). Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Bettez, S.C. (2010). Mixed-Race Women and Epistemologies of Belonging. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 31(1) 142-165.

Bhabha H.K. (1991) *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bhavnani, K. & Phoenix, A. (1994). *Shifting identities shifting racisms: a feminism and psychology reader*. London: Sage.

Birenbaum, A. (1970). On Managing a Courtesy Stigma. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 11, 196-206.

Bolatagici, T. (2004). Claiming the (n)either/(n)or of 'third space': (re)presenting hybrid identity and the embodiment of mixed race. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 25(1), 75-85.

Bozett, F.W. (1988). Social control of identity by children of gay fathers. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 10(5) 550-565.

Bradshaw, C.K. (1992). Beauty and the beast: On racial ambiguity. In M. P. P. Root (Ed.), *Racially mixed people in America* (pp. 77-90). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: a practical guide for beginners*. London: Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

Breakwell, G. M. (1986). *Coping with threatened identities*. London: Methuen

Breakwell, G. M. (1992). Processes of self-evaluation: efficacy and estrangement. In G. M. Breakwell (Ed.), *Social psychology of identity and the self-concept* (pp. 33–55). London: Academic Press/Surrey University Press.



- Breakwell, G. M. (2001). Social representational constraints upon identity processes. In K. Deaux and G. Philogene (Eds.), *Representations of the social: bridging theoretical traditions* (pp. 271–284). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Breakwell, G. M. (2004). Identity change in the context of the growing influence of European Union institutions. In R. Hermann, T. Risse and M. B. Brewer (Eds.), *Transnational identities: becoming European in the EU* (pp. 25–39). New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Breakwell, G. M. (2010). Resisting representations and identity processes. *Papers on Social Representations*, 19, 6.1–6.11.
- Bridges, D. (2001). The Ethics of Outsider Research, *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35(3) 371-386.
- British Psychological Society (2005). *Professional practice guidelines*. Division of Counselling Psychology. Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- British Psychological Society (2009). *Code of Ethics and Conduct*. Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- British Psychological Society (2017). *Culture and difference within and across ethnic minorities*. Division of Counselling Psychology. Leicester: British Psychological Society.
- Brown, L.S. (2009). Cultural Competence: A New Way of Thinking About Integration in Therapy. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 19(4), 340-353.
- Brunsma, D. L., & Rockquemore, K. A. (2001). The new color complex: Appearances and biracial identity. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 1(3), 225-246.
- Buchanan, N. & Acevedo, C. (2004), When Face and Soul Collide: Therapeutic Concerns with Racially Ambiguous and Nonvisible Minority Women. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1), 119-131.
- Buckley, T.R. & Robert, C.T. (2004). Biracial (Black/White) Women: A Qualitative Study of Racial Attitudes and Beliefs and Their Implications for Therapy. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1) 45-64.

Cabral, R., & Smith, T. (2011) Racial/ethnic matching of clients and therapists in mental health services: A meta-analytic review of preferences, perceptions and outcomes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(4), 537-554.

Caplan, P. (2013). Don't blame mother: Then and now. *Gender and women's studies in Canada: Critical terrain, 99-106.*

Case, K. A. (2007). Raising male privilege awareness and reducing sexism: An evaluation of diversity courses. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 31*, 426–435.

Cauce, A.M., Hiraga, Y., Mason, C. Aguilar, T., Ordonez, N. & Gonzales, N. (1992). Between a rock and a hard place: Social adjustment of biracial youth. In M.P.P. Root (Ed.), *Racially mixed people in America* (pp. 207-222), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clare, L. (2003). Managing threats to self: Awareness in early stage Alzheimer's disease. *Social Science and medicine, 57*, 1017-1029.

Clarke, V., & Kitlinger, C., & Potter, J. (2004). Kids are just cruel anyway: Lesbian and gay parents' talk about homophobic bullying. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 43*, 531-550.

Clarke, V., Ellis, S.J., Peel, E., & Riggs, D.W. (2010). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans queer psychology: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Coleman, H., Wampold, B. & Casali, S. (1995). Ethnic minorities' rating of ethnically similar and European American counselors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 42*, 55-64.

Comas-Diaz, L., & Greene, B. (1994) *Women of color: integrating ethnic and gender identities in psychotherapy*. New York: Guilford Press.

Constantine, M.G. (2002). Predictors of satisfaction with counseling: Racial and ethnic minority clients' attitudes towards counseling and ratings of their counselors' general and

multicultural counseling competence. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 30(4), 210-215.

Constantine, M.G. (2007). Racial microaggressions against African American clients in a cross-racial counseling relationship. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54, 1-16.

Cooper, M. (2010). The challenge of counselling and psychotherapy research. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 10(3), 183 -191.

Corey, G. (2001). *The art of integrative counselling*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole

Coyle, A. & Rafalin, D. (2000). Jewish gay men's accounts of negotiating cultural, religious and sexual identity: A qualitative study. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality*, 12(4), 21-48.

Crawford, S.E. & Alaggia, R. (2008). The Best of Both Worlds? Family Influences on Mixed Race Youth Identity Development. *Qualitative Social Work*, 7(1), 81-98.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6) 1241-1299.

Crenshaw, K. (2016) Ted Talk: The urgency of intersectionality. Online

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o>

Cross, W.E. (1971). Toward a psychology of Black liberation. The Negro-to-Black Conversion Experience. *Black World*, 20(9), 13-27.

Dallos, R. and Stedman, J. (2013) Systemic Formulation. In L. Johnstone & R. Dallos, *Formulation in psychology and psychotherapy: making sense of people's problems*, Second edn, (pp. 67-95) London: Routledge.

Daniel, G. R. (1996). Black and White identity in the new millennium: Unsevering the ties that bind. In M. P. P. Root (Ed.), *The multiracial experience: Racial borders as the new frontier* (pp. 121-139), CA: Sage.

Davis, F. (1992). *Fashion, culture and identity*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Davis, F. J. (1991). *Who is Black? One nations definition*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

De Jong, P., & Berg, I. K. (1998). *Interviewing for solutions*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.

Deakin, H. & Wakefield, K. (2014). Skype interviewing: reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research, 14* (5), 603-616.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: University Press.

Dwyer, S. D. & Buckle, J.L. (2009). The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 8*(1), 54-63.

Eatough, V. and Smith, J.A. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In C. Willig and W. Satinton-Rogers (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology*, (pp.193-211). Los Angeles: Sage.

Edwards, L. & Pedrotti, J. 2004, "Utilizing the Strengths of Our Cultures: Therapy with Biracial Women and Girls", *Women & Therapy, 27*(1), pp. 33-43.

Edwards, R., Caballero, C., & Puthussery, S. (2010). Parenting children from 'mixed' racial, ethnic and faith backgrounds: typifications of difference and belonging. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 33*(6), 949-967.

Eleftheriadou, Z. (2010). Cross-cultural counselling psychology. In R Woolfe, S. Stawbridge, B. Douglas & W Dryden (Eds.), *Handbook of Counselling Psychology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (195-212). London: Sage.

Elliott, R., Fischer, C.T. & Rennie, D.L. (1999). Evolving guidelines for publication of qualitative research studies in psychology and related fields. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 38*(3) 215-229.

Erikson, E.H. (1968). *Identity: youth and crisis*. Faber and Faber.

Evans, A.M. & Ramsay, K. (2015). Multiracial and Biracial Individuals: A Content Analysis of Counseling Journals, 1991–2013. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 43(4), 262-274.

Fatimilehin, I.A. (1999). Of Jewel Heritage: racial socialization and racial identity attitudes amongst adolescents of mixed African–Caribbean/White parentage. *Journal of Adolescence*, 22(3), 303-318.

Fernando, S. (1995) (Ed.). *Mental health in a multi-ethnic society*. London: Routledge.

Fine, M. (1992). *Disruptive voices: The possibilities of feminist research*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Fine, M. (1994). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 70-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fine, M. (1997). *Off white: readings on race, power, and society*. London: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. NY: Vintage Books

Franco, M. G., Katz, R., O'Brien, K. (2016). Forbidden identities: A qualitative examination of racial identity invalidation for Black/White Biracial individuals. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 50, 96-109.

Frankenberg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: the social construction of whiteness*. London: Routledge.

Fredrickson, B.L. & Roberts, T. (1997). Objectification theory: toward understanding women's lived experiences and mental health risks. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 21, 173-206.

Gaines, S. (2009). Interracial and interethnic relationships. In H. T. Reis & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of human relationships* (pp. 906-907). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gaither, S.E. (2018a) I study biracial identity in America. Here's why Meghan Markle is a big deal. <https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/5/14/17345162/meghan-markle-royal-wedding-2018-race>

Gaither, S.E. (2018b) The multiplicity of belonging: Pushing identity research beyond binary thinking, *Self and Identity*, 17(4), 443-454,

Gaither, S.E., Babbitt, L.G. & Sommers, S.R. (2018). Resolving racial ambiguity in social interactions, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 76, 259-269.

Gallais, T.L. (2008). Wherever I go there I am: reflections on reflexivity and the research stance. *Reflective practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 9, 145-155.

Garland-Thomson, R. (2006). Ways of Staring. *Journal of Visual Culture*, 5(2), 173-192.

Gaskins, P.F. (1999). *What are you? Voices of mixed-race young people*. New York: Henry Holt.

Gergen, K. (1999). *An Invitation to Social Constructionism*. London: Sage.

Ghannam, F. (2008). Beauty, Whiteness, and Desire: Media, Consumption, and Embodiment in Egypt, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 40(4), 544-546.

Gibbs, J. (1987). Identity and marginality: Issues in the treatment of biracial adolescents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 57 (2), 265-78.

Gibbs, J. T. (1989). Biracial adolescents. In J. T. Gibbs & L. Huang (Eds.), *Children of color: psychological interventions with minority youth* (pp. 322-350). New York: Josey-Bass.

Gillem, A. & Thompson, C. (2004). Introduction: Biracial Women in Therapy: Between the Rock of Gender and the Hard Place of Race. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1) 1-18.

Gillem, A.R., Cohn, L.R. & Throne, C. (2001). Black Identity in Biracial Black/White People: A Comparison of Jacqueline Who Refuses to Be Exclusively Black and Adolphus Who Wishes He Were. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 7(2), 182-196.

- Gleeson, K. & Frith, H. (2003). Getting noticed: Using clothing to negotiate visibility. *Psychology of Women Section Review*, 5(2), 7-11.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: The Overlook Press.
- Goffman, E. (1968). *Stigma - notes on the management of spoiled identity*. London: Penguin.
- Griffith, A.I. (1998). Insider / Outsider: Epistemological Privilege and Mothering Work. *Human Studies*, 21(4), 361-376.
- Hall, C. (1996). 2001: A race odyssey. In M. P. P. Root (Ed.), *The multiracial experience: Racial borders as the new frontier* (pp. 395-410). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hall, C.C.I. (1980). *The Ethnic Identity of Racially Mixed People: A Study of Black-Japanese*. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.
- Hall, C.C.I. (2004). Mixed-Race Women: One More Mountain to Climb. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1) 237-246.
- Hall, G.C.N., Hong, J.J., Zane, N.W.S. & Meyer, O.L. (2011). Culturally competent treatments for Asian Americans: The relevance of mindfulness and acceptance-based psychotherapies. *Clinical Psychology: Science and practice*, 18(3), 215-231.
- Hall, R.E. (2006) The Bleaching Syndrome Among People of Color: Implications of Skin Color for Human Behavior in the Social Environment. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*. 13(3), 19-31.
- Hanna, P. (2012). Using internet technologies (such as Skype) as a research medium: a research note. *Qualitative Research*, 12(2), 239-242.
- Harris, J.C. (2017). Multiracial Women Students and Racial Stereotypes on the College Campus. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(4), 475-491.
- Hayfield, N. & Huxley, C. (2015). Insider and outsider perspectives: Reflections on researcher identities in research with lesbian and bisexual women. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 12(2), 91-106.

- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hellawell, D. (2006). Inside-out: analysis of the insider-outsider concept as a heuristic device to develop reflexivity in students doing qualitative research. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 11(4), 483-494.
- Helms, J. E. (1995). An update of Helms's White and people of color racial identity development models. In J. G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L. A Suzuki & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counselling* (pp. 181-198). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Henwood, K., & Pidgeon, N.F. (1994). Beyond the qualitative paradigm: a framework for introducing diversity within qualitative psychology. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 4, 225-238.
- Hill, M. E. (2002). Skin Color and the Perception of Attractiveness among African Americans: Does Gender Make a Difference? *Social Psychology Quarterly* 65 (1), 77–91.
- Hirani, S.A.L. (2008). Child rearing practices in Pakistan and associated challenges for healthcare professionals, *Coinn Newsletter*.
- Holliday, R. (1999). The Comfort of Identity. *Sexualities*, 2(4), 475-491.
- Holt, A. (2010). Using the telephone for narrative interviewing: a research note. *Qualitative Research*, 10(1), 113-121.
- Hooks, B. (2003). *Rock my soul: Black people and self-esteem*. New York: Washington square press.
- Hooks, B. (2015). *Feminist theory: from margin to center*, New York: Routledge.
- Hunter, M. L. (2005). *Race, gender, and the politics of skin tone*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Hunter, M.L. (1998). Colorstruck: Skin Color Stratification in the Lives of African American Women. *Sociological Inquiry*, 68(4), 517-535.
- Ibrahim, A. (2014). Mixed marriages in Islam (blog) 24 July. Available from <http://www.romanticmuslim.com/mixed-marriage-islam> (accessed 30 Jan, 2016).



Israel, T. (2004). Conversations, Not Categories: The Intersection of Biracial and Bisexual Identities. *Women & Therapy*, 27 (1-2), 173-184.

Isran, S. & Isran, M.A. (2012). Patriarchy and Women in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 4(6), 835.

Jackson, D. & Mannix, J. 2004, "Giving voice to the burden of blame: A feminist study of mothers' experiences of mother blaming", *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 150-158.

Jacobs, J.H. (1992). Identity development in biracial children. In M.P.P. Root (Eds.), *Racially mixed people in America* (pp. 190-206). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Janghorban, R., Latifnejad Roudsari, R. & Taghipour, A. (2014). Skype interviewing: the new generation of online synchronous interview in qualitative research. *International journal of qualitative studies on health and well-being*, 9(1), 24152-3.

Jaspal, R. & Breakwell, G.M. (2014), *Identity process theory: identity, social action and social change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaspal, R. & Cinnirella, M. (2012) Identity processes, threat and interpersonal relations: Accounts from British Muslim Gay Men, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 59(2), 215-240.

Jaspal, R., & Breakwell, G. (Eds.). (2014). *Identity Process Theory: Identity, Social Action and Social Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaspal, R., and Sitaridou, I. (2013). Coping with stigmatised linguistic identities: identity threat and ethnolinguistic vitality among Andalusians. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research*, 13(2), 157–175.

Johnson, S., & Robson, C. (1999). Threatened identities: The experience of women in transition to programmes of professional higher education. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 9, 273-288.

Kerwin, C. & Ponterotto, J.G. (1995). Biracial identity development: Theory and research. In J.G. Ponterotto, J.M. Casas, L.A. Suzuki & C.M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling* (pp.199-217). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kich, (1992). The developmental process of asserting a biracial, bicultural identity. In M.P.P. Root (Eds.), *Racially mixed people in America* (pp. 250-264). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Klausen, S.M. (2010). Reclaiming the white daughter's purity: Afrikaner nationalism, racialized sexuality, and the 1975 Abortion and Sterilization Act in apartheid South Africa, *Journal of Women's History*, 22(3), 39.

Korgen, K.O. (1998). *From Black to Biracial: Transforming Racial Identity among Americans*. CT: Praeger.

Kroger, J. (2000). Ego identity status research in the new millennium. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 24(2), 145-148.

La Roche, M., Batista, C. & D'Angelo, E. (2010). A content analysis of guided imagery scripts: A strategy for cultural adaptations. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 67, 45-57.

Lago, C. & Thompson, J. (2002). Counselling and race. In S. Palmer (Ed.), *Multicultural counselling: a reader*. (pp. 3-20) London: Sage.

Lansdown, R., Rumsey, N., Bradbury, E., Carr, T. & Partridge, J. (1997). *Visibly different: coping with disfigurement*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Larkin, M., Watts, S. and Clifton, E. (2006) Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 102-120.

Laszloffy, T.A. (2008). Therapy with mixed race families. In M. McGoldrick, K.V. Hardy (Eds.) *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture and gender in clinical practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) (pp. 275-285). New York: Guildford press.

Liladhar, J. (1999). Racial Categories: Appearance and Othering. *Feminism & Psychology*, 9(2), 239-242.

Lorenzo-Blanco, E.I., Bares, C.B. & Delva, J. (2013). Parenting, family processes, relationships, and parental support in multiracial and multi-ethnic families: An exploratory study of youth perceptions. *Family Relations*, 62(1), 125-139.

Lou, E., Lalonde, R.N. and Wilson, C. (2011) Examining a multidimensional framework of racial identity across different Biracial groups, *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 2, 79-90.

Madill, A., Jordan, A., & Shirley, C. (2000). Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: realist, contextualist and radical constructionist epistemologies. *British Journal of psychology*, 91, 1-20.

Malešević, S. (2004). *The sociology of ethnicity*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Calif; London: Sage.

Maramba, G. G. & Hall, G.C.N. (2002). Meta-analyses of ethnic match as a predictor of dropout, utilization and level of functioning. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 8(3), 290-297.

Maslow, A.H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being*, 2nd edn, New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: a personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in Women's Studies, Working Paper 189, Wellesley College.

McLeod, J. (2001). *Qualitative research in counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

McNab, S. & Kavner, E. (2001). When it all goes wrong – challenge to mother blame: forging connections between mother and daughter. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 23, (2), 189-207.

Michael, R.T. (2004). Sexual capital: An extension of Grossman's concept of health capital. *Journal of Health Economics*, 23(4), 643-652.

Miller, J. & Glassner, B. (2004), The "inside" and the "outside": finding realities in interviews. In D. Silverman, (Ed.) *Qualitative research: issues of theory, method and practice*, 3rd edn, (pp. 131-148). CA, London: SAGE.

Miville, M.L., Constantine, M.G., Baysden, M.F. & So-Lloyd, G. (2005). Chameleon Changes: An Exploration of Racial Identity Themes of Multiracial People. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*(4), 507-516.

Moloney, L. L. (2001). Do fathers 'win' or do mothers 'lose'? A preliminary analysis of closely contested parenting judgments in the family court of Australia. *International Journal of Law, Policy, and the Family, 15*, 363 - 396.

Morten, G., and Atkinson, D.R. (1983). Minority identity development and preference for counselor race. *Journal of Negro education, 52*, 156-161.

Mulvaney-Day, N.E., Earl, T.R., Diaz-Linhart, Y., & Alegria, M. (2011). Preferences for relational style with mental health clinicians: A qualitative comparison of African American, Latino and Non-Latino White patients. *Journal of Clinical psychology, 67*, 31-44.

Nakashima, C.L. (1992). An invisible monster: The creation and denial of mixed-race people in America. In M.P.P. Root (Ed.), *Racially mixed people in America* (pp. 162-178). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Nakazawa, D. (2003). *Does anybody else look like me? A parent's guide to raising multiracial children*. Cambridge, Mass.: Perseus.

Narayan, K. (1993), How Native Is a "Native" Anthropologist?", *American Anthropologist, 95*(3), 671-686.

Neimeyer, R. A., & Stewart, A. E. (2000). Constructivist and narrative psychotherapies. In C. R. Snyder & R. E. Ingram (Eds.), *Handbook of psychological change: Psychotherapy processes and practices for the 21st century* (pp. 337-357). New York: Wiley.

Newman, A. M. (2017): Desiring the standard light skin: black multiracial boys, masculinity and exotification, *Identities*, DOI: [10.1080/1070289X.2017.1377420](https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2017.1377420).

Nishimura, N. (2004). Counseling Biracial Women: An Intersection of Multiculturalism and Feminism. *Women & Therapy, 27*(1) 133-145.

Nishimura, N.J. (1998). Assessing the issues of multiracial students on college campuses. *Journal of College Counseling*, 1(1), 45-53.

Nkansa-Dwamena, O. (2010). *Reflections on sameness and difference: Implications for counselling psychology and professional practice*. (Unpublished doctoral thesis, City, University of London). Retrieved from <http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/19657/>

O'Donoghue, M. (2004). Racial and Ethnic Identity Development in White Mothers of Biracial, Black-White Children. *Affilia*, 19(1), 68-84.

Omi, M. & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (2015). *Racial formation in the United States* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Organista, K. C. (2000). Latinos. In J.R. White & A.S. Freeman (Eds.), *Cognitive Behavioral Group Therapy: For specific problems and populations* (pp. 281-301). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Paquette, D. (2004). Theorizing the father-child relationship: Mechanisms and developmental outcomes. *Human Development*, 47, 193-219.

Parham, T. A. and Helms, J. E. (1981). The influence of Black students' racial identity attitudes on preferences for counselor's race. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 28(3), 250-257.

Patton, M.Q. (2002), *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*, (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA; London: SAGE.

Perry, C., Thurston, M. & Green, K. (2004). Involvement and Detachment in Researching Sexuality: Reflections on the Process of Semi Structured Interviewing. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14(1), 135-148.

Phoenix, A. (2014). Colourism and the politics of beauty. *Feminist Review*, 108, 97-105.

Pidgeon, N. & Henwood, K. (1997). Using grounded theory in psychological research. In N. Hayes (Ed.), *Doing qualitative analysis in psychology* (pp. 245-273). Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

Poston, W. C. (1990). The Biracial Identity Development Model: A Needed Addition. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 69(2), 152-155.

Qadeer, M.A. (2006). *Pakistan: Social and cultural transformation in a Muslim nation*. London: Routledge.

Quinn, B.A. (2002). Sexual harassment and masculinity: the power and meaning of 'girl watching'. *Gender & Society*, 16(3), 386-402.

Renn, K.A. (2000). "Patterns of Situational Identity Among Biracial and Multiracial College Students", *The Review of Higher Education*, 23 (4), 399-420.

Renn, K.A. (2008). Research on biracial and multiracial identity development: Overview and synthesis. *New Directions for Student Services*, 123, 13-21.

Richardson, R. & Wood, A. (2004). RAISE Project & Uniting Britain Trust, *The achievement of British Pakistani learners: work in progress: the report of the RAISE project, 2002-04, funded by Yorkshire Forward*, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent.

Rockquemore, K. & Brunsma, D. (2004). Negotiating Racial Identity: Biracial Women and Interactional Validation. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1), 85-102.

Rockquemore, K. A., & Laszloffy, T. A. (2003). Multiple Realities: A Relational Narrative Approach in Therapy with Black-White Mixed-Race Clients. *Family Relations*, 52(2), 119-128.

Rockquemore, K.A. & Laszloffy, T.A. (2005). *Raising biracial children*. Lanham: Altamira Press.

Rockquemore, K.A. (1998). Between black and white Exploring the "Biracial" Experience. *Race and Society*, 1(2), 197-212.

Rockquemore, K.A. (2002), Negotiating the Color Line: The Gendered Process of Racial Identity Construction among Black/White Biracial Women. *Gender & Society*, 16(4), 485-503.

Rollins, A. & Hunter, A.G. (2013). Racial Socialization of Biracial Youth: Maternal Messages and Approaches to Address Discrimination. *Family Relations*, 62(1), 140-153.

Roomi, M.A. & Parrott, G. (2008). Barriers to development and progression of women entrepreneurs in Pakistan. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 179(1), 59-72.

Root, M. (1997), Mixed race women, In N. Zack (Ed.) *Race/sex: Their sameness, difference, and interplay* (pp. 157-172). New York: Routledge.

Root, M. (2004). From Exotic to a Dime a Dozen, *Women & Therapy*, 27(1), 19-31.

Root, M. P.P. (1996). *The multiracial experience: Racial borders as the new frontier*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Root, M.P.P. (1990). Resolving "Other" Status: Identity Development of Biracial Individuals. *Women and Therapy*, 9(1), 185-205.

Root, M.P.P. (1994). Mixed-race women. In L. Comas-Diaz & B. Greene (Eds.) *Women of color: Integrating ethnic and gender identities in psychotherapy*, (pp. 455-478), New York: Guilford Press.

Root, M.P.P. (1999). The biracial baby boom: Understanding ecological constructions of racial identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In R. H. Sheets & E.R. Hollins (Eds.), *Racial and ethnic identity in school practices: Aspects of human development* (pp. 67-89). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. 3rd edn, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rumsey, N. & Harcourt, D. (2005). *The psychology of appearance*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Rumsey, N. (2002). Body image & congenital conditions with visible differences. In: Cash, T. F. & Pruzinsky, T., (Eds.) *Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice*. New York: Guilford Press.

Scarduzio, A.J. & Geist-Martin, P. (2008). Making sense of fractured identities: male professors' narratives of sexual harassment, *Communication Monographs*, 75(4), 369-395.

Shankar, P. R.& Subish, P. (2007). Fair skin in South Asia: an obsession? *Journal of Pakistan Association of Dermatologists*, 17, 100-104.

Smith, J. (1995). Semi-Structured Interviewing and Qualitative Analysis. In J.A. Smith, R Harre & L.V. Langenhove (Eds.) *Rethinking methods in psychology*, (pp. 10-26). London: Sage.

Smith, J. A. and Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In J. A. Smith (Ed.) *Qualitative Psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 51-80). London: Sage.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P. & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: theory, method and research*. CA, London: SAGE.

Smith, T.B., Domenech-Rodriguez, M., & Bernal, G. (2011). Culture. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 67, 166-175.

Stanley, J.L. (2004). Biracial Lesbian and Bisexual Women: Understanding the Unique Aspects and Interactional Processes of Multiple Minority Identities. *Women & Therapy*, 27(1-2), 159-171.

Stewart, K., & Williams, M. (2005). Researching online populations: the use of online focus groups for social research. *Qualitative Research*, 5, 395-416.

Stonequist, E.V. (1937). *The marginal man: A study in personality and culture conflict*. New York: Russell and Russell.

Storrs, D. (1999). Whiteness as Stigma: Essentialist Identity Work by Mixed-Race Women. *Symbolic Interaction*, 22(3), 187-212.



Strach, L. & Wicander, L. (1993). Fitting in: issues of tokenism and conformity for minority women, *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 58(3), 22.

Streeter, C.A. (1996). Ambiguous bodies: Locating Black/White women in cultural representations. In M.P.P. Root (Ed.), *The multiracial experience: Racial borders as the new frontier* (pp. 305-320). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sue, D.W. & Sue, D. (2013). *Counseling the culturally diverse: theory and practice*, 6th ed., Hoboken, N.J: Wiley.

Sue, D.W. & Torino, G.C. (2005). Racial cultural competence: Awareness, knowledge and skills. In R. T. Carter (Ed.), *Handbook of Multicultural Psychology and Counseling* (pp. 3-18). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Sue, D.W., Bucceri, J., Lin, A. A., Nadal, K.L.& Torino, G.C. (2007). Racial microaggressions and the Asian American experience. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 13, 72-81.

Sullivan, J. R. (2012). Skype: An appropriate method of data collection for qualitative interviews? *The Hilltop Review*, 6, 5460.

Tajfel, H. & Turner, J.C. (1986). *The Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behavior*. London: Nelson-Hall.

Tang, D.T.S. (2007). The research pendulum: multiple roles and responsibilities as a researcher. *Journal of Lesbian studies*, 10, 11-27.

Thompson, C.A. (1999). Identity resolution in Black/White individuals: The process of asserting a biracial identity. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 52 (10-B), 5571-5572.

Tizard, B. & Phoenix, A. (1993). *Black, white or mixed race? Race and racism in the lives of young people of mixed parentage*. London: Routledge.

Tizard, B. & Phoenix, A. (2001), *Black, white or mixed race? Race and racism in the lives of young people of mixed parentage*, Revised ed., London: Routledge.

UK Census 2011, Office for National Statistics.

Vignoles, V. L., Chrysochoou, X., and Breakwell, G. M. (2002). Evaluating models of identity motivation: self-esteem is not the whole story. *Self and Identity*, 1(3), 201–218.

Vivero, V. N. & Jenkins, S. R. (1999). Existential hazards of the multicultural individual: Defining and understanding 'cultural homelessness'. *Cultural diversity & Ethnic Minority psychology*, 5(1), 6-26.

Wade, L. (2012) 'Colorism and the "science" of beauty' *Sociological Images*, 12 May, <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2012/05/12/colorism-and-the-science-of-beauty/>, last accessed 2 June 2014.

Wallace, K.R. (2003). Contextual factors affecting identity among mixed heritage college students. In M.P.P Root and M. Kelly (eds.), *Multiracial child resource book: living complex identities*. Seattle, Wash.: MAVIN Foundation.

Warner, L. R. (2008). A best practices guide to intersectional approaches in psychological research. *Sex Roles*, 59, 454-463.

Watts, J. (2006). 'The outsider within': dilemmas of qualitative feminist research within a culture of resistance. *Qualitative Research*, 6(3), 385-402.

Wetherell, M. & Mohanty, C.T. (2010). *The SAGE handbook of identities*, (1st ed.), CA, London: SAGE.

Wilkinson, S. & Kitzinger, C. (1996). *Representing the other: A feminism & Psychology Reader*. London: Sage.

Wilkinson, S. (1998) Focus groups in feminist research: power, interaction, and the co-construction of meaning. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 21(1), 111–25.

Williams, C. B. (1999), Claiming a biracial identity: Resisting social constructions of race and culture. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 77(1), 32-35.

Williams, T. (1996). Race as process: Reassessing the “What are you?” encounters of biracial individuals. In M.P.P. Root (Ed.), *The multiracial experience* (pp. 191-210), Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Willig, C. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Wilson, A. (1987). *Mixed race children: A study of identity*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Woolfe, R., Strawbridge, S., Douglas, B. & Dryden, W. (2010), *Handbook of counselling psychology*, 3rd ed., London: Sage

Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology and Health*, 15, 215-228.

Zahid, N. (2011). The effects of a Pakistani heritage. In C. Lago (Ed), *The handbook of transcultural counselling and psychotherapy* (pp.309-320). Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.

Zane, N., Sue, S., Chang, J., Huang, L., Huang, J., Lowe, S., Lee, E. (2005). Beyond ethnic match: Effects of client-therapist cognitive match in problem perception, coping orientation, and therapy goals on treatment outcomes. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33, 569-585.

# Appendices

## Contents

Appendix A: Demographic form

Appendix B: Interview guide

Appendix C: Participant Information sheet

Appendix D: Consent form

## Appendix A: Demographic form

### Lived experiences of biracial women with Pakistani and White parents: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of identity

#### Some questions about you

In order for me to learn about the people taking part in this research, I would be grateful if you could answer the following questions. All information provided is anonymous.

Please either write your answer in the space provided, or highlight the answer, or answers, that best apply to you.

1. How old are you?			
2. What country did you grow up in?		What country do you live in now?	
3. Are you? Full-time employed   Part-time employed   Full-time student   Part-time student Other: _____			
4. If you work, what is your occupation?			
5. What is your mother's racial/ethnic background? _____			
6. What is your father's racial/ethnic background? _____			
7. What is your religion? _____			
8. How would you describe your social class? (e.g., working class; middle class; no class category) _____			
9. How would you describe your relationship status? Single Partnered Married/Civil Partnership Separated Divorced/Civil Partnership Dissolved Other: _____			
10. If you are in a relationship, what is your partner's racial/ethnic background?			
11. Do you have children?      Yes      No			

Thank you!

## Appendix B: Interview guide

### Lived experiences of biracial women with Pakistani and White parents: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of identity

#### Interview guide

If you would rather not answer any of the questions asked during the interview, please let me know

- To start with, tell me a bit about your family history
- What were your experiences growing up and the challenges, if any, you faced having a Pakistani father and white mother? (Prompt: Can you tell me more about a time when you experienced this, can you give me an example of when that happened)
- Did you experience any conflicts having a Pakistani father and white mother?
- Do you recall any time or situation when you became aware that you may be somewhat different?
- Did you experience any pressures to conform to societal expectations?
- What role has your appearance played in your experience?
- How was your experience as a woman different or similar to your brother (if you have one) or other male peers?
- What kind of responses did you get from others around you to your biracial identity? How did other people read/make sense of your identity? What about now?
  - Something other participants have talked about is how people struggle to read their ethnicity. Is this something you have experienced?
- How do you describe your racial/ethnic background when asked? What factors do you think may have contributed to your describing yourself in this way?
- Who in your family was an important influence on you (with regard to racial/ethnic identity) when growing up?

- In your view, does it make a difference that you have/had a Pakistani father and white mother as opposed to a Pakistani mother and White father?
- Are you bilingual? And if so did you favour one or the other language? Did you feel advantaged or disadvantaged in any way regarding language?
- What role/impact did religion and participation in cultural rituals and events have on your sense of identity? What about now? How does this play out in your daily life?
- What were the positive aspects, if any, in your experience of having one Pakistani and one white parent? The negative aspects?
- What stressors did you experience growing up relating to your biracial background and what strategies did you use to cope with them? And now?
- Do you think your biracial background influenced your choice of partner? (i.e. who you chose and why?)
- What are your current experiences within your own created family? (Your children, your partner and his or her background?) What impact does your biracial background have on your partner/children?
- As you know, I am a counselling psychologist in training and I am passionate about my research because I want to understand how my profession can better help people like us. So, whether you've had personal therapy, or participated in some other form of development, or even if you haven't, what do you think practitioners need to be aware of to do that? Equally, is there something that you would find unhelpful?
- Is there anything else you would like to add? Or ask me?

## Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet

### Lived experiences of identity of biracial women with Pakistani and White parents

#### Participant Information Sheet

##### Who are the researchers and what is the research about?

Thank you for your interest in this research on biracial women with Pakistani and White parents lived experience of their sense of identity. There has been little in the way of psychological research on biracial women, however, feminist researchers across a number of different fields of research have explored the experiences of biracial women and the challenges they face. One group that is to yet to be explored is women with Pakistani and White parents. The experiences of this group may be different from other groups of biracial women given their unique cultural, ethnic and racial positioning, therefore it is important to hear the voices of women from this group.

My name is Humaira Mannan and I am completing a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology in the Department of Health and Social Sciences, at the University of the West of England, Bristol. I am completing this research for my doctoral research project. My research is supervised by Dr. Victoria Clarke, an Associate Professor and qualitative and feminist psychologist (see below for her contact details), and Miltos Hadjiosif, a senior lecture in counselling psychology.

##### What does participation involve?

You are invited to participate in a qualitative *Skype* interview – a qualitative interview is a ‘conversation with a purpose’ and you will be asked to answer questions in your own words (if you live in or near Bristol and would prefer a face-to-face interview, please let me know). Using *Skype* technology we will be able to see each other via video as we talk, but you’ll be able to participate in the interview from your own home or another convenient location. The questions will cover your family history, the positive and negative aspects of having one Pakistani and one white parent, responses you have got from others around you and pressures, challenges or conflicts you might have faced growing up and how you coped with these. The interview will be audio captured and I will transcribe (type-up) the interview for



the purposes of analysis. Prior to the interview, you will be emailed a consent form and asked to sign it and return it to me as an email attachment.

You will also be emailed and asked to complete (and return as an email attachment) a short demographic questionnaire. This is for me to gain a sense of who is taking part in the research. Before we start, I will discuss what is going to happen in the interview and you will be given an opportunity to ask any questions that you might have. You will be given another opportunity to ask questions at the end of the interview.

### **Who can participate?**

Any woman over the age of 18 who has a Muslim Pakistani father and White mother, and access to a computer or mobile device for the purposes of a *Skype* interview (unless they live in or near Bristol and are willing to participate in a face-to-face interview).

### **How will the data be used?**

Your interview data will be anonymised (i.e., any information that can identify you will be removed) and analysed for my research project. This means extracts from your interview may be quoted in my research report and in any publications and presentations arising from the research. The demographic data for all of the participants will be compiled into a table and included in my research report and in any publications or presentations arising from the research. The information you provide will be treated confidentially and personally identifiable details will be stored separately from the data.

### **What are the benefits of taking part?**

You will get the opportunity to participate in a research project that is personally relevant and on an important social and psychological issue.

### **How do I withdraw from the research?**

If you decide you want to withdraw from the research, please contact me via email. Please note that there are certain points beyond which it will be impossible to withdraw from the research – for instance, when I have submitted my research report. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to contact me within a month of participation if you wish to withdraw your data. I'd like to emphasise that participation in this research is voluntary and all information provided is anonymous.

### **Are there any risks involved?**

I don't anticipate any particular risks to you with participating in this research; however, there is always the potential for research participation to raise uncomfortable and distressing issues. For this reason, I have provided information about some of the different resources which are available to you. The following websites lists accredited and in some instances low cost counselling services:

*For people living in the UK*

The **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)** is a UK registered charity that provides a directory of therapists on the BACP register and offers advice on finding a therapist: [www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/therapists](http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk/therapists)

**Mixed Foundations** is a charity specialising in counselling services for the dual heritage community in the UK: [www.mixedfoundations.org.uk](http://www.mixedfoundations.org.uk)

**Mind** is a UK mental health charity that provides advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem in the UK: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

The **National Counselling Society** is a UK charity that offers a list of professional counsellors and advice on how to choose a counsellor and what counselling can be useful for: [www.Nationalcounsellingsociety.org](http://www.Nationalcounsellingsociety.org)

*For people living in the US*

The **American Psychological Association** is the largest association of psychologists in the US and provides a service to find practicing psychologist in your local area in the US: [www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org)

If you have any questions about this research please contact me on

Email: [Humaira2.Mannan@live.uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Humaira2.Mannan@live.uwe.ac.uk)

Or my research supervisor: Victoria Clarke, Department of Health and Social Sciences, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY

Email: [Victoria.Clarke@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Victoria.Clarke@uwe.ac.uk)

*This research has been approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC)*

## Appendix D: Consent form

### **Lived experiences of biracial women with Pakistani and White parents: An interpretative phenomenological analysis of identity**

#### **Consent Form**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research on lived experience of biracial women with Pakistani and white parents, with a particular focus on identity.

My name is Humaira Mannan and I am completing a Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology in the Department of Health and Social Sciences, University of the West of England, Bristol. I am collecting this data collection for my doctoral research project. My research is supervised by Dr. Victoria Clarke, an Associate Professor in the Department of Health and Social Sciences. She can be contacted at the Department of Health and Social Sciences, University of the West of England, Frenchay Campus, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol BS16 1QY [Tel: (0117) 3282176; Email: Victoria.Clarke@uwe.ac.uk] if you have any queries about the research.

Before we begin I would like to emphasize that:

- your participation is entirely voluntary
- you are free to refuse to answer any question
- you are free to withdraw at any time [within the limits specified on the information sheet]
- you are also the 'expert'. There are no right or wrong answers and I am interested in everything you have to say.

Please sign this form to show that you have read the contents of this form and of the participant information sheet and you consent to participate in the research. You also agree to audio recording of your interview and transcription of the recording.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Please return the signed copy of this form to me.

*This research has been approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC)*