

The role of Religion in the Educational Success of
Young Black Christian students: towards a concept of
'Faith Capital'.

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Dedication

In loving memory of my mum
Lydia Anne Freckleton
1931-2000

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ABSTRACT

The role of Religion in the Educational Success of Young Black Christian students: towards a concept of 'Faith Capital'

This study provides new empirically based knowledge about Young Black Christian students' (YBCS) perceptions of the contributory factors to their Educational Success. It also offers insights into a new emergent concept Faith Capital existing especially in the mind of those who believe in God. This study offers the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS.

This study is rooted in the author's role as a Pentecostal Christian Black woman and an educator, who entered the teaching profession in September 1995 hoping to make a difference. This study is looking at factors which support success rather than the usual studies which look at reasons for failure. This research offers the concept Faith Capital, from which academics and Black communities can identify a contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS. It addresses the key question: What is the role of religion in the Educational Success of YBCS: towards a concept 'Faith Capital'.

This research uses a constructivist methodological approach to explore concerns regarding Young Black Students (YBS) who are labelled as non-achievers. Their failure to attain Educational Success has been the subject of studies and debates over the last 40 years. Responses and interventions to these concerns have been numerous and varied.

The research question is explored using a variety of methodologies, allowing for the use of interdisciplinary approaches to understand the popular view of poor academic achievement for YBS. Through the literature review and empirical investigations of YBCS regarding what they perceive as contributory factors to their Educational Success the author concluded that the concept Faith Capital is a contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.0 Introduction

The impetus for undertaking this study was influenced by a number of key events and stages in my life, which will be expressed more fully later in this dissertation. However, I share some initial thoughts here, so as to give the reader an overview. I am a Christian Black woman and an educator, who has achieved Academic success. I embarked onto my Bachelor of Arts Degree course after gaining full-time occupation and studying at evening classes to gain my A' levels. I returned to full-time education (University) after being employed for a while.

My research commenced with some concerns, thoughts and questions I held as to the underlying reasons for widely held views of the underachievement of Young Black Students. These views seemed to inform and shape the beliefs, ideologies and practices of some educational literature and academic practitioners. My research sought to challenge such views, and in my opinion, these views seemed to permeate the Black arena and therefore inhibit the achievement of Young Black Students. Search for literature that supports Young Black Students achievement proved futile. The majority of literature and journalistic opinions mostly supported reasons for underachievement.

However, as I did not hold with the view that Young Black Students were underachieving, and in response to the minimal literature available on the academic achievements of Young Black Students, I commenced my search into identifying factors that contribute to their Educational Success.

1.1 Background

Due to my professional role as an educator, and secondly my role as a youth leader within a large Black community church, I developed a

heightened awareness of the discussions around under-achievement of Young Black students. The discourse on their underachievement was much more prevalent than the discussions on their achievement. This motivated me to ask some key questions. How can I, a Black youth leader and educationalist effectively respond culturally and academically to what I had perceived to be a stigma towards Young Black Students? I use the term stigma here, to refer to a popular paraded view within the media (Guardian 2005-2010), of the underachievement of Young Black Students. My roles in the church and community therefore led me to ask the following questions:

- How did I achieve Educationally?
- How did my peers achieve Educationally?
- What are the factors that contribute to their Education?

These questions outline the concerns I have about the perception that Young Black Students are not achieving within education, and the possible disconnect between those identified as achieving within Education and government figures of poor achievement, and this is reported in the Youth Cohort Study (YCS), (2011); SFR (2013, 2014). Furthermore, the questions offer the opportunity to explore the Educational achievement of Young Black Students and identify factors that contribute to their Educational Achievement. Importantly, I reiterate from the outset that this study was not concerned with identifying the role of religion in the Educational achievement of Young Black Christian Students but was concerned with merely highlighting reasons for non-educational achievement of Young Black Students, in general.

I make clear this distinction as the majority of available reports and research continue to convey factors that contribute to non-achievement of Young Black Students as highlighted in the works by Mirza's (1992), Byfield's (2008) and Rhamie's (2007). These writers identify key issues relating to some of the perceived contributory factors for poor educational achievement; such as racism, class, and gender. Mutual discourse of these

perceived contributory factors is explored, and also critically analysed later in this study.

Another motivator for this work was my prior studying on Young Black Students educational achievements in July 1997, which revealed a sparseness of effective responses to the then proposed reasons for under-achievement. My research for my Masters in Education, in 1999 highlighted the poor educational achievement of young Black Caribbean boys and sought to explain the differences in the educational achievement of Black African and Caribbean boys. Almost twenty years later in 2015 the data for educational achievement of Young Black Students continue to highlight their poor achievement (SFR 2016).

I argue here that, it became increasingly evident from explorations with the church seniors, by seniors I mean an elderly person an 'old age pensioner' (Oxford dictionary 2015), by church seniors I mean an elderly person who has attended church over several years, that Young Black Students, especially Young Black Christian Students are achieving Educational Success. However, they are misrepresented in how they are portrayed in some sectors of our society, resulting in media stories and reports lacking any 'credible' narratives from the Young Black Students themselves. Moreover, this view may be seen as subjective as the initial exploratory interviews with the church seniors also produced limited data.

Consequently, I was dissatisfied with the portrayal of Young Black Students being labelled as failures. (Guardian 2005, BBC 2010). This raised further thoughts about the relevance and impact of my Christian faith on my Educational Success. I was concerned to further understand how according to Pattison's (2000:7) view, my 'religious belief, faith traditions and practices engage with the experiences, questions and actions' of, for example, the Young Black students' discussed in this study. This possibility

Pattison (2000) suggests creates the space for conducting an 'enriching dialogue'.

Situating this research in the field of education poses challenges, relating to its varied perspectives, limitations and implementations which will be addressed later in this study. However, it is within this arena that my research is grounded as stated previously in the studies of Swann's (1985), Gillborn's (2005) and Byfield's (2009).

In taking a stance as a Christian Black woman and an educator, to view this work through practical educational and Christian belief lenses, the next section sets out some initial explanations of working definitions and terms for consideration.

This study examines ways in which Young Black Christian Students (YBCS) achieve Educational Success. For the purpose of this study, I am defining YBCS as students who have gained sufficient qualifications to enter onto a degree course within a UK University, and who are professing Christians. For the purpose of this dissertation I am using the term young to mean those who have transitioned from school, or Further Education (FE) to University, as the Oxford Concise Dictionary (2015) states that young may be a teenager or a young adult. It should also be borne in mind that the young participants within this study are aged between 18 – 25. My reasoning here is that the plethora of statistics and popular views on Black underachievement usually incorporate the term young.

The early exposition of Coard's (1971) work have contributed to some of the most comprehensive foundations relating to the possible reasons for poor Educational Success of Young Black Students within the UK, Rhamie's (2007). In recent years, the works of Byfield (2008), Gillborn (2012), and Strand (2013), further contributed to the continued development of

understandings relating to significant issues associated with poor educational achievement of Young Black students.

One of the principal notions which informs the concept of educational achievement is Bourdieu's (1987) notion of cultural capital. This is important in this context because Bourdieu's (1987) Cultural Capital theory asserts:

'Academic success is largely the preserve of pupils who have the ability to fit in with the dominant cultural values' (p11).

Having acknowledged two distinct ideas above, namely, educational underachievement and educational success, this study seeks to critique these ideas by looking at a different way of examining the issue, fostering interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary relationships in exploring the development of contributory factors to Educational Success of YBCS, and offering support on their academic journey. I acknowledge here that there are different perspectives regarding factors contributing to Educational Success. It is from this standpoint that I suggest contributory factors to Educational Success for Young Black Students that are valid towards driving change in the popular view that are highlighted in later chapters.

This study has accepted the Young Black Students poor academic achievements represented by the Youth Cohort Study (YCS 2011), and government reports Statistical First Release (SFR 2013, 2014) highlighting failure with the results or outcomes of government and community initiatives, ultimately terminating in minimal progress. It is within this discourse that I offer the concept Faith Capital as a possible contributory factor to the Educational Success of Young Black Christian Students.

I draw on research regarding Young Black Students, my own historical experience of being a Young Black Christian student, influenced by my family and church, as well as my current role as a Head of department in a Further Education college. I also draw on the narratives and stories from

fieldwork participants, the focus groups' responses from public servants regarding perceptions of the emergent concept Faith Capital, and several authors' contribution on Religious Capital as this is relevant in the contextualization of this study.

Whilst grounding this research in the field of education, it explores Young Black Christian Students experiences and narratives that are analysed by using interdisciplinary approaches to bring greater understanding of their Educational Success. I wish to explore the stories and experiences of Young Black Christian Students associated with the issues above. Furthermore, I am interested to understand why Young Black Students are perceived as not achieving Educational Success. I acknowledge from the outset that numerous reports and research have highlighted Young Black Students as poor achievers (*Swann,1985; Gillborn,2005*).

This picture inspired me to research, what for me, was not a comfortable or acceptable situation regarding Young Black Students apparent position. I was aware of abundance of scholarly research reasons for academic failure among Young Black Students, and the dearth of research on impetuses for Educational Success. I was faced with the dichotomy as to interrogate the immense available reports and research on reasons for failure, or whether to deviate and follow my initial convictions and explore factors that contribute to Educational Success. Consequently, I chose to explore factors that contribute to Educational Success, and of course in doing this I had to undertake a review of the research on factors that contribute to failure. Furthermore, I was interested to understand the motivating factors for Young Black Students' Educational Success and respond to what I had perceived to be a necessary exploration. Moreover, I chose to focus on the positive and not the paraded negative comments of Young Black Students' academic achievements, but as asserted by Showunmi and Maylor (2013) who cite Jean-Marie et al. (2009) focusing on;

'The negative (non-educational achievement) of young Black students I can lose sight of the positive ...and what is possible'. (p12)

Therefore, to set context to the study I move on to share the explanation and working definition of terms in the next section.

1.2 Explanation and working definition of terms

Acknowledging the potential challenges to this study, I have taken time to reflect on my Christian practices, as youth leader and on my involvement with Black young people within my church, college and community. It became apparent that my earlier studies were without acknowledgment of the theological insights (religious beliefs) that frame my thinking, and therefore warrant explanation and a definition of the working terms within this study at this juncture.

I begin this investigation by researching the landscape of under-achievement of Young Black Students within the UK, in which the following terms are often used; Educational Success, Educational Underachievement, Educational achievement, Young Black Student, Young, Black, Ethnicity, Race.

Educational Success

The term Educational Success within this study refers to students who have attained sufficient qualifications to allow them to embark onto the first year of a Degree programme, without usually progressing immediately from full-time education. I offer this definition of the term Educational Success due to the fact that some Young Black Students enter into higher Education (HE) later in life, this usually demonstrates their perseverance, tenacity, resilience, and ability to overcome initial adversity, to enable them to progress to HE.

Educational Success and educational achievement are sometimes portrayed as the same thing and often interchanged by various educational

and governmental establishments, researchers and authors. In this research, I use these terms as follows: I refer to educational achievement to mean students who have obtained 5 GCSEs A*- C as measured by the UK government statistics. Educational Success refers to students who have attained sufficient qualifications to allow them to embark onto the first year of a Degree programme, without usually progressing immediately from full-time education. I use this definition for Educational Success to challenge the distinction between government statistics that usually measure Educational Success as achieving GCSE's or A' levels. This study highlights that for many YBS GCSE's or A' levels were not the progression route used to enter University.

I pause here to offer justification for the use of the term Educational Success. Achievement of 5 GCSE's A - C are often viewed as an initial indicator of a pupil's potential to enter HE. This is based on the substantive amount of evidence on GCSE achievement obtained by the now dated Youth Cohort Study (YCS 2011), which correlates with the likelihood of attending University. It is also widely reported by YCS Survey (Sweep 3, 2, 2011), that in general GCSE attainment at age 16 significantly influences entry to Degrees in Higher Education (HE) by age 19. The YCS (2011) identified that 96% of 18-19-year olds studying for a Degree attained 5 or more GCSEs in a Year at age 16; the study also revealed that the more GCSEs held the greater likelihood of studying at Degree level.

However, this is not a true reflection for all YBS. Despite lower GCSE results at age 16, minority ethnic groups are more likely to persevere with their education, by re-sitting exams for better grades after the age of 16 to ensure entrance into HE (DfES 2007). The YCS (2011) only captures data relating to 16 to 19-year olds therefore data on admission to HE for Young Black Students are usually missed as they tend to enter HE at an older age (UCAS 2013). Moreover, this highlights the need for Educational Success

for YBS to be measured with a different government measure to GCSEs or A' levels.

I was presented with a further quandary within this field, of whether to explore educational achievement which is the measurement of attainment at GCSE level, to which there is immense research or to explore Educational Success as identified by myself. I chose to research Educational Success, and explore the factors that relate to Educational Success, this was due to the seemingly lack of available discourse about the Educational Success of YBS.

Educational Underachievement

Plewis and Coram (1991) are of the view that underachievement is a word frequently encountered in educational writing but that it is not a well-defined concept. Within this study I am using the term under-achievement to refer to students who have not achieved 5 GCSEs A*-C. This is based on government statistics at the Department for Education (DfE) which measures educational achievement as 5 GCSE's A*-C since 1992. This is also reflective of the Swann's (1985) Report 30 years earlier than the SFR (2015) which reported a significant review of the educational experience and achievement of ethnic minority children in the UK. The Swann's Report refers to the data on school leaving qualifications at that time.

Educational Achievement

In contrast to the above I refer to the term achievement as students who have obtained 5 GCSEs A*-C as measured by the UK government statistics. I have used this term to differentiate between Educational Success and educational achievement within this study as stated earlier. This is due to the fact that government reports, statistics and academic authors use these terms interchangeably. The government statistics are often viewed as an initial indicator of how potential Educational Success, as defined above may be achieved. There is a substantive amount of evidence on GCSE

achievement, obtained by the Youth Cohort's Study (YCS 2011) which correlates with the likelihood of attending university.

Young Black students

I am defining the term 'Young Black Students' to represent the definitions that follow for Young, Black and Student, combined into one meaning. This term classifies the identify within a section of the population who are often grouped together. Furthermore, throughout this study this group will be recognised by the acronym YBS.

Young Black Christian students

The term 'Young Black Christian students' will be used as the above definition with the addition of the word Christian to differentiate between Young Black students who are Christian and those who are not. Within the furtherance of this study the following acronym will be used for this term YBCS.

Young

I am defining the term young to include those up to the age of 25, this is because there is no age definition to the term young. The term 'young' encapsulates a wide age group, depending on the research being carried out. The Oxford Concise Dictionary (2015) states that young may be a teenager or a young adult. This study's main focus is on Young Black Students and Young Black Christian Students' who have attained sufficient qualifications to enter onto a Degree course within the UK. Progression to full-time University from school or college within the UK usually transpires at age 18, however, there is no upper age limit to embarking on a course at University. Therefore, I have set a parameter for the word young to be used within this study as the age group 16-25.

Black

Black, as a terminology embraces a diverse UK population who may share experiences of racism. I use the word Black with an initial capital letter to

indicate that it denotes broad social groups and not colour. Black is not an appropriate label in every context but its inclusivity provides consistency and coherence.

Afridi and Warmington (2009) state that in the 1950s and 1960s Black had a political meaning, denoting solidarity among all who experienced discrimination. The term Black arose as a conscious and political reclaiming of a previously derogatory term during the struggles of the US civil rights movement, where African Americans began their campaign for recognition. Blackwell, (2007) identifies this era as the Black communities finally coming together, in one movement.

Afridi and Warmington (2009) claim that;

'The political usage of the term (Black) frequently indicates solidarity or affiliation with those who have suffered colonial or racist oppression by the British state.' (p6).

By the 1990's the term Black was questioned as socioeconomic experiences differed across minority groups. This etymology is supported by Lingayah (2011) who concurs, that the political coherence of the Black label had changed, and more emphasis was placed on cultural differences and the term Black became largely confined to people with an African or African Caribbean heritage. However, the Care Quality Commission's (2011) survey data differentiate between Black Caribbean, Black African, Other Black and Mixed Black/white. Lingayah (2011) highlights that broader terms also vary; policymakers and researchers often use Black and minority ethnic or BME (Black and minority ethnic) to encompass all who do not identify themselves as White British.

Within this study however, I am using the term Black to mean those people of Caribbean Origin, Afro-Caribbean, Black British, and NOT of African parentage. I use this distinction as government statistics (ONS 2012) differentiate achievement data between Black Caribbean and Black African.

Pupils of African parentage are portrayed as achieving a higher percentage of GCSE's A-C. I also offer this clarification as the UK government (2007) census classification includes Black as African and Black as Caribbean.

I further define the term Black in detail within this paper so as to set the context to my overall research. Grosvenor (1997) further claims that the term Black is a construction, and that its use as a descriptor or classificatory concept should be contested. In this, he is highlighting his belief that Black is not an identity but a term of classification. Moreover, he argues that it is also recognised that the category 'Black' implicitly imprisons individuals within the closed dialectic of 'race'. However, I am choosing to use the term Black as it is a descriptor used by all government statistics, politicians, the media and by Black people themselves. (Byfield 2008). Sallah and Howson (2007) ten years later, concur with Grosvenor (1997) and claim that;

'Historically, Black African/Caribbean's in the United Kingdom were predominantly the descendants of West Africans captured in trade from procurers in Africa.' (p39)

This often leads to the supposition that all Black Caribbeans are of African descent and distinctions are rarely made between Africans and Caribbeans. In an attempt to decipher the more contemporary understanding of the term Black, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (2005) states that acknowledgment is needed of the influence of the early experiences of the African/Caribbean, this is so an assessment can be made of their assumptions of racial exploitation, and marginalisation. Additionally, cultural theorists such as Gilroy (1987, 2000) and Hall (1992) have led several debates on the changing representations of the concept of the term Black. Their debate was seen as the first moment in Black cultural politics, marked by the development of a common Black identity. Hall (1992) emphasised that the;

'Recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'Black'; that is, the recognition that 'Black' is an essentially politically and culturally constructed category' (p254).

Hall's (1992) assertions lead to the assumption that the term Black is constructed politically and culturally and therefore it cannot be guaranteed that it can be assigned as identity. Brah and Minhas (1985) carried out studies within the UK based on a political understanding of the term Black, as inclusive of people of African, Caribbean and South Asian origin. This inclusion of South Asian people highlights the problem of the continuing redefining of what the term Black refers to. Aldred (2013) further suggests that some Black people may be in denial of their Black humanity. It is an on-going issue for this study because there is no clarity as to the use of the term Black; therefore, my analysis of both the literature and statistics of Black people is challenging.

Several authors have sought to define the term Black in conjunction with other stereotypical terms. Youdell's (2004) study explored Black identity and the term Black masculinity and concluded that these are complex constructions. Hook's (2004) study of 'hip hop music' suggested that 'Black masculinity' is seen as individuals refusing to engage with the:

'Complex interconnection between race, gender and sexuality, thus limiting the possibilities for a wide range of Black male forms of identity to emerge.'
(p72)

Brown's (2006) study confirms that defining 'Black identity' was seen as an extremely complex issue within his study of young Black men. The studies highlighted above may lead to the deduction that defining the term Black is complex, debatable and is based upon the individual accepting the concept as part of their identity. Consequently, bearing in mind the convoluted explanations of the term Black, I must stress that caution should be applied when reading other studies and government statistics as their definition of Black may not be the same as mine. Therefore, once again I reiterate my use of the term Black within this study, so as to offer a distinction between Black Caribbean/Black British and Black African, and submit the definition which will be used within this study:

'The term Black to mean those people of Caribbean Origin, Afro-Caribbean, Black British, and NOT of direct African parentage *for at least two generations.*

Mixed race pupils within this study who have one Black parent, will be considered based on their individual self-assignment as discussed.

Student

The term student within this study refers to anyone who is currently or have previously studied. However, when used within the above terms YBS and YBCS, students here refer to those of Caribbean heritage.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is often associated with the terms race and the term Black (Byfield 2008), and therefore it is expedient that the term is explored within the context of the landscape of this study. Aldred (2013) asserts to reject the term race and substitutes the word race with the word ethnicity. Ethnicity is often referred to by researchers as ethnic identity. Government statistics (DfE 2012) define ethnic identity as a person's national identity. They state it is a:

'Self-determined assessment of their own identity with respect to the country or countries with which they feel an affiliation.' (p147)

What can be deduced from this statement is that assessment of ethnic identity is not dependent on legally determined nationality or ethnic group, but instead is determined by a person's preference. Phinny and Ong (2007) suggest that ethnic identity is distinct in some ways from other group identities such as racial identity. They comment that ethnic identity shares aspects of personal and group identities and claim that ethnic identity is multi-faceted. Phinny (2003) stated earlier that recognising ethnic identity has many facets is merely a start to understanding it. He asserts that ethnic identity derives from a sense of people hood within a group, a culture and a particular setting. Yet ethnic identity is not merely knowledge and

understanding of one's in-group affiliations, even though such insights and comprehension are part of it.

Conversely, Helms (2007) challenges this view and claims that one's ethnic identity is constructed over time; the actions and choices of individuals are also essential to the process. Cokley (2007) further adds that ethnicity is not necessarily associated with a geographical location and that within the present context of global migration, populations may be several generations removed from a given geographical location that may in past decades have been associated with a particular ethnic group.

My interrogation of the term ethnicity has highlighted differences in interpretation of the terms ethnicity and ethnic identity. Definitions of both terms in the literature and government statistics vary over time, consequently highlighting the challenges to interpreting data clearly. A clear example of this conundrum is offered by Phinny's (2003) and Roberts et al's, (1999) research which implemented the measurement of ethnic identity based on the Multi-Group Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). This is where groups of people are measured based on their language, culture and religion. Although this is an American concept it has served well in understanding the process of group ethnic identity.

However further research by Helms (2007) and Cokley (2007) offer a revision to the MEIM and suggest measuring ethnicity by multi-group may be misleading. Their discussions on the issues suggest it may be profitable to explore further ethnic identity research in the context of their ideas and recommendations.

Earlier research on ethnicities by Nazroo (1997) further compound the understanding of ethnic identity, as his views suggest that perceptions of ethnic identity have changed over time; depending on the length of migration, the extent to which new relationships are forged, and the birth

of children who may be citizens of that local community. Phinny's and Ong's (2007) studies ten years later confirm this view; adding that membership of an ethnic group is sometimes associated with affiliation with a particular faith or religious group. They claim that the concept of self-assignment of ethnicity has also risen to prominence in recent decades, as providing important insights into self-perception and identity. Phinny and Ong (2007) concur with Nazroo's (1997) earlier findings that ethnic identity is multi-faceted. They state that:

'Ethnic identity derives from a sense of people hood within a group, a culture, and a particular setting. Yet ethnic identity is not merely knowledge and understanding of one's in group affiliations.' (p171)

Aspinall et al (2002) assert that it has become clear in the 21st century that individuals have complex ethnic origins that may be difficult to classify using the predominant terms within statutory collections of data. Mason (2000) alludes to young people who are participants in any study, to use the notion of 'Situational Ethnicity' as they feel this may be increasingly more appropriate. 'Situational Ethnicity' is the ability to regard oneself differently depending on the context. For example, a British born Pakistani Muslim young person may regard himself or herself as British Muslim in some situations and Pakistani or South Asian in others. Similarly, a young person of Jamaican origin may regard himself or herself as Black British, or Jamaican, or African Caribbean depending on the context. In an increasingly complex, multi-ethnic society, many individuals have dual, triple or quadruple ethnic origins especially in urban areas (Aspinall 2000b).

Work by Karlsen and Nazroo (2002a) and Nazroo (2002b) and Nazroo (2003) provide a detailed and in-depth exposition of the relationship between ethnicity, health and social class. Nazroo (1998) suggests that this relationship hinges on three dimensions of the structural context. First, the cumulative influence of disadvantage over a lifetime; second, the geographical locale of ethnic minority groups in deprived housing tenure

and the associated ecological effects; and third, the consequences of living in a racist society.

It is inevitable then that research reports and analyses over time will have some drawbacks and are subject to individual interpretation.

This serves to highlight the challenges to be faced in assigning ethnicity within this research. Therefore, results relating to national identity within the UK maybe ambiguous as participants may be classified with a single national identity or a combination of identities, and individuals within this research are also allowed to self-assign their ethnicity. Furthermore, Phinny and Ong (2007) assert that there is generally little direction given, to help individuals know what aspects of their ethnicity they should consider when deciding which group, they are in. Therefore, within this study ethnicity and ethnic identity will be viewed as the culture to which the participants belong and defined by the participants themselves.

Race

As mentioned earlier the landscape upon which this study is scaffolded includes the term ethnicity which is often replaced with the term race Byfield (2008). Mason (1986) asserts that the term race was used to make justifications about physical and mental differences between White and Black people. However, Lareau's (2003) study suggests that race is not a standalone factor. Her studies claim that race crosses with social class, this therefore hampers a clear definition of the term. The term race and ethnicity are often used interchangeably replaced by the media and academics and thus adds to the difficulty of clear definition, even educational authors such as Byfield (2008) concurs with this and claim that ethnicity has become the replacement term for the word race.

However, researchers Phinny and Ong (2007) discuss the concept of ethnic identity and state that ethnic identity is distinct in some ways from other

group identities, such as racial identity even though it may share aspects of personal and group identities. This alludes to the supposition that ethnicity and race are not interchangeable; however, for the purpose of this study I use the term Black as a racial and ethnicity classifier and thereby cut through debate which, although interesting is not centrally important here.

Having defined the key terms to be used within this research, I will now offer the structure of the study, prior to concluding this chapter with a summary.

1.3 Summary

This chapter has provided an introduction to the study. It has outlined the main purpose of the research, and some important concepts such as definitions and discussions of the terms 'Young Black Students, Young Black Christian Students, Young, Black, Students, Educational Success, Ethnicity, Race, Underachievement. It has also explained the grounds for my personal interest and my Christian view in the research. I move on to Chapter Two, to review the theory underpinning this study.

Chapter 2 The theoretical underpinnings of the study

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I set up the theoretical underpinnings of this study. As stated in Chapter One this study seeks to identify contributory factors to the Educational Success of Young Black Students (YBS), and specifically to Young Black Christian students (YBCS). I remind the reader here of my definition of the term Educational Success. This refers to; students who have attained sufficient qualifications to allow them to embark onto the first year of a Degree programme, without usually progressing immediately from full-time education. I offer this definition of the term Educational Success due to the fact that some YBS enter HE later in life, this could demonstrate their perseverance, tenacity, resilience, and ability to overcome initial adversity, to enable them to progress to HE.

Before I am able to identify any factors that may contribute to the Educational Success of YBCS, this chapter probes into the literature relating to YBS, seeking clarity, explanations and insights from studies in the UK and USA in order to allow the development of a theoretical framework which will guide this study.

It is from such understanding that this research work seeks to analyse emerging concerns, themes and issues. Furthermore, it will view them in light of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory identifying Bourdieu's opinions on contributory factors to Educational Success. This literature discussion will firstly explore the conceptual framework, explore Cultural Capital, and move on to discuss various authors views on Social Capital and the impact of social class, racism, and religion on YBS Educational Success.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter One, there is a credible concept about something which is called social capital (Bourdieu 1986). Historical, political

and economic circumstances prevail which means that YBS are often deficient in terms of how this is acquired. There is some research and studies which suggests that religious belief (Byfield 2008) may, in certain circumstances help address this shortfall and be instrumental in Educational Success.

It is within the above context that this chapter delves into some of the ideas which aid the understanding YBS as categorised earlier. I explore approaches and frameworks applied by proponents within fields of sociology, religion and education offering varied complementary and at times oppositional explanations and accounts regarding the world of YBS. Some of these explorations by scholars like Lareau (2009), Byfield (2008), Furbey (2003), Strand (2011, 2014), Sewell (2009) and Rollock (2011) offer some contextual revelations regarding the YBS Educational Success. In addition, they offer empirical research data that this study contests at times but also builds on. With this in mind I move on to explore Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory as this is central to explaining the conceptual framework which I further develop to guide my empirical work.

2.1 The Development of a Conceptual Framework

I offer a discussion of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory as this is a central explanatory framework in my study. Firstly, I move from the simplistic view to the complex explanation of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory in order to set the conceptual framework for this study. In trying to understand and identify the factors that contribute to the Educational Success of YBS, Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory enabled me to conceptualise my framework so as to be able to guide my empirical work within this study. The factors that contribute to Educational Success of YBS are many and varied and the perceptions by different parts of society warrant further interrogation.

Within this chapter I also identify the main scholars in this field that draw on Bourdieu's theories to explain Black achievement. Scholars like Lareau (2009), who draw on Bourdieu's theory to support her view of the influence of the family on Black achievement. Byfield (2008), who explores Bourdieu's concepts regarding the influence of religion on Black achievement. Furbey (2003), who interrogates Bourdieu's view of social capital as it relates to faith and Black achievement, to name but a few. All the above authors draw on Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Concept in establishing a framework within their studies.

2.2 Cultural Capital Theory explored

Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital Theory will be underpinning the conceptual framework which guides this study. As mentioned earlier this theory is the seminal text in this study and will be employed as a lens to view the discussions on Educational Success. This theory provides a lens by viewing YBS economic, social and Cultural Capital and identifies the symbolic capital that leads to Educational Success. This theoretical framework has been employed to assist in explaining possible reasons for underachievement and achievements of YBS, and to discuss the concepts that inform this enquiry.

Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital Theory allows for analysis of forms of capital, which includes not only economic but also intangible cultural, social and symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu (1986) Educational Success is based on the amount of capital one possesses. He claims that individuals enter the education market with differing amounts of capital. Some individuals enter the education market having already possessed quantities of relevant capital bestowed upon them in the process of habitus (the process of upbringing and family connections), which makes them better

players than others in certain field games. Reay (2010) cites Bourdieu and Passeron (1973) who claim that;

'Those privileged children fit into the world of educational expectations with ease', while the unprivileged children seem to present challenges' (p248).

Bourdieu's (1984) social discourse presumes that people are always situated within culture and that, subconsciously rather than self-consciously, this exercises a set of constraints, assumptions, relationships, positioning and values that inform practice and meaning.

Bourdieu (1984) contests that individuals internalise these structures and then reproduce them in the social world. The concepts he uses to try to make these assumptions visible are fields and habitus. The concepts by which he tried to account for their impact and their ability to regulate practice were symbolic power and Cultural Capital. Field is widely used in educational research to define the dimensions of the social space, and habitus to define the deeply rooted dispositions and assumptions held by those who occupy the field. It is often assumed that within the field there will be disagreements arising from the interaction of different shared habitus, and the need for cultural validation. The field within the context of this study is the academic arena.

There are those however, who argue that the use of Bourdieu's concepts in the sociology of education research needs further reflection. Robbins (2000) argues that Bourdieu's own theoretical approach has become institutionalised and that even within his own work Bourdieu began to proceed;

'as if his concepts were true rather than continuing to work with concepts as infinitely adaptable instruments for grasping infinitely changing realities.' (p61).

The above statement by Robbins (2000), undergirds my use of Bourdieu's theory within the analytical framework for this study. I intend to use

Bourdieu's concept as an infinitely adaptable instrument, bearing in mind that concepts can be adapted to different social settings. Beck (2007) argues that Bourdieu's concepts need de-coupling from the umbrella of all cultural meaning as logical. He draws on Moore's (2004) argument that there are two separate accounts of culture to be found within Bourdieu's and Passeron's (1977) study. Beck (2007) further argues that due to researchers relying uncritically on this notion, this has resulted in an overemphasis on social class positioning within educational research analysis. Moore (2004) argues that in accounting for difference within social groups Bourdieu does not highlight culture as arbitrary. The second account is an account of culture which rests on the assumption that there must be universal principles, and an ability to engage with real knowledge interacting with something other than Cultural Capital. Beck (2007) is essentially arguing that the re-emphasis of this dual definition of culture is largely lost to educational research.

It is important that I state here, that the contradictory views on Cultural Capital are pertinent to my study as there are those who criticise the lack of conceptual clarity in Bourdieu's concepts. Moore (2004) claims that many researchers use this concept in diverse ways and have devised various conclusions to their own justification.

Beck (2007) further asserts that some researchers focus on Cultural Capital with regards only to certain aspects of highbrow culture. From my study of Bourdieu, it could be assumed that Bourdieu's (1987) theory, and in particular his notion of habitus, is totally conclusive leaving no place for individual awareness. Goldthorpe (2007) argues that;

'Bourdieu's view of the transmission of Cultural Capital as a key process in social reproduction is simply wrong.' (p14)

He further states that differing class conditions do not give abiding forms of habitus as Bourdieu suggests. Goldthorpe (2007) claims that even within

disadvantaged classes, with little access to high culture, values favouring education may still prevail.

It could be argued therefore, that if Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory is to be applied to this research, it may allow the social positioning of respondents to be overlooked. Cultural Capital should be measured by the YBS themselves and their perception of their Cultural Capital noted. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990), in developing Bourdieu's (1977) earlier work, highlight the on-going Cultural Capital discussion of class reproduction, through education references to Cultural Capital in the context of educational inequalities in HE.

YBS have a different kind of Cultural Capital to the societal norm as Maylor (2014) asserts. Bourdieu's (1986) habitus describes how families protect what is exclusively theirs and reproduce their own social class. Jary and Jary's (1995) now dated study asserts that within those 'logics of practice' or habitus as it is sometimes referred to, individuals are able to 'strategise' to produce different outcomes and they further suggest that children were aware of;

'Challenges, stresses, lack of rewards, for physical work culture, and skills; and had watched their parents and in short, wanted to leave this behind.'
(p120)

Chowdry et al (2008) disagree with the Cultural Capital theorising that supports the above, and this does not resonate with the data on the levels of participation in HE in England (DfE 2013). UCAS (2015) statistics indicate that more students from lower social background possessing lower Cultural Capital were attending universities through the 'Widening Participation policy', further discounting Bourdieu's theory.

Furthermore, Black students whose attainment nationally is higher than White students (but who are nevertheless designated as underachieving – DfE, 2013a) are considered to have aspirational, supportive parents who

value education which positively influences their own aspirations and educational outcomes, and results in these students attending university (Strand, 2014b).

Bourdieu (1997) continues to argue that several theories have explained the lower levels of Educational Success, and higher rates of school drop-out for children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Children from higher socio-economic backgrounds have parents who possess the knowledge and the financial means to guide them towards high educational attainment.

Bourdieu's (1990) framing of social class in terms of economic, cultural, social and symbolic resources helps to make clear how institutions of formal schooling intersect with local habitus to either propel students out of their social economic class or embed them into their communities. He claims that the choices of young people whose family traditions and social capital linkages were rooted in unskilled jobs, have little to do with whether or not they possessed the economic resources to access higher education. In summary Bourdieu's (1990) ideas are relevant to my study as the focus of my study is on the Educational Success of YBS, and he raises the issue of the link between social capital and Higher Education.

Several authors namely Lareau and Horvat (1999) formulated a theory that included race as a key component of Cultural Capital. According to this theory;

"cultural and social resources become forms of capital when they facilitate parents 'compliance with dominant standards in school interactions" (p42).

Devine (2005) suggests that Lareau and Horvat (1999) research highlights that a history of racism and discrimination made some parents more likely or able to express themselves to teachers in an angry, hostile, or aggressive manner. This highlights the importance of the activation of Cultural Capital: people choose whether to activate their capital, and they have different

levels of skills in doing so. Several reports place racism at the centre of the Educational Success discussion, the Swann report (1985), the McPherson report (1999), and to some extent Coard's (1971) exposition to mention but a few. These reports identified racism as a possible contributory factor to the underachievement of YBS, at that time. However, 30 years on from The Swann Report (1985), which argued for 'Education for All', issues of racial and ethnic inequality in schools are as pertinent as ever.

Moreover, researchers (Gillborn, 2005; Mirza, 2004) have reported that in the last thirty years the gains made in education related to ethnic diversity in our society appear to have been lost and old-fashioned racism has appeared again. The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999), advised that a depth of understanding of 'race', ethnicity and racism be represented within the curriculum. However, within the fragile gains made in the wake of The Macpherson Report (1999) and the Race Relations Amendment Act of 2000, imposing a duty on schools to promote race equality, have been eroded in the promotion of refocusing on fundamental British values', and a narrowing of the curriculum.

Moreover, Lander (2011) asserts that in recent years confusion has been created by the 'pc gone mad' brigade, some teachers tend not to tackle racism because they are ill-prepared or unsure of what to do despite the legislative imperative. Smith (2002) argues that the resurgence of racism in schools may well be linked to teachers' lack of education and understanding about 'race', ethnicity and racism.

The above discussion serves to establish that racism may be a cause of poor Educational Success for some YBS. The discourse also indicates that lack of skill in activating Cultural Capital may also lead to a negative outcome for parents of YBS too. In the next section, I will explore

Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory as his theory resonates with my conceptual framework.

2.3 Bourdieu's Cultural Capital Theory Explained

Bourdieu's (1984) Cultural Capital Theory suggests that an individual enters into society (in this study the individual is a learner). The society consists of a number of spaces; it can be seen as a multi-dimensional space consisting of a number of sub spaces or fields. These could be seen in a number of contexts such as institutions, social groups and work places or careers. This study refers to religious settings, school, college, university, and friendship groups as its fields or subspaces.

Bourdieu (1977) claims that while entering the field or space the individual always has with them habitus. Habitus are the resources the combination of the amount and type of capital the individual has. I understand this to be the process of upbringing that they have gained in the home as a result of being part of a family group. This habitus can be economic capital that is money and wealth, social capital, for example, who you know and your networks, or it can be Cultural Capital which is very important in Bourdieu's (1977) theory. His Cultural Capital Theory is about knowing the right cultural codes and how to behave, what works in various settings and context or in different fields.

Bourdieu (1977), states that there are three forms of capital economic, social and cultural. These are then transformed into symbolic capital. He claims that this is an automatic process that happens when the individual enters into the field or space as explained earlier. Each field or space has its own rules, and according to those rules the social group at an aggregated level will evaluate the individual and ascribe that individual their position in the field.

The field or space identified for YBS may differ from societal norms as cultural backgrounds may ascribe a different position to YBS within a given field. For example, the eldest sibling within a Black household is sometimes given extra responsibility and authority over younger siblings even to enforce disciplinary measures for wrong doings. Within some Black families this is an accepted field or space and the eldest sibling is afforded that position of power (Jary and Jary 1995).

Therefore, Bourdieu's (1977) theory can be used to aid this study, as his Cultural Capital Theory provides a way of seeing, which makes it useful to analyse the practice of the individuals. It can easily recognise spaces or fields that are schools, groups, or work. Following on from the explanation of the theory of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital a more detailed view of different forms of capital is offered in the next section.

2.4 Additional Authors' Views of Cultural Capital Theory

Other authors such as Reay (2010), Strand (2011), Beck (2004), and Lareau (2009) have explored the concept cultural capital. They believe that socio-economic class, family, and religion contribute to the Educational Success of YBS. Studies by Byfield (2008), Glaeser and Sacerdote (2001), and Sacerdote (2002), Channer (1995) and Jeynes (2003) asserts that Religious Capital is a possible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS. Therefore, as well as drawing on the views of the above authors, I will be focusing on the application of Bourdieu's work, and the already established Religious Capital, as Religious Capital has been identified by the above authors as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success.

Religious Capital as suggested by Byfield (2008) reveals a capital that is based upon a cultural setting; it refers to rituals, rules and is based on a community coming together to worship. Iannaccone's (1984) view on Religious Capital states that it is gained in a particular social setting, and

therefore is part of social capital as it is in a particular place, and that the actual building Church, Synagogue, Mosque has a bearing on the Religious Capital. Within this study both definitions are used as it is sufficient to agree with both authors that Religious Capital exists. Further exploration of Religious Capital is found in later chapters.

Bourdieu's (1987) views on religion are limited; however, his theory of social capital gives a rich conceptual resource for the study of religion. He enlarges the notion of capital to include non-economic forms of capital and paved the way for the conceptualisation of other forms of non-economic capital, including Religious Capital.

Iannaccone's (1984) study introduced the concept of Religious Capital to explain patterns of religious beliefs and behaviour. Iannaccone's (1984) concept of Religious Capital is a joining of social capital with the notion of religion. This author's concept of Religious Capital states that it is acquired in a particular social setting, and therefore becomes a subset of social capital. It is gained in a particular place, and the actual building, Church, Synagogue, or Mosque has a bearing on the Religious Capital. He claims it is gained by the coming together in one place and abiding by a set of agreed rules and principals.

In one sense then, Religious Capital based upon Iannaccone (1984) assertions might be considered to be a subset of social capital. Putnam (2000) concurs with Iannaccone's (1984) conceptual ideas, as Putnam's (2000) influential work on social capital found that religion is by far the largest generator of social capital in the USA. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, there are several authors who also use Bourdieu's Cultural Capital framework. However, unlike Iannaccone (1984) and Putnam (2000) who identify Religious Capital as a subset of social capital, I will now look at Byfield's view that Religious Capital is not a subset of social capital.

2.5 Byfield's View of Cultural Capital

Byfield (2008) claims, that those students without the dominant Cultural Capital who possess the more distinct form of Religious Capital, trade on their connection to religion to enable them to embrace the dominant Cultural Capital. This is highlighted in Byfield's (2008) study and Chapter One in this study, where students reject other forms of non-dominant Cultural Capital such as their Black identity. Byfield's (2008) view of children particularly during adolescence claims that they are seeking to establish their identity. She asserts that many Black children living in white dominated societies struggle with a particular aspect – their racial identity. In her study, she found a third of the students talked about the multifaceted struggles they faced in coming to terms with their own racial identity, maintaining or rejecting that identity and struggling to fit into the dominant society.

Byfield (2008), states that one of the reasons for Black youth forming subcultures is because of their struggle with maintaining Black identity whilst trying to fit with the main culture of society. Byfield's (2008) study claims that there is evidence that the job market is seeking a different type of worker with skills and qualifications, and therefore it must be ensured that this is reflected in how YBS are taught to develop their self-esteem and a culture for learning. Byfield's (2008) views resonate strongly with Bourdieu's (1987) theory of habitus, where he states that children from different cultural backgrounds struggle to fit into the dominant culture values such as those found in the school and workplace.

Bourdieu's theory of habitus concurs with Byfield's (2008) view about children from different cultural and social class backgrounds. Therefore, I think it expedient to review literature surrounding Cultural Capital, and this is explored in the next section.

2.6 Lareau's View on Social Capital Theory

Lareau's (2009) study claims that expanding the notion of capital beyond its economic conception as viewed by Bourdieu (1986), helps to provide explanations for differential educational achievement. The term 'capital' had traditionally been used in connection with economics; however, Bourdieu expanded the notion of capital beyond its economic conception by emphasising non-economic forms of capital. These non-economic forms of capital include the following: social capital, a network of lasting social relations and sphere of contacts symbolic capital, prestige, honour and the right to be listened to and Cultural Capital, the collection of non-economic forces such as family background, social class, varying investments in and commitments to education and different resources that influence academic success.

Lareau (2007) explores Cultural Capital as it is seen by Bourdieu (1973) as being of particular value within the school marketplace. She affirms Bourdieu's view; that Cultural Capital is formed through the nurture of students' parents rather than nature. She therefore concludes that 'the scholastic yield from educational action depends on the Cultural Capital previously invested by the family'. Brown (1973) although now dated also states this;

'the initial accumulation of Cultural Capital, the precondition for the fast, easy accumulation of every kind of useful Cultural Capital, starts at the outset, without delay, without wasted time, only for the offspring of families endowed with strong Cultural Capital'. (p246)

Lareau (2007) highlights Bourdieu's (1987) theory of capital and suggests that, given teachers come from mostly higher socio-economic backgrounds, children from similarly high socio-economic backgrounds will tend to feel most at ease within the associated school system. Such children speak the same language as their teachers. Their parents and teachers may often share extensive amounts of knowledge. According to Bourdieu (1987) such

shared Cultural Capital clearly works for the benefit of children from higher socio-economic background.

However, it may be argued that a school where all the teachers are Young and Black would lead to YBS Educational Success. Moreover, Tony Blair speaking to the Guardian (2001), stated that faith schools, where the teachers reflect the community it teaches, have a distinctive mission and ethos for achieving excellent educational results, this is reflected in their educational achievements that are better than non-faith state schools. Moreover, Maylor (2015) further asserts that Teacher training institutes needs to;

'effectively equip student teachers to deliver an ethnically inclusive curriculum and raise the attainment of Black children' (p30.)

Thus, offering ways to help to combat the underachievement of Black Children which is underpinned by the racist culture in some English schools. This culture sees Black children as coming from families who lack Cultural Capital i.e. knowledge and skills associated with the White middle classes (Bourdieu and Passeron,1997).

This concurs with Bourdieu's (1977) view that academic success is largely the preserve of pupils who have the ability to fit in with the dominant cultural values found in their school system. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there are several authors who also use Bourdieu's Cultural Capital framework but take a different view. Furbey et al's (2006) view of faith as a concept of social capital, is explored in detail within the following section. This discussion lends credence to the use of Bourdieu's (1977) theory.

2.7 Furbey et al's Study on Faith as a Concept of Social Capital

Furbey et al's (2006) study 'Faith as a concept of social capital', revealed that the theory of social capital provoked an explosion of interest since the mid-1990s. However, Field (2009) offers an explanation for the explosion of interest in the idea of social capital. He asserts that the theory of social capital is at heart most straightforward. Its main thoughts can be summed up in two words: relationships matter. He further claims that;

'By making connections with one another, and keeping them going over time, people are able to work together to achieve things that they either could not achieve by themselves' (p9).

His view is that people connect through a series of networks and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks;

'to the extent that these networks constitute a resource, they can be seen as forming a kind of capital'. (p1)

A recurring theme here is 'trust' which can be both a cause and a consequence of social capital. A further review of the literature highlights Gilchrist's (2004) views, which find social capital broadly defined as 'a collective asset made up of social networks based on shared norms, trust and mutuality' (p4). However, Taylor (2000) states that;

'Social capital is also a 'contested and problematic concept.' (p1026)

Lin (2001) also agrees with Taylor (2000) and claims that there is also uneasiness at the application of the instrumental 'economic' language of 'capital' in the context of social networks and community development. There is sometimes a basic assumption that people act rationally to maximise their benefits and minimise their costs when they choose alternative courses of action so as to get the best outcomes for their own preferences.

Field (2003) argues that this jar with many for whom the emphasis on 'capital' seems to limit action and debate to the parameters of capitalist

relations. In particular this challenge the language of religious faith and the subordination of self-interest within the worship of the Divine and a related ethic of service to others. Second, the idea of social capital is associated with a political philosophy that many reject.

It is worth bearing in mind here that the definition of religious practice according to Strong's Bible Concordance (1986), is that; it can be about worship, rituals, ceremonies, or liturgy, which may be spoken or sung words. This could be argued therefore that it does not seem to reflect social capital. However, religious belief is usually identifiable by a set of creeds, with the official doctrine and descriptions of the beliefs offered by religious authorities (Oxford Dictionary 2016). This may be seen as a derivative of social capital as it possesses rules and creeds and authorities to answer to.

Putnam's (2000) work in the US relating to the consequences of social capital has influenced the social and regeneration strategies of New Labour. Putnam (2000) defines social capital in terms similar to those used later by Gilchrist (2004) and others. New Labour also stresses personal and civic responsibility and the role of voluntary (including Faith) organisations in achieving greater 'social cohesion', sharing with Putnam (2000) an emphasis on the social capital embedded in 'legitimate' voluntary and community organisations as a source of social stability. A forthright expression of this essentially consensual definition of social capital is found in a practitioner 'toolkit' developed by the UK government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) who claim;

'Social capital is the 'social glue' between people, organisations and communities that enables them to work together to pursue shared objectives.' (www.renewal.net).

This 'social glue' definition provokes the suspicion that social capital is a concept that shifts responsibility for social exclusion on to poor people and poor places. It acts as a cover for cuts in social welfare and operates to

draw the representatives of 'recognised' voluntary and community organisations into 'partnerships', in which inequalities of power and resources and the presence of conflict are papered over. An emphasis on traditional voluntary organisations such as religious institutions can lead to a neglect of emerging new forms of social capital. As stated earlier within this chapter and in Chapter One of this study, my preliminary research highlighted religion, as a possible contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBS. Therefore, the next section views religion, within Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital framework.

2.8 Religion and its links to Social Capital.

Amin's (2002) study views religion in a context of decline in some formal religious traditions. It should be noted that emerging informal and less hierarchical expressions of religious social engagement and newer forms of association and affiliation are now being expressed. Faith-based projects and Faith buildings are not always what they seem to outsiders. They may provide places and spaces where people 'negotiate difference' and 'transgress' the normal boundaries of interaction. Furbey et al (2006) confirm this and claim they have found examples of 'Faith as social capital' in 'legitimate' civil society but they have also encountered examples and episodes of social capital in more informal Faith settings. They further claim that the complexity and diversity of 'religion' is such that;

'We should expect to find that social capital can act as a source of social retreat or active resistance and critique, not simply as an instrument of governability.' (p121)

This recognition of the non-traditional, informal and non-consensual qualities of some Faith-related social capital encourages a focus on inequalities within religious communities, particularly on gender and age as dimensions of social capital formation, where men and older people often dominate formal positions and determine priorities. Putnam's (2000)

emphasis on voluntary organisations as carriers of social capital can lead to the thought of neglect, not only informal activity but also at the opposite pole. Gilchrist (2004) further asserts that the social capital embedded in social networks can be;

'Exclusive of others, a perpetuator of stereotypes of 'outsiders', tribalist and oppressive to members, a source of internal inequality.' (p9)

Gilchrist's (2004) opinions above resound with the popular view of authors that the lack of Educational Success of YBS is due to their close-knit communities, some of which can have an oppressive hold on individuals. This echoes Bourdieu's (1986) view, that such destructive social capital can be identified in networks of both the rich and the poor. Cattle (2001) claims that destructive social capital is associated much more with criminal networks in poor areas or with ethnic and religious minorities seen as living lives 'parallel' to others. The Performance and Innovation Unit PIU (2002) also recognises the 'downside' of social capital in government, however official action is concentrated on poorer places and people. Recent world and domestic British events have underlined the ability of 'religion' to express many of the features of negative social capital, and to express them in a particularly enduring, damaging and intractable way. This is an important issue for this study to which I return to later in this study.

Fine (1999) argues that the indiscriminate use of 'social capital' risks rendering the concept meaningless by becoming everything to everyone. Yet the exploration of the capital embedded in social networks may enable a closer exploration of the issues of community development and empowerment.

Gilchrist's (2004) study claims that there are three types of social capital; bonding, bridging and linking. Gilchrist (2004) expresses the three types in these terms: Bonding; based on enduring, multi-faceted relationships between similar people with strong mutual commitments such as among

friends, family and other close-knit groups. Bridging formed from the connections between people who have less in common, but may have overlapping interests; for example, between neighbours, colleagues, or between different groups within a community. Linking derived from the links between people or organisations beyond peer boundaries, cutting across status and similarity and enabling people to exert influence and reach resources outside their normal circles.

Moreover Gilchrist (2004) asserts that all these types of social capital are needed to produce the well-connected community. Socially 'rich' people are those with relationships that 'bond', 'bridge' and 'link'. Thus, the 'horizontal' relationships of bonding (with family and close friends) and bridging (with other community groups) need to be supplemented by 'vertical' relationships (with those with a different 'knowledge' and other resources, including government). The types of social capital referred to above resonates with this study in terms of the connection to religion within the community.

Furthermore, interrogation of the literature surrounding religion highlighted the concept Religious Capital. Therefore, the concept Religious Capital will be explored within the next section of this literature review.

2.9 Religious Capital Explored

This section explores the concept Religious Capital as it pertains to this study. This exploration interrogates the claims of Religious Capital, it also builds on theorists discussed earlier in this chapter and investigates fully Religious Capital. This will be executed by delving into the relevant theoretical research and relating this to Bourdieu's (1986) conceptual and theoretical framework discussed earlier.

Subsequent literature research highlighted numerous findings, theories and definitions of Religious Capital. These theoretical findings within the UK and abroad challenged one another on the definition of Religious Capital.

The early research studies of, Iannaccone (1984), Wallace and Williams (1997), and Ellison (1992) have all contributed to some of the most comprehensive explorations relating to the impact of religion and faith on Black peoples' success. In recent years, the works of Rey (2004), Furbey et al (2006) and Byfield (2012) further contributed to the continued development of religious understandings relating this as a contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS. Previously, Byfield's (2008) study, based her theoretical concept on Bourdieu's (1986) Cultural Capital concept asserts that;

'One may possess a high degree of dominant cultural capital which is widely recognised as a key contributory factor to Educational Successes.' (p248)

The dominant cultural concept being alluded to here is religion; Bourdieu (1987) enlarges the notion of capital to include non-economic forms of capital and paved the way for the conceptualisation of other forms of non-economic capital including Religious Capital.

Iannaccone's (1984) introduction of Religious Capital as a subset of social capital, differ from Byfield's (2006) views of Religious Capital as a non-subset of social capital as discussed earlier in this chapter. Moreover, Iannaccone (1984) and Byfield (2006) both assert that Religious Capital exists and they acknowledge this within Bourdieu's (1987) Cultural Capital theory framework. Prior to returning to Bourdieu's (1987) Cultural Capital theory I will further explore Religious Capital.

Religious Capital as suggested by Byfield (2008) reveals a capital that is based upon a cultural setting; it refers to rituals and rules and is based on a community coming together to worship. Iannaccone's (1984) view on

Religious Capital states that it is gained in a particular social setting, and therefore is part of social capital as it is in a particular place, and that the actual building Church, Synagogue, Mosque has a bearing on the Religious Capital. Conversely Byfield's (2006) previously asserted that religious belief did not fit into the concept of social capital, or Religious Capital. Moreover, Byfield (2008) continued to assert that;

'A religious belief however, does not easily fit into Bourdieu's social or cultural capital, or indeed Iannaccone's definition of spiritual or Religious Capital.' (p48)

She suggests that;

'Social capital should be removed from the concept of Religious Capital in order to distinguish between capitals that are unique to religion.' (p37)

Therefore Byfield (2008) justifies her view that there is no economic connection to religion. However, the repository of social capital as asserted by Bourdieu (1987) gained within a church or community setting can be seen as a vehicle for Religious Capital. In using the word capital in its purest form, it relates to economic value.

In my continuing quest therefore for theoretical knowledge on Religious Capital and its impact on Educational Success, several authors were identified who substantiated a link between education and religion. I considered literature surrounding education and religion but have therefore chosen to highlight the studies that I feel strengthen the debate for Religious Capital as a contributory factor for Educational Success. Studies by Glaeser and Sacerdote (2001) and Sacerdote (2002) demonstrate a strong positive correlation between religion and academic success. Studies by Channer (1995) and Jeynes (2003) also highlight that children from poorer backgrounds who were committed to religion performed better academically than their less religious counterparts. These further fuels the

assumptions and the assertions by Byfield (2008) that religion is a possible contributory factor to Educational Success.

Channer (1995) and Byfield (2008) studies claim that most of their students were religious and that their church offered them cultural capital. The students' belief in God was instrumental in their Religious Capital which in turn contributed to students' academic achievement. However, the general consensus among religious authors is that the benefits of religion are usually seen in the context of life after death. Nevertheless, religious beliefs and religious communities as noted earlier in this chapter, have been identified as having an impact on parents as well as students' achievements in this present life. Regnerus (2000) concurs that taking part in church activities heightened educational expectations and achievements.

Byfield (2008) asserts that another distinguishing feature of Religious Capital (that is capital unique to religion) is its lack of association with economic capital. Byfield (2008) further asserts that;

'Religious Capital cannot be considered a subset of other forms of capital; it is indeed a new form of capital. Religious Capital has the capacity of enhancing both cultural and social capital.' (p18)

Although there are similarities between cultural and social capital, Bourdieu's (1986) theory recognizes that they differ from one another in important respects. The differences are that economic capital can be seen as money and wealth, whereas social capital is about who you know and your networks.

Bourdieu's (1986) theory provides explanations for differential educational achievement, his separation of capital allows for the possibility of Byfield's (2008) views to take up residence. Religious Capital therefore could be well placed as a subset of social capital, as this embeds social contacts in which religion is easily adopted. I share my personal reflection (reflection 1) which

highlights the social capital I gained within my own religious setting, in Chapter Three. However, it is sufficing to say although my reflections are about discussions with myself, this reflexively aids my understanding of my own position.

However, two further studies by Regnerus (2000) and Regnerus and Elder (2003), studying two different datasets pursued the research question of the influence of religion on educational achievement for young people. Their studies highlighted that religious students scored better on maths and reading tests, religion predicted academic success equally across social classes. Regnerus (2000) argued that religious involvement likely signified;

'...a level of social control and motivation towards educational achievement.' (p363)

He further supports the notion that there is an influence from one's own personal, private religious identity. He argues that the ritual of attending worship services, in contrast with theological differences that mark distinct religious affiliations and beliefs, is a process that operates independently of particular belief systems. King and Elder et al (2003) assert that church attendance constitutes even if by accident, a form of social integration that has the ability to reinforce values conducive to educational achievement. They state that church attendance matters more for educational progress for young people in poorer neighbourhoods.

Moreover, Regenerus and Elder (2003) suggest that churches provide functional communities amid dysfunction and in doing so reinforce parental support networks. Churches then are no less functional in more advantaged neighbourhoods. These suggestions by Regenerus and Elder (2003) build on earlier studies by Wilson-Sadberry et al (1991) who specifically focused on the educational achievement of African American male students and emphasised the importance of students' religious convictions in their

Educational Success. This concurs with Byfield's (2006) UK study, which claim that although successful Black boys often faced adverse factors surrounding their schooling experiences, nonetheless they achieved success due to their personal religious beliefs. She further asserts that these successful Black male students had compensatory factors in their lives, such as supportive parents with strong educational values, access to community led programmes, strong religious beliefs and church communities.

Carter (2003) enters the Religious Capital debate and argues that unfortunately the importance of religion especially prayer as a non-dominant form of capital is overlooked by Bourdieu (1986). Carter (2003) believes that within the Black community, prayer is a valued form of capital. Pattillo-McCoy (1998) supports this view and claims that prayer nonetheless is prevalent in the everyday life of Black Christians, particularly Black Americans making prayer a possible cultural Capital. As noted earlier various studies have focused on several areas regarding religion and education either on the religious sub-cultural effects, and those that concern the influence of public and private religion.

Interestingly, attention to religion and education was originally sparked in the UK by Lenski's (1961) claims highlighting the obvious differences between Protestants and Catholics in education, where he noted the over-representation of the clergy within Catholic schools. However, my literature research uncovered similarities within studies of religion and education by the American, Ellison (1992) who studied Religious Capital. He also researched Black Christian behaviour in the USA and claims that Black students who engaged in frequent devotional activities such as prayer and Bible study, were kept on track to achieving Educational Success. However, the devotional activities and the Bible studies that his research identified as part of his definition of Religious Capital require the individual to be part of an organisation.

Moreover, Parcel and Geschwender (1995) noted in their study that church attendance contributed to girls' verbal abilities. This underscores the findings in my church/community focus group where the participants stated that they gained the skills to conduct public speaking in front of large crowds. Parcel and Geschwender (1995) conclude that;

'Affiliation aside, religious practice or involvement generally affects education positively.' (p841)

This is further supported by Muller and Ellison (2001) who confirm that devoutly religious teenagers reported greater educational expectations for themselves. They also documented positive relationships between religious involvement and time spent on homework, avoiding truancy, math test scores, taking advanced mathematics courses and achieving at school. This corroborates the outcomes of the focus group's findings that suggest religious involvement benefited their academic achievement. Muller and Ellison's (2001) also noted that the results of their study suggested that religious involvement may bridge family life, intergenerational ties, and provide a good community structure and access to good resources.

Conversely, Wallace and Williams (1997) suggest that religion is largely indirect in its influence of academic success. They claim understanding the mechanisms; for example, social control, support, values and identity that religion works through to shape behaviour is what is important. Smith (2002) takes an altogether different approach in understanding the motivating power of religion in the lives of young people. He focuses on the positive, constructive influence of religion and he argues for nine distinct factors through which religion affects young people. These fall under the headings of moral order, learned competencies and social organisations. He takes the perspective that;

'...there is something particularly religious in religion, which is not reducible to things not religious'. (p6)

Contrary to Smith (2002) and, Byfield (2006) who assert that, while the possession of social or cultural capital do not relate to or enhance the more unique aspect of Religious Capital, the possession of Religious Capital in its distinct form could enhance both social and cultural capital. Byfield (2006) further surmises that religion through its provision of social, cultural and Religious Capital provided a psychological and social framework within which students can make sense of their purpose in life, while simultaneously providing them with emotional and social support to maximise their potential.

Together all the above studies point to the importance of religion and religious associations providing means of integrating young people into standard avenues of Educational Success.

Grace (2002) asserts that Monks and Nuns who take a vow of silence and celibacy are governed by the rules and rituals of their organisations, albeit they may retreat to long sessions of solitude and confinement within their faith, they are still accountable to their particular community or habitus. Grace (2002) further infers that those who possess Religious Capital must also have a belief in a God, a being or a prophet. I have therefore entered the Religious Capital debate with a dichotomy to be addressed; My theoretical research confirms that Religious Capital exists but is it part of social or cultural capital. It is perceived in various forms by different theorists and researchers.

In summary, I hope to use this knowledge and theory of Religious Capital as a foundation from which to build on my present exploration of contributory factors to the Educational Success of YBCS.

2.10 Religious Capital viewed in the light of Bourdieu's Cultural Capital theory

My justification for the use of Bourdieu's (1987) concepts within this study was initially due to my personal assumptions on the contributory factors to the Educational Success of YBS. This was primarily based on the popular views and theories around the family and not religion. The emergence of religion within the findings of this research has resulted in the justification for the use of this theoretical concept. I also suggest therefore that the possible persistent use of Bourdieu's (1987) theory could also be due to his ability to probe the complicated relationship between structure and practice, where questions about religious faith, practice and institutions explore the impact on believers, non-believers and their social experience. Beck (2007) claims that although many people make use of Bourdieu's (1987) theory in the realm of religion as well as those firmly in the secular social field, he suggests that Bourdieu's (1977) theory should be viewed with caution.

Nonetheless, as stated earlier there is a precedent for applying Bourdieu's (1987) concepts to analysing education, but not just education also Christian education. I draw upon research by Angus (1988) although dated and not from the UK, it draws together the themes religion and education which are now prominent within my study. Angus (1988) adopted theoretical perspectives from Bourdieu (1977) to investigate the nature of religious identity within a school in Australia. His aim was to explain how interaction between structure and agency, could produce a particular set of meanings in a school where change through the actions of small groups of participants were more common than they appeared.

Although my study is not about Christian education as an academic subject, the above study serves to highlight the possible connections between education and YBCS. Angus' (1988) study also illuminates the ability of Bourdieu's (1977) concept to reveal and describe analytically the relationship between religious identity, structural and cultural forces. Bourdieu is a key feature of my own conceptual framework. As Angus

(1988) asserts, Bourdieu's (1977) concept identifies relationships between family, society and religion.

Further support for Bourdieu's (1977) concept is given by Grace (2002) who also uses Bourdieu's (1977) concept to theorise the field of Catholic education in the United Kingdom. He researches the challenges facing the leaders of Catholic secondary schools in urban areas. Grace (2002) concludes that these leaders were able to draw upon their Religious Capital, stemming from their religious identity to be able to face the challenges of morality in Catholic education. Grace's (2002) work demonstrates that Bourdieu's (1977) theory can be applied in an analytical framework that has different or perhaps more nuanced assumptions, about the nature of religious worldviews and their relationship to culture and society. The overarching themes resounding from the above two studies seem to suggest justification for the use of Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital concept.

Subsequent studies from the Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU, 2002) claim that the concept of social capital has provoked an explosion of interest since the mid-1990s. Field (2003) confirms this and explains that the idea for the theory of social capital is really straightforward, he states its central study can be summed up in two words: *'relationships matter'*. He further asserts that it is by making connections with one another and keeping those connections going, people are able to work together to achieve things that they either could not achieve by themselves or could only achieve with great difficulty. Field (2003) claims that people connect through a series of networks and they tend to share common values with other members of these networks. It is therefore clear in Field's (2003) opinion to see how religious communities are viewed as possessing social capital. Gilchrist (2004) supports Field's (2003) definition and finds social capital broadly defined as;

'A collective asset made up of social networks based on shared norms and trust and mutuality.' (p4)

Conversely Taylor (2000) states that;

'Social capital is also a 'contested and problematic concept (p126).'

He claims in particular that it challenges the language of religious faith and the subordination of self-interest within the worship of the Divine and a related ethic of service to others. Taylor (2000) further asserts that;

'The idea of social capital is associated with a political philosophy, a moral communitarianism that many reject (p10).

However, although social capital tends to be seen as a positive term by many, Taylor (2000) reminds researchers that it can be 'a negative force' like another positively charged concept 'community'. Taylor's (2000) further claims that;

'Social capital can also have a very 'dark side', encouraging conformity, perpetuating inequity, and allowing certain individuals to shape their institutions to suit only themselves.' (p1027)

Conceivably Gilchrist's (2004) list of the problems associated with a close-knit community can also be applied to 'social capital'. He asserts that;

'The social capital embedded in social networks can be exclusive of others, tribalist and oppressive to members and a source of internal inequality.' (p71)

Byfield (2008) concurs with Taylor (2003) and claims that this is also found within some churches, supporting Bourdieu's (1986) view that the cultural power of elite networks found within churches are also oppressive. However, this has not been the position taken by the participants in my preliminary study, the participants claim that the church has been a support.

Additionally, my literature research uncovered the study 'Faith as a social capital' by Furbey et al (2006) (the similarities in this study are mostly within the name. However, Furbey et al's (2006) study asserts that social capital which is part of Bourdieu's capital framework is the glue that brings about social cohesion in religious communities that supports the NRU's (2004) view stated earlier.

Smith (2002) articulates what many sociologists of religion argue every day that religion itself motivates human behaviour. Smith's (2002) arguments differ from Wallace's and Williams's (1997) view, that religion has an indirect effect mediated through socialisation mechanisms. Smith (2002) conversely suggests that in some situations religion motivates young people's behaviour directly. He also adds that religious experience and belief itself prompts young people to act positively. I concur with Smith (2002) as my findings from the church/community focus group also seem to demonstrate this. I conclude this chapter with the summary of the literature review.

2.11 Summary

Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital Theory has been explored throughout this chapter and I conclude that it is a framework from which the literature can be viewed and which throws light on the issue of education, family and religion. Bourdieu's (1977) Theory has helped to shape my thinking with regards to the impact of social class and the family. It also highlights Byfield's (2008) assertions that Cultural Capital mainly religion can contribute to the Educational Success of YBS. Furbey et al's (2006) study leads to the possible view that Social Capital is the glue that brings about social cohesion therefore it may have a possible impact on the educational achievement of YBS.

It is worth noting Eller's (2005) claims that even though Cultural Capital is acquired in the home and the school through exposure to a given set of cultural practices; Cultural Capital may also be seen as in born "talent", and its holder "gifted," because it is embodied in particular individuals. He adds to the research views being exposed earlier in this chapter that Cultural Capital is gained at home, or schools and alludes that it is probably also embodied within the individual.

In order to ensure that the different areas of exploration were adequately addressed, it was crucial that all fieldwork and associated research processes were firmly grounded in a methodology that would effectively represent the voices, and context of those involved in this research. The methodological process implemented in this research, is discussed in detail within the next chapter, Chapter Three, which focuses on the introduction and justification of the data collection instruments, the ethical implication and the approach to analysis.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided the theoretical and literary context on which this research is grounded and highlights my rationale in seeking to identify factors that contribute to the Educational Success of Young Black Students (YBS), and Young Black Christian students (YBCS). The preliminary findings provided a rationale for continuing research. With this in mind, this Chapter sketches out the process by which my role as a Christian Black woman and an educator, who has achieved Educational Success seeks to convey the research methodology developed for this study. This chapter offers the methodological framework through which the following question is explored:

What role does religion play in the Educational Success of Young Black Christian students?

In seeking to address the above question, this chapter offers detailed thoughts relating to the research methodology, and methods for undertaking the data gathering phase of this work. It also considers some key ethical factors that govern how the research is undertaken.

Methodological processes for engaging all groups are represented in sections below. Importantly, the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches chosen for undertaking exploratory fieldwork interviews, the largescale questionnaire survey, and focus group discussions are considered. Reflective moments in the field work process and overall research are captured in my 'reflective diary', which highlights certain emotions, feelings and thoughts pertinent to the study. This aspect also acts as empirical data source, with some extracts from the diary being included within the study under the personal reflection headings.

This chapter concludes, with the summary acknowledging the complex dynamics in the diverse methodological approaches used within this study.

I therefore begin this chapter with an overview, offering my rationale as to the several methodological approaches embarked upon within this research in relation to my research question: What role does religion play in the Educational Success of Young Black Christian students? Prior to discussing my research approach, I suggest the reader visits the chronological data collection chart (table 1) in the appendix.

My methodological approach was used to probe each area of the research; namely the experience, analysis, religious reflection and revised practice and this allowed for my qualitative stance to be embedded in a constructivist approach. This enabled me as the individual researcher to work in ways which were appropriate for the research project rather than conforming to a specific set of rules. Von Glasersfeld (1991) asserts that,

'Constructivism is seen as a movement where individuals have come to a particular view.' (p12).

Therefore, I embarked on qualitative research and interviewed three young Black public servants. This was to explore the idea of Faith stemming from the findings of the church focus group (see reflection 2).

While interrogating literature alongside the research with the young Black public servants and the Young Black Christian students (YBCS); I uncovered the concept of Religious Capital as discussed in the previous chapter, which seemed to have some resonance with my findings on faith. The discovery of the concept Religious Capital as a contributory factor to academic success, along with several authors' discussions on faith begged for additional exploration. This constant revelation from each enquiry confirmed the constructivist approach and supports my initial methodological thinking.

Therefore, I revisited the immense literature on Religious Capital, a derivative of Bourdieu's (1977) social capital, to establish a link as this was my closest reference point (see Chapter Two). However, the Faith revelation did not seem to fit comfortably here. The focus group discussion seemed to identify this faith to be more of a belief than a religion.

However, following my theoretical exploration of Religious Capital and the revelation of faith from the focus group findings, A eureka moment appeared; coupled with reflecting on my personal experience of faith as a Christian, the concept Faith Capital was established. The definition of this concept is that;

Faith Capital is based on a personal belief in God, it exists within the mind of the believer and it is not necessarily based on principles, rules, and rituals but a belief in God that can allow individuals to achieve Educational Success. It is an unwavering sense of faith that far exceeds human limitations and draws from spiritual wealth in God.

Therefore, it seemed prudent for me in my constructivist approach to conduct research into the similarities and differences between Religious Capital and Faith Capital. I wish to make clear at this juncture that this study did not intentionally set out to examine religion as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS. It set out to identify **any** factors that contribute to the Educational Success of YBS, consequently, due to the outcomes of the earlier primary research identifying the emergent concept Faith Capital, research with the young Black Public servants and the YBCS was expedient. Moreover, bearing in mind that the constructivist approach suggests that each piece of research is reviewed and within the light of the findings of that particular research a new research is constructed.

Therefore, following the young Black public servants research, the themes emerging from the findings seemed to suggest that the view of YBCS

needed to be included. I chose YBCS to interrogate the emergent concept Faith Capital as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS. This was done in the light of the established concept Religious Capital, and the findings from the young Black public servants. The methodology identified for this research was a narrative approach. The narrative approach was used due to my experience of the exploratory interviews with the church seniors. My consideration was that this particular approach would typically focus on the lives of the YBCS as told through their own stories of faith and religion. The emphasis in this approach would be on the story of their acquiring Educational Success.

While considering facilitating an enquiry to gain greater understanding of the factors that contribute to the Educational Success of YBS, and how I might effectively identify them. It was important to consider the approaches and processes that would gain insight into the world of YBS. This would hopefully result in an expanse of appropriate data that represent their experiences within a defensible ethical research framework. Whilst acknowledging the different ethical frameworks involved in research enquiries, it was necessary to initially engage with the ethical processes of the University of Hertfordshire where this study is assigned. The next section sets out the ethical research process applied in undertaking the empirical phase of the exploratory study.

3.1 Research Ethics

It was important to understand the ethical governance procedures and requirements of the University of Hertfordshire for students undertaking research. My research question posed above was subjected to the full code of practice guidelines, requiring an application and approval from the Humanities and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee. Consequently, ethical approval was granted to undertake empirical work with YBS and the church seniors. Therefore, the UH Code of Practice for Research provided

the framework for the governance and the guidelines for me to undertake work, embedded in good ethical conduct and upholding good practice principles.

Given that the link between the insider/outsider dimensions to the ethical issues are often present in qualitative research approaches, my role as one of the church leaders and a member of the same congregation as the church seniors posed an ethical dilemma of being an insider, with some of the participants. Busher (2002) asserts that researchers should be aware that there is a potential issue for participants;

'Quality of data, they feel able to reveal without, in their eyes, revealing themselves within the processes of their organisation.' (p82)

While adhering to the university's ethical codes, principles and practices derived from the field of social work/science, my Christian commitment, professionalism, integrity and accountability was also paramount. Consideration was given to the possible ethical issues that may arise such as; the quality of data may be called into question, or issues with how the exploratory interviews were conducted. There is no test to guarantee the quality of the data and it is possible that individuals did not mention valid information in their interview because of how they may be perceived by me. However, the nature of the exploratory interviews in terms of length, openness, my interaction and the conversational approach to questioning were devised to minimise these difficulties. One of the on-going issues raised by some of the participants known to me was the concern of how their story would be retold. To address this particular concern, I offered participants an opportunity to read their exploratory interviews once transcribed and amend and edit them.

Whilst acknowledging that the enquiry into factors that contribute to the Educational Success of YBS was a research activity, using social scientific and interdisciplinary tools, Dickson-Swift et al (2008) suggest that;

'Qualitative research is an emotional activity and researchers need to be aware of the emotional nature of the research and anticipate the effects that it may have on them and their participants.' (p88)

This they suggest has the potential to impact and influence an individual, group or community directly or indirectly and whilst agreeing that all research has consequences, they argue that some may result in harmful outcomes. This work was therefore not without the insights, principles and perspectives of research proponents mentioned earlier. Graham et al (2005) and Thompson et al (2008) offer me the tools and confidence to grapple with what was initially a daunting piece of work and enquiry, representing Educational Success of YBS. I pause to reiterate that the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants was guaranteed. The participants were also given the choice to withdraw from the research at any time and assured that transcripts would be disposed of once the research was concluded. The next section represents my research philosophy highlighting my personal view.

3.2 Research Methodology

My qualitative stance was embedded in a constructivist approach, where I have been allowed as the individual researcher to work in an appropriate way for this particular study as asserted by Von Glasersfeld (1991).

It is important when working within the constructivist framework to note that the participants in the research do not necessarily hold the answer I am seeking, rather they are part of the process of discovery. The participants are allowed to establish their thinking and enhance their voice, which enables me to find a greater and more worthwhile understanding. The qualitative model allows for openness to new ideas and a strategy for the inclusion of emerging issues. The tolerance of ambiguity is reflected in the constructivist stance and involves acceptance of an emerging set of

ideas and questions being worked out alongside the gathering of primary data.

Therefore, I concur with Guba and Lincoln et al's (1998) explanation of the aim of qualitative enquiry in regards to a constructivist paradigm where they claim;

'That the aim of the inquiry is the understanding and reconstruction of the constructions that people (including the enquirer) initially hold... The enquirer is cast in the role of participant a position that some critics have faulted on the grounds that it expands the enquirer's role beyond reasonable expectations of expertise and competence.' (p211)

In acknowledging the challenge, I needed to develop sufficient expertise and the competence to carry out the enquiry in a rigorous and truthful manner, accepting that new interpretations and understandings will emerge throughout the process. With this in mind I read arguments from the positivist and interpretivist research camps; the positivist belonging in the power of empiricism and the latter in narrative and interpretation.

Morris (1972) voiced his fears that researchers would become 'technicians' rather than 'intellectuals'. However, Hammerersly (2005) has been a consistent defender of the development of knowledge through educational enquiry via narrative and interpretive strategies, so initially this research strategy was used. This allowed the meaning to become apparent and the empirical data in the following chapters highlight the use of this research strategy. It is worth noting here that Ely (1990) states that the word qualitative;

'Highlight the primarily qualitative-as-descriptive nature of work within this paradigm, in contrast to the primarily quantitative emphasis of positivist approaches.' (p3).

Creswell (2007) confirms this and asserts that this method would give a detailed view in a natural setting and aid my desire to answer my research question through detailed exploration. Moreover, the exploratory interviews

with the church seniors acknowledged the issues associated with using personal narratives, and self-reflective approaches. Nevertheless, it allowed me to challenge my qualitative stance and ask questions appropriate to the research, rather than confirming to specific qualitative rules. I move on to discuss the research methods in the next section.

3.3 Overview of Research Methods

I used the following research methods first within the preliminary research. First were the exploratory interviews in the field Study; the intention of the field study was to recruit six senior participants over the age of 65 who were parents of children who had achieved Educational Success. The exploratory interviews were administered in this field study with open-ended questions allowing the church seniors to share their in-depth views and experiences.

The second method used was the questionnaire survey. Prior to administering the questionnaire survey exploratory questions (see appendix 4) were designed and used to assist in the design of the questionnaire to ensure comprehensive clarity and non-ambiguity. The third method employed in this study was focus groups. Kitzinger and Barbour (2001) claim they are a form of data collection that allows participants more latitude than other comparable methods. Crotty (1998) states that,

'It is the establishing of a constructivist epistemology which is significant and delineates the limits of the research approach.' (p3)

The fourth method used in this study was a return to interviews with the young Black public servants and the YBCS. Therefore, a constructivist perspective identifies assumptions about the world in which humans live and work. These assumptions are varied leading to a research focus that is orientated to complexity of views, perspectives and assumptions. Layder

(1993) contends that a multi-strategy approach will encourage the use of quantitative data in order to complement the centrality of the qualitative analysis. He further states that a multi-strategy approach that primarily uses interviewing to collect primary data but also techniques such as observation and large-scale quantitative data to support, but not necessarily to authenticate the interview data will best convey the real picture of the perceptions of the individuals within this research. Hence, I adopted the multi-strategy approach. I proceed to discuss the rationale for the interviews with the Public servants.

3.4 Rationale for the Interviews with the Public Servants

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, after viewing the findings that had arisen from the focus group, at a fundamental level, with a constructivist approach I considered the faith revelation. This revelation was like a lightning bolt, in the fact that it was mentioned an excessive amount of times within the preliminary research. This allowed for reality to be constructed by my participants. Therefore, I embarked on qualitative research and interviewed three young Black public servants. I chose purposive sampling and chose public servants that were known to me. I emailed all three public servants and discussed my research and arranged times to conduct the interviews. I also ensured that the public servants met the criteria of being young Black Christians, who had achieved Educational Success.

Therefore, I believed that the research with the public servants and the YBCS would contribute and further consolidate the idea that this concept of Faith Capital could be identified as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS. This research was to choose the qualitative approach as discussed earlier in 3.2 and conduct three interviews with Young Black Christians in public office positions so as to strengthen the findings. I chose these three individuals due to my own personal

perceptions and a statement by Revel (1870) the first African American Senator who claims;

'To attain a position within a public office, as a Black person is a great accolade indeed. (p420)

I concur with Revel (1870) even though this was 150 years ago, as to attain any public office within the UK currently is generally considered an exceptional achievement. It is imperative that I remind the reader that this study set out to identify factors that contribute to the Educational Success of YBS as opposed to the numerous studies identifying reasons for Black underachievement. Therefore, in my mind, obtaining the view of young Black people with a role in the high office of a public servant is very relevant indeed. The exploration of the public servant's views on Educational Success and the concept Faith Capital were fundamental in understanding this emergent idea.

I pause here to offer a pertinent introspection of personal reflection. My reflective diary excerpts will be included in this chapter to enable the reader a view into my ethical dilemmas and arising issues as a researcher. My rationale for including personal reflections throughout this study is referred to in Chapter One and explored in detail in Chapter Four. While having no intention here to advocate extravagant claims, I use the reflective tool to consider some of the factors that influenced and shaped my ideas, beliefs, assumptions and values, as well as my faith, relating to Faith Capital and Educational Success. The following self-reflection is offered here:

Reflection 1

*I exhaled after discovering that **Faith Capital** was no-where to be found in any of the educational journals or the academic websites. However, I wanted to firm up my findings and explore whether this concept **Faith Capital** made sense to anyone else apart from me.*

Alongside my studies I have been reading the book, 'Greatest Black men'. It was there I stumbled upon the quote by Revel (1870) which made me consider interviewing the people I knew in public office. I then thought I want to see whether people at the top of their

*game felt the same way; and/or whether they had tapped into **Faith Capital** without realizing it. I wondered whether they would be willing to bear their souls and tell me about their past educational experiences.*

In identifying the possible participants from the public office that I wanted to contact, I realised that I may have an ethical issue, that is, is a public servants' life private and confidential? How would my research focus on the participants lived experiences? Might my research lead to knowledge of sensitive matters, and what was the likelihood that information given would raise private issues? Lastly what precautions had I taken to protect my participants? All of these questions plagued me initially.

The above reflection 1 supports my reason for conducting the research with participants who are young Black people who have achieved Educational Success and have identified themselves as devout Christians. This research with the young Black public servants, will include specific questions relating to faith and Educational Success, so as to substantiate the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success of YBCS, therefore I will be testing my hypothesis that the concept Faith Capital supports Educational Success.

Revel's (1870) statement is part of the propelling force for the direction of this research, with regard to interviewing the young Black public servants. However, the need to investigate Educational Success as it pertains to the wider society and YBCS was borne out of the earlier preliminary findings within this study. My resolve to explore my research intentions within the context of the interviews with the young Black public servants, were partly due to my Christian background. Channer (2001) confirms that your background impacts your thinking.

In seeking to identify participants purposive sampling was used as discussed above. The thorny issue of gender raised its head as all the participants in this particular research were all men. I contemplated whether this information was pertinent to the research to be undertaken.

Benskin (1994), Blair (2001) and the LDA, (2004) assert the various range of theoretical perspectives that have been reported; that Black girls tended to achieve more than Black boys but was still below average.

It is worth noting here the research with the young Black public servants did not set out to draw comparisons between genders but focus on identifying factors that contribute to the Educational Success of young Black people in public office, and to explore their views of the emergent concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor, to their success. In making sense of the difference between the achievements of male and female I refer the reader to Lesko (2000), Wright et al (2000), and Reddock (2004) who all seem to echo that simplistic comparisons within the media and political arena seem to suggest that we can compare Black boys' negative experiences of schooling with Black girls' positive experiences. It is argued that a more in-depth systematic approach is necessary to make comparisons. The next section discusses the ethical dilemma encountered with the public servant's research

3.5 Further Ethical Dilemma

The ethical questions resonated in my mind; wondering what questions to ask and how to approach the public servants. I was aware that I needed to know about the personal experiences of the young Black public servants, and what effect their faith might have on their career and their lives, but I was not sure what response I would gain. I was aware that there are clear benefits of interviews in identifying participant's feelings and thoughts. This could however lead some of the participants (to become more vigilant when they develop awareness that this is what is legitimately being done). As a result of this, they might become apprehensive because they might fear that their identity will be revealed to outsiders. For example, the young Black public servants may not want their history or previous experiences to be out in the public arena.

In order to avoid the problem of participants being uncertain of confidentiality it is important to assure them that their answers would be confidential. De Laine (2000) notes that, it is important to give the participant the opportunity to decline to answer before the interview, and also during the interview if necessary.

Prior to undertaking these interviews, I considered the ethical implications of widening my sample this way. Usually public servants have several disclosure clauses in their contracts about what they can say in public. However, Guillemin and Gillam (2004) suggest that there are at least two major dimensions of ethics in research; procedural ethics that involve gaining approval from relevant authorities and 'ethics in practice' described as the everyday ethical issues that arise during the administration of research. They also suggest that;

'Although procedural ethics is unable to inform and guide all aspects of research practice, it does serve a valuable function in forcing us to consider and reflect on the fundamental guiding principles that govern research integrity.' (p277)

The procedural ethics of UH forced me to consider the following question; would omission of all identifiers in my research guarantee anonymity of all participants? I became aware that I could be the cause of things to happen, and that there could be situations during my interviews with the young Black public servants that could have adverse consequences. For example, participants revealing information they would prefer me not to know, making a disclosure or revealing vulnerability. In such cases I might need to betray the participant's trust.

Mason (2002) asserts that I may be forced to make the decision regarding the need to edit out parts of the data, especially if they could have significant adverse consequences, or that a participant may be concerned

that analysis might not cast them in a fully positive light especially in their public servant role. Guillemin and Gillam (2004) suggest consideration be given to the possibility that I may need to make decisions at a given instance, and it seemed therefore that procedural ethics might not in itself provide all that I would need for dealing with ethically important moments in my research. It has however been shown that:

*'Reflexivity is a helpful conceptual tool for understanding both the nature of ethics in research and how ethical practice in research can be achieved'.
(p262, 263)*

Therefore, I continued to use the conceptual tool of reflexivity to further enable me to understand the nature of ethics within these young Black public servant's interviews. Furthermore, greater consideration of possible ethical issues involved in designing the questions for my participants in this chapter will be discussed. Denscombe and Aubrook (1992) suggest that interviews should be held under the conditions of 'complete confidentiality'. I was confident that this would allow the young Black public servants to be willing;

'To respond with a large degree of candour and accuracy'. (p123).

My initial intention was to ascertain how the young Black public servant's individual experiences influenced personal constructs and how these in turn led the participant's development of their views, faith, and beliefs surrounding Educational Success; and in particular the impact of faith on their careers. I move on to discuss the methods used in the interviews with the young Black public servants.

3.6 Methodological Approach

I decided to use semi-structured questions with my participants in the public servant interviews. Bouma (2000) explains that semi-structured interview provides opportunity to find out what someone is thinking or feeling. Therefore, I aimed to explore through interaction with my participants their beliefs, views and their history. Patton (2002) states that clearly the main advantage of using semi-structured interviews is to aim to explore human 'behaviour' through interaction which;

'...enables researchers to recognise their participants 'feelings and thoughts' and to gain a comprehensive understanding on the views of the participants.' (p306).

Moreover, Fontana and Frey (2005) and Yin, (2009) assert that there is value in the semi-structured interview in that it allows participants to tell the interviewer what he or she does not already know. It may be the case that the interviewer has reached a point at which both the purpose of the research has been decided and the methodological approach has been determined.

In my continued quest to ensure that the right methodological approach was being used, I decided to use a narrative approach within the interviews with the young Black public servants. The following questions were asked during the interviews:

1. What is your comment on this concept?
(This question was the first question to be asked, after a brief explanation of the concept Faith Capital was discussed).
2. What or who influenced you to be in your current position?
3. What do you think has enabled you to be in this position?
4. What influence has your faith in God had on your achievement in public office?
5. What influence has your faith had on your Educational Success?
6. As a Christian what does faith mean to you?

The next section discusses the interview approach implemented with the public servants.

3.7 The Public Servants Interview Approach

After careful consideration of the interview questions composed (see above), I decided on reflection that the interviews should be conducted in a semi-structured format and questions used only for guidance, to ensure that my emergent concept Faith Capital is explored in detail. I needed to gain not just the surface view of the participants but also allow time for the participants to probe their thoughts on the viability of the concept. Bearing in mind Gillham's (2000) observations state that in order for interviewers to gain valid answers and ensure that their participants were more open, interviewers should start by asking:

'Can I start by asking you...? This 'openness' encourages the interviewee to be correspondingly open in response'. A good structuring technique when questioning will result in participants' answers being more valid.' (p40)

Therefore, I changed my interview question to the following; can I start by asking you.....? (see appendix 7).

I confirmed that the questions would only be asked after prior explanation to the participants. I also agreed to give an explanation of the concept Faith Capital to each individual before the interview. I reflected on my decision not to identify participant's attitudes per se, but rather to compare inference of attitudes with actions, with specific reference to language used about faith. I move on to discuss the methodology and rationale of the research interviews with the YBCS.

3.8 Research with YBCS

The interviews with the YBCS form an integral part of the research, within this study as they relate specifically to the YBS to whom is the focus of this study. This final part of the research offers depth to this ongoing study. The research conducted with the YBCS builds on the breadth of findings identified by the preliminary research in this study. The interviews with the public servants and the YBCS offer further depth to these findings. These two elements of the methodological approach explore the emergent concept Faith Capital identified during the focus group discussions. The emergent concept Faith Capital, needed a further exploration and deeper understanding, hence the seemingly extra significance given to the last two sets of interviews. The justification for the interviews with the young Black public servants and the YBCS has been noted earlier, however, several factors were considered before embarking on this exploration:

- 1) This research journey has developed an emergent concept Faith Capital.
- 2) This Dissertation did not set out to explore faith or religion initially.
- 3) It has been necessary to interrogate this concept with several research methods to ensure the findings are robust and valid.

Moreover, in essence, the interviews with the YBCS seeks to explore and understand the possibility of the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success, through their experiences and stories to academic discourse and debate. I begin by detailing my rationale for the research with the YBCS's.

3.9 Rationale research with YBCS

This research hopes to answer the questions being raised with regards to the reliability of earlier research methods employed to arrive at my discovery of the concept Faith Capital.

There seems to be no empirical or theoretical evidence supporting this notion of the concept Faith Capital. Therefore, my above reflection (reflection 1) aids my justification of interrogation of this new concept Faith Capital. This emergent concept Faith Capital was influenced by responses of the participants in the focus groups and implied by the participants in the exploratory study with the church seniors.

My understanding of the concept Faith Capital is; this conviction of faith is personal not taught or studied but acquired by the individuals through a personal relationship with God. It is not based in a particular habitus and does not require the individual to attend services, mass, or prayers; it is not based on a shared consensus; it is an individual assurance which governs one's attitudes and thoughts. It is an unwavering sense of faith that far exceeds human limitations and draws from spiritual wealth in God. This is discussed later in this study. The above definition and explanation is the basis and foundation on which this study now progresses. Consequently, this research with the YBCS was imperative to substantiate this embryonic concept. I proceed to discuss the methodology for the interviews with the YBCS.

3.10 Methodology

Whilst considering my earlier exploration within a theoretical framework, I utilised research techniques and tools of semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussion, which provided the means through which to explore the nature of the participants' lived experiences, their thoughts and feelings of the factors that contribute to Educational Success. Therefore, this section offers the methodological framework in which the following question along with its associated thoughts are explored:

'What are YBCS thoughts, perceptions and experiences regarding their personal faith, which have resulted in their Educational Success?'

In seeking to address the above question, this section offers detailed thoughts relating to the research methodology and methods for undertaking the research with the YBCS. It also considers the ethical factors that govern how the research is undertaken. This section explains the processes involved in gaining access to YBCS and the methodological processes for engaging the students are represented in the sections below.

Drawing on Rubin's and Rubin's (2005) suggestion that the main purpose of an interview is to see the world from the eyes of the person being interviewed, the interview was semi-structured. The focus of the interview aimed to explore and establish the concept Faith Capital. The next section considers the associated issues and processes involved in undertaking the interviews with YBCS.

3.11 Methodological Considerations

This research with the YBCS is interested in gaining a better understanding of the YBCS' view of the factors that contribute to their Educational Success, and to identify the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor. In effect, this study is seeking to obtain their authentic 'voices' or narratives about their Educational Success as well as their thoughts as to what impact faith may have had. This research with the YBCS is seeking to explore and analyse a sample group of individuals regarding some of their personal Educational Success stories.

Consequently, I had to consider the different approaches offering the appropriate tools for exploration and analysis. Given I was seeking to consider a sample group for this study, affording me the opportunity to gain an in-depth understanding of my concept Faith Capital it became clearer during the research design phase that a qualitative methodological approach and perspective would be suited for this research, because it

sought to explore such issues as experience, perceptions, motivation, and feelings.

This is supported by numerous researchers Dawson (2009), Gray (2009) who suggest that qualitative research relates more to exploring attitudes, behaviours and experiences as opposed to a quantitative methodology which has more leaning towards verification regularity, statistical analysis. Dawson's (2009) study indicates that:

'Certain words help to suggest a leaning towards qualitative research, others towards quantitative. For example, if you have written 'how many', 'test', 'verify', 'how often' or 'how satisfied', this suggests a leaning towards quantitative research. If you have written words such as 'discover', 'motivation', 'experience', 'think', 'thoughts', 'problems', or 'behave/behaviour', this suggests a leaning towards qualitative research.'(p20)

In choosing the right methodology that would help me in studying the feelings and perceptions of the YBCS it was also important to consider the methods, offering a set of procedures and techniques for gathering and analysing the data of YBCS. According to Bell (1987);

methods are selected because they will provide the data you require to produce a complete piece of research'. (p 50).

The next section discusses the interview sample.

3.12 Interview Sample

Once again purposive sampling was implemented to recruit participants who were YBCS, who were practicing Christians currently studying on an undergraduate degree program therefore achieving Educational Success as defined in Chapter One. An email was sent to the National Youth Director of the New Testament Church of God, seeking permission to carry out the

research at a National Youth Christian conference. An announcement was made at the conference to students on an undergraduate degree program who wanted to participate in the research to attend my table in the foyer.

This enabled me to strategically select participants who I believed would provide information-rich cases. I sought the essence of individual's experience, and also sought to develop a theory. Yin's (2009) discussion of representative sampling suggested that in order to achieve my theorising purpose, I should seek a sample which was representative in terms of the potential replication of a connection. For me, this connection was the one which students were making between Religion, Faith and Educational Success. I wanted to explore this through the participant's voices. As this conference was being run over 3 days my intention was to recruit 15-20 potential participants. However due to the time constraints within the conference and the fact that several respondents did not meet the criteria only 13 participants took part in the research.

Yin's (2009) view of the impact of sampling strategies on potential theory generation, and Patton's (2002) view of ensuring that sampling strategies are fit for purpose led to me draw up a strategy for inclusion, see the following chart below (table 2).

Table 2 Sampling Strategy

Sampling strategy	Purpose	Consequent inclusion criteria for my research–students
Homogeneous	To allow a focus on similar participants, all of who fit the research criteria.	Aged between 21-25 Black British of Caribbean descent. On the first year of an undergraduate degree. Practicing committed Christians Interested in exploring the impact of religion and or faith on their Educational Success
Intensity/ topical relevance	To allow the investigation of information-rich cases which 'manifest the phenomenon intensely but not extremely' (Patton, 2002:243)	Display an interest in exploring faith and education; Display an interest in Black Educational Success
Convenience/ Feasibility	To support maximum researcher convenience in terms of time.	Have time to allocate to: Participate in interviews Available for additional follow interviews or focus groups.
Opportunistic	To allow the researcher to follow new leads as the research unfolds	Appear to be able to offer rich information which was not previously known

(table 2)

The recruitment plan for the participants should have been straightforward as this was an annual conference with over 3,000 young Black christians. The announcement made at the conference enabled the participants to volunteer to be part of my study. The YBCS interviews are discussed within the next section.

3.13 YBCS Interview Approach

All participants arriving at my desk were checked to see if they met the inclusion strategy. This was done by asking the participants to tick the eligibility questions (see appendix 6). Once this was confirmed they were

shown the rationale at the top of the interview questions (see appendix 6a) and each person was given an explanation about the research and the confidentiality clause explained. They were asked did they wish to continue with the interview, they all agreed. Each respondent signed their consent to say they agreed to take part (see appendix 6a). A ½ hour timeframe was agreed at first with participants, allowing for the main questions with relevant subsidiaries. I considered whether to allow or indeed encourage narrative responses; being aware that encouraging this type of response from participants might appear intrusive. This was left open by allowing time for individuals to tell their stories if they wished but wording questions tactfully to indicate no compulsion, see the interview questions below:

1. Do you think that your faith has contributed to Educational Success?
2. Would you say that your religion has contributed to your Educational Success?
3. What would you say are the benefits of your faith/religion?
4. Do you think being a Black young man/woman and having faith has contributed to you being in university?
5. What do you think are the factors about faith or religion that influence Educational Success?

Given that there was a possibility for some of the participants to want to return to the conference, my thought was to minimise involving a long-detailed interview. Although three of the questions seemed to be closed questions, my justification for this was to conserve on time bearing in mind the venue where the interviews were taking place. Plus, this gave me the opportunity to ask the participants to expand on their answers if necessary, to the yes/no questions. I used sound recorded interviews guided by my semi-structured questions. This was to record the interactions and to allow me to better observe participants and record any significant actions.

However, I previously acknowledged this approach to be highly subjective, and I was therefore conscious of the fact that I could easily have been influenced by the answers and my own understanding of the new emergent concept Faith Capital. I needed to take into consideration Blumer's (1969) ideas on the inference of attitudes and my own doubts regarding my concept Faith Capital. All this unease led me to revise my second research question to what is your comment on the concept Faith Capital? (see appendix 7). The findings and analysis from this research and the research with the YBCS is presented in Chapter Four.

Prior to presenting the summary for this chapter I offer an explanation of the importance of the 'reflexivity process', argued to be necessary in research methodologies, given that it allows for researchers to review or assess their research practice. This is discussed in the next section.

3.14 Reflexivity Process Explored

As mentioned in Chapter One, and above - I have kept a personal reflective diary throughout this research journey. I have shared pertinent excerpts throughout this study. The first excerpt of my reflective diary (reflection 1) is shared in this chapter and then subsequent reflections are assigned within chapters throughout this study.

My reflected diary allows for the experiences to be viewed in their context and to demonstrate how the thought processes developed. In terms of reflexivity it is vitally important (due to the overtly academic nature of this study) that a full understanding of the ideas and their development is presented. For me, the reflective aspect of this work focuses on how my faith, ethnicity, identity biases and assumptions impact on my research journey and outcomes. This self-reflective process further highlights aspects of my pre-supposition as it relates to me a Black Christian educator

with regards to the Educational Success of YBS. Finlay and Gough (2003) suggests:

"Reflexivity emerges out of the etymological root of the word reflexive which means to bend back upon oneself. In research terms, this can be translated as thoughtful self-awareness analysis of intersubjective dynamic between researcher and researched. Reflexivity requires critical self-reflection of the ways in which the researcher's social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact on the research process. (p9)

At several stages of the research, I found myself struggling to maintain a balance between the notion of objectivity and sensitivity. The problems that arose, related to dealing with my different roles, at different times. My role as Deputy Head of department, Researcher, Teacher, and my role as Youth Leader, these seemed to impact my thinking. Whilst having the awareness and knowledge that the context of this work was to be led by an ethical research approach, I found myself constantly questioning my feelings relating to the experiences of my participants, which activated further thinking regarding the entire research process. Admittedly, it was difficult to manage my feeling at times.

Moreover, it became necessary for me to discuss my research with other researchers regarding emotional attachment issues as suggested by Dickson-Swift et al (2008). Bolton's (2005) argument strengthens the challenge against a self-indulgent approach to research, suggesting the following:

"The reflexive thinker has to stand back from beliefs and values systems, habitual ways of thinking and relating to others, structures of understanding themselves and their relationship to the world, and their assumptions about the way the world impinges on them. (p19).

Dickson-Swift et al. (2008) and Bolton (2005), suggest that I acknowledge 'best practice', but must not ignore the temptation to be influenced by my prejudices, fears and biases in the research and reflective processes. In

essence, I needed to detach myself emotionally from the data, and content, and work systematically through the findings. Progressing beyond the insights gained from the participants and enter a more analytical phase, focusing on the emerging themes and theoretical considerations. Remembering to keep this in focus was difficult at times; however, the constant revisiting of my reflective diary served to remind me to reflect and review participants responses objectively and to try and remain emotionally detached.

This reflective practise became an invaluable tool, when considering progressing from one methodological stance to another. For greater reflection, a variety of approaches and models were considered, all offering the opportunity to reflect, yet having limitations in their respective applications. The approaches considered included 'Kolb's learning cycle', 'The reflective spiral', 'Narrative reflective practice', including Pattison's 'Critical Conversation' approach (Thompson et al., 2008:50–74). Pattison's model of 'critical conversation' appealed to me the most, because it allows for a three-way conversation, which gives expression to the context of this study, in that it enables me to reflect critically, according to Pattison (2008) his basic idea is that the researcher should imagine herself as being involved in a three-way conversation between (a) her own ideas, beliefs, feelings, perceptions and assumptions, (b) the beliefs assumptions and perceptions provided by the government and media and (c) the contemporary situation which is being examined. This allowed for my thoughts and feelings to be explored and shared with the reader.

Furthermore, my reflective diary has enabled me to consider my position as a 'reflective practitioner', which, according to Forrester (2000) involves; *'ongoing dialogue between theory and practice in which if it is effective, understanding is deepened and practice improved'* (p 28).

Moving on from my reflections of my methodological approaches explored in this chapter and prior to discussing the analysis and findings of the research methods in Chapter Four. I feel it is expedient for me to offer a summary of the findings of my preliminary research, before concluding this chapter with an overall summary.

3.15 Summary of the findings of preliminary research

After the qualitative interviews with the seniors, I subsequently engaged in a quantitative methodology, designed a questionnaire and distributed it to a larger audience of students with the sole purpose to gain valid information directed at addressing the research question. Nevertheless, subsequent analysis of the data revealed that it was necessary to interrogate the emerging themes. Suffice to say the themes emerging from the survey analysis also seemed to resonate with the family and religion.

While viewing reality as it was being constructed and not just a fixed state that I the researcher was looking for, I realised that several methodological approaches were required. Therefore, I decided to use focus group discussions to illuminate the developing themes further. Three separate focus groups were implemented as part of the preliminary study. The first was a convenience focus group who discussed success. The second focus group, identified students who had completed the largescale survey and addressed Educational Success. The third focus group recruited a group of YBS from the church community who also discussed Educational Success. Findings from the focus groups are discussed later in this study.

After revisiting the data from the church senior's exploratory interviews, the large-scale questionnaire, and the focus groups, the overriding themes emanating from these primary research findings seemed to point to religion and the family, as possible contributory factors to the Educational Success of YBS. Moreover, one of the focus group's findings specifically identified faith as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success. I was at the

time mindful of my potential biases, which inadvertently may emerge whilst exploring faith with a focus group of professing Christians.

Viewing the findings that had arisen from the focus group, at a fundamental level, with a constructivist approach I considered the faith revelation from the church focus group, and I proceeded with my research. The findings from the preliminary research suggests the following;

- Exploratory interviews – the research evidence strongly that the influence of **Parents** and **Religion** had a significant impact, on the achievement of YBS.
- Summary of the Questionnaires – the findings and the literature reviewed surrounding the findings of the questionnaires, seems to suggest that the **Family** and **Religion** play an important contributory role in the Educational Success of YBS.
- Summary of the convenience focus group – themes arising from the findings identify materialistic gains, such as houses and sports cars and education.
- Summary of the Analysis and Findings of the Focus Groups - the findings from the analyses on all the focus groups seem to suggest **family, faith** and **religion** as contributory factors to Educational Success. However, I was drawn to the in-depth discussion on faith by the church community focus group participants, and the discussion on religion from the undergraduate students' focus group. Moreover, the emerging revelation of the concept Faith Capital was borne out of the focus group finding.

Prior to offering my rationale for the interviews, I remind the reader of my initial methodological thinking which was along a constructivist approach, and my initial thoughts were to explore one piece of research at a time assess the findings, see what had arisen from the research, and then plan the next piece of research if necessary. I continue to reflect on this process

and my views of the mixture of methodological approaches used within this study thus far. This is discussed in the following overall summary.

3.16 Overall summary

Given the complex nature of qualitative inquiry as a researcher at this level I had encountered many difficulties. Although there are guidelines in the literature, the emphasis on interpretation and emergent design provided no precise formula on how I should proceed. However, the benefits and the value of reflexive methodology have enabled me to reflect on the design of the exploratory study interview questions with the church seniors, the largescale questionnaire with the college students, the focus groups questions, and the research with the public servants, and with the YBCS. Whilst acknowledging the initial and occasionally ongoing challenges highlighted in this chapter, I am confident that this approach has yielded credible results which I will go on to explore and analyse in Chapter Four. This chapter presented the framework in which the empirical or fieldwork phase of the research fitted, considering such issues as identifying focus groups, and interviewing approaches.

In summary and in reviewing all the methods used I believe I have a good research question. Wolcott (1995) suggests that researchers should research topics that they believe are worthwhile, that the researcher values, is passionate about and with which the researcher is totally preoccupied. This is very much the case as I was willing to raise the questions with a group of friends not realising it was a convenience focus group. My research methodology has been enlightened by the several research approaches used.

I would now use these research methods of inquiry if necessary. The practical experience gained and the theoretical knowledge now acquired has influenced my previous views on research methods. In light of the

findings of the qualitative exploratory study, the large-scale questionnaire with the college students was undertaken. This enabled a quantitative approach to be used revealing a better understanding of quantitative research methods to gain a broad view of the undergraduates' perceptions of factors that contributed to their Educational Success.

Learning to reflect on my behaviour and thoughts as well as on the phenomenon being studied creates a means for continuously becoming a better researcher. Becoming a better researcher captures the dynamic nature of the process. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) highlight that conducting research like teaching, and complex acts, it can be improved, but it cannot be mastered. I continue to reflect on this process and my views of the mixture of methodological approaches used within this study thus far. As I move to Chapter Four, where I engage in discourse and analysis emerging from the findings.

Chapter 4 Findings, discussion and analysis

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter, Chapter Three represented the methodological processes for approaching the empirical data gathering phase of the research. As stated in Chapter One this study seeks to identify contributory factors to the Educational Success of Young Black Students (YBS), and specifically to Young Black Christian students (YBCS). Chapter Three briefly explained the preliminary research which included the exploratory interviews with the church seniors, the questionnaire survey and the focus groups. This chapter however, focuses on the findings from the research with the Public Servants and the YBCS. It begins by summarising the preliminary research findings so as to set context. This chapter will then specifically focus on the discussion, analysis and findings of the emergent concept Faith Capital. Prior to introducing the public servants interview discussion, I feel it is expedient to share my personal stance.

4.1 Personal Stance

It is worth noting whilst taking this additional investigative journey and interrogating this emergent concept Faith Capital, that I will also be sharing my own personal reflections. The revelation of the focus group findings earlier of their faith in God as an enabler to them achieving Educational Success, and the themes arising from the exploratory research have unearthed this new embryonic concept that I have identified as Faith Capital.

I am aware that I am proposing a new contribution to knowledge, and that it is unusual within a dissertation to include in-depth personal reflections of my findings. However, the rationale for my reflexive position is that I had

no known 'reflective tools' for reflecting on my narrative, because reflection and reviewing evaluation or analysis, were not a part of any of my previous research experience. However, in engaging with this research, I have been introduced to new and fresh insights to progress this work. Finlay and Gough (2003) state that:

Reflexivity requires critical self-reflection of the ways in which the researcher's social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact on the research process. (p9)

Furthermore, as this revelation relates to a personal experience, I therefore feel it is imperative that I offer an explanation of this emergent concept Faith Capital to the reader; this is further explained in Reflection 2. This reflection lays the foundation from which this new phenomena Faith Capital has emerged. It highlights the internal turmoil in identifying the emergence of a new concept and attributing this new knowledge to the discovery within my research. It also reveals the elation in accepting and naming this new phenomenon concept Faith Capital. The following reflection (reflection 2) on my narrative represents the complexity in making theoretical sense of diverse issues and perspectives associated with beliefs, faith and practice as it relates to Educational Success. It is this very challenge that this work seeks to offer some thoughts regarding YBCS, faith and Educational Success.

Reflection 2

Whilst analysing the third focus group's findings and interrogating those findings the overwhelming reiteration of faith by the focus group seemed to escape my notice. It was only upon returning to my discussions to review the discovery within a theoretical context that my second eureka moment arose. The revelation that faith could be a possible contributory factor to Educational Success began to resonate with me. I wondered whether I had discovered or stumbled upon some newfound knowledge to contribute to my research.

Recovering from my Damascus road experience and wakening to my new-found revelation – I wondered what to name the findings from the focus group. I felt that I could only link

this to Religious Capital. However, it seemed to be more than religion and more about a belief, or a faith. As I considered the findings on faith and reflected on literature on Religious Capital the words 'Faith Capital' surfaced in my head. I then created the name 'Faith Capital' this seemed to capture the essence of the findings.

I reflected on a paper I had written two years ago, that recounted the time when I was encouraged by a Christian friend to continue with my studies even though I was struggling at the time. She told me to continue to "pray and believe, have faith and you'll make it". I didn't see it at the time, it was my first eureka moment it was like 'a light had been switched' on excuse the pun.

I became aware that I had faith, not just as a belief, or a religion, but a faith that God could help me to succeed; as I said the words out loud I began to believe it. I said "I have faith that God could help me to achieve". I share this reflection with the reader today because subsequently the same revelation has happened while analysing my findings. I realised that the participants had gone further than just exposing their Religious Capital and their belief in God, but they had shared their personal faith, which I now call 'Faith Capital'.

Therefore, this chapter will give an account of the analysis and findings of this part of the research, as the research process and methodology have been discussed previously in Chapter Three. In order to establish its rigour and to give a sense of the weight to the data being collected. I begin by detailing the findings of the public servant's interviews.

4.2 Findings of the Public Servants' Interviews

The findings and analysis will be presented for each question as verbatim transcript to give ease in identifying themes. The full interview account for participant Y is presented in appendix 8. However, in order to present the analysis of the data in a thematic way it has been necessary to re-arrange the order of the original transcripts. Each interview began with a brief explanation of the concept Faith Capital. The findings are presented with questions and discourse that highlight tangible factors for the concept Faith Capital.

The following excerpts are thematic analyses taken from the findings of the interviews carried out with those who all have roles as public servants. They are identified as Public servant (PS) X, Y, and Z. All three participants were asked the following question:

Can I start by asking you what your comments are concerning the concept Faith Capital? (this was asked after a definition of the term was explained to the public servants).

Theme 1 – comments on Concept Faith Capital

PS X

'I think Faith Capital is a new concept, I have never heard of it before and it took some time for me to understand faith as a capital – bearing in mind that capital usually refers to money. I concluded that it may be seen as a certain amount of wealth. Like I said I have never heard of it I suppose for you that is a good thing because you wouldn't be discovering something new for your PhD if it was already out there.'

PS Y

From the perspective of faith, I would agree that faith is not reliant or determined on anyone other than the individual. So, faith as it relates to relationship and belief and computes like foundation translated from the Greek into English – the substrata the foundation, the undergirding underpinning of belief, hope it cannot be a shared experience it has to be individual to the person.

The manifestation and realisation upon the evidence of faith becomes witnessed by others but the actual commodity of faith as it relates to knowing God has to be individual.

Faith is one thing - capital part of your faith, that part is interesting because this is me pretending to be academic in order to have capital means to have gain more than one which to me means plural. That is why I think the concept is interesting and almost paradoxical in its essence, capital it would suggest supply and demand and integration and interaction and faith you don't need it. As a concept, I think it's great.

Not sure how Bourdieu uses capital but modern day, but capital is in some conversations used as a negative and as you have capitalistic society if used in the same way it becomes difficult to transfer the word faith and use it next to faith. Faith is not exploited and capital

can sometimes be exploited. My phrase I use 'Responsible capitalism' means yes make the wealth be responsible and share it. If you're using the same concept and applying become spiritually wealthy and have gifts and abilities talents use them. A Bible talk about a measure of faith is larger than someone else is responsible and encourages someone to grow in faith. As a concept is plausible it's a fine line between spiritualising something that has been taken over by world with capitalism, because when you do it the intentions may be pure but the word has connotations' and denotations. Therefore, people will struggle to get over the pre-conceived ideas of what capitalism is but as a concept yes.

PS Z

I would agree with the suggestion that faith has capital in terms of learning and career development, how we would measure the impact – is a good question but I do believe that in my life and in the life of others that I know a belief in God has helped and driven at times and inspired their educational development.

PS Y

'As a concept Faith Capital is plausible. It's a fine line between spiritualising something that has been taken over by the world with capitalism because when you do it the intentions may be pure but the word has connotations and ... Therefore, people will struggle to get over the pre-conceived ideas of what capitalism is but as a concept yes...'

(Excerpt i)

The participants gave varying answers to the first question but generally they tried to grapple with the concept offering different perspectives on the concept Faith Capital, in general they all agreed that faith was a personal belief for Christians. This response was not surprising as all the participants were professing Christians. Participant Y, who stated that this concept is almost paradoxical allowed me to reflect on how this concept would be received by non-academics? and how would it be received by non-believers?

I considered the fact that this study is an educational venture that will be published in the public arena although primarily written for those within the academic sphere. My hope is that the general public would find the study

of use regardless of their educational background. Once again, I began to ponder my new concept Faith Capital – and whether it would become a tangible contributory factor for Educational Success of YBCS, and if so what weight would it carry. It is clear to note here that none of the participants dismissed the idea of Faith Capital being a concept, however one of the participants did warn of the pitfalls to ordinary people understanding it. The second question: What or who influenced you to be in your current position? All three responses follow:

Theme 2 – Comments on influential individuals?

PS Z

What or who, that's an interesting one, it is a what/who answer, those connected to my belief in faith they have always encouraged me to learn – again going back to a relationship with God or an understanding with God – people would always encourage you to read and understand and know who God...

– they would also then encourage you to develop yourself – and identify your purpose – that purpose would be identified as the purpose you have in God through your faith so the 'what' would be the church and people related to the church and people of faith. The 'who' would often be the leaders who would see your abilities and sometimes identify your areas of weakness and coach and encourage you to work on those?

PS Y

That's a good one - to be honest fathers and mothers played an important part in my life. My grandmother has been central to me receiving certain revelation, my wife, children the way my perspective on life is about legacy and what we are leaving behind. Not only superiors, patriarch and matriarchs also those family members that have been important to me, also people I observe from a distance. I met someone the other day whose presentation of the gospel of his faith as a lifestyle impressed me, encouraged me to go further and when I see people in my field that are doing greater than me, then I want those things too. It doesn't make me want to sit down but they make me want to go forward and achieve- a cacophony of things.

PS X

As I was just saying the Christian voluntary work started me off – then The VO organisation took me on permanently and started paying me. I really enjoyed what I was doing talking to people trying to help everyone and trying to solve their problems. I then realised that I

was cut out to be a helper, a social worker. So, I went and study and got my social worker qualifications. So, I think that what has helped me to be where I am today.

(Excerpt ii)

It is important to note here that the interviews were semi-structured; therefore, the questions were phrased differently to some participants. This was due to some participants unknowingly answering two questions in one. The responses to the second question were varied, however the overriding theme arising from the participants' responses seem to suggest people who were connected to the same belief as the participants and were Christians or had faith that influenced their current positions. Only one participant mentioned the family, and one participant referred to capital with regard to wealth. It was interesting to note that two of the participants did not mention the family; this seems in contrast to my earlier findings in this study where several participants claim the family as contributory factors in their Educational Success.

Conversely the PS X and PS Y may not have mentioned their family or parents, as Blair and Bourne (1998) suggest that after high school Black parents develop a hands-off approach and this may have been the case for these participants. On reflection, I realised that maybe questions on the family should also have been included

The following question: What influence has your faith in God had on your achievement in public office? Was raised with the responses that followed.

Theme 3 –The influence of your faith in God on your achievement in public office?

PS X

Well yes, my faith had everything to do with it – because I really started to help people in the community and started to help out at many community projects. All of the community projects I worked in were linked to churches. So as a devout Christian my faith was the foundation that all my principals were built on. I believed that God allowed me to be in the

position I am now in, I think my faith in God as the all sufficient - one was what has kept me going in times of difficulties and distress.

PS Y

I wouldn't call myself an academic I struggled through my first degree and struggled through my second degree and in the true sense of the word my academic achievement was just that - a massive achievement not whether or not my faith in God had a direct result on my academic grade but what I would say is that my faith in God kept me at university kept me going back even when I didn't make the grade that's a challenge - a sermon in fact so. My faith in God helped me to stay the course academically.

(How?)

Because there were times I could have given up easily but my Faith in God Says - if God has enabled me to get to this point in life, he must be able get me through every challenge. Can I be bold and say my faith in God didn't make me study harder but my faith in God made me pray more about my studies, does that make sense - here's a perfect example of your concept of Faith Capital, not my degree not my Masters. I attended two classes for the whole term 9 months 2 classes but every Tuesday I would go and pray about maths, went into the exam and passed whether that's Faith Capital or faith - that's where I would say my faith in God helped me. If I didn't have faith I won't have been praying in that time, my specific faith in God said you have tried three times to pass maths GCSEs and you failed every time - this time you're going to pray.

PS Z

Um... one of things that faith in God has on your achievements is you start to realise it's not about you, so firstly not to build up your own self-image but you're doing it to carry out a process and secondly, you're not doing it from your own strength. I don't want to get all Bible, biblical but 'I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me' is the sort of thing you start thinking in terms of an affirmation to help in the difficult times - it would help me to focus on that and to focus on scriptures that would remind me that I am called with a purpose and that would help me to achieve.

(Excerpt iii)

The subsequent question was asked at different times throughout the interview process. The overriding theme resonating from the above responses is that the participants unanimously agree that it was their personal faith that allowed them to achieve their positions in society. This seems to endorse my definition of the concept Faith Capital (see excerpt iii

above) and supports the concept that it is a conviction of faith that is personal not taught or studied but acquired by the individual through a personal relationship with God.

The fourth question: What does your faith mean to you?

Theme 4 – The place of faith

PS X

Faith means everything to me God has allowed me the opportunity to improve myself in every aspect of my life in my education and in my career, I know that God and faith in God can allow everyone to succeed.

PS Y

Faith is essential as a belief and faith as a life style – faith as a believer gives me a set of rules and principles that I don't want to betray, because my faith as belief, says I stand ultimately accountable to God but faith as a lifestyle is different because you can be a person of faith but not deep-felt belief to make you act any differently..... Faith is intrinsic to who I am. It's central to who I am I cannot separate faith as a belief or a lifestyle as it relates to me personally but I do understand there is a separation.

PS Z

Faith for me has three components first component is conviction I am convicted and convinced that I am connected to God. 2nd component I believe if we are talking about essential components - is an awareness that God is who he says he is and is able to do anything even when in the eyes of the world they may say you'll never achieve this, but if you believe that's what he wants you to do is he is able to do that so the second part is total belief in God or trust in God and the 3rd part of faith is obedience – so the willingness to take that chance and step out and face being ridiculed and seen as a failure because you believe in God. So, the three components faith is to me – faith for me if I was to sum it up in a sentence is a vehicle that brings me through into the grace of God through that relationship I have with him.

(Excerpt iv)

From the above three interview responses, all participants explained succinctly their personal understanding of faith. The consensus seemed to suggest that the concept Faith Capital could be a viable contributory factor

for Educational Success. The participants have all been influenced by their unwavering personal belief that God would help them to achieve Educational Success (see appendix 8). The reader should note here that participants seem to use the words faith and belief interchangeably. Notwithstanding the responses demonstrate a clear understanding of personal faith and it is therefore seen as reinforcement to my supposition that the concept Faith Capital may be acknowledged as a contributory factor to Educational Success. I offer the reader a summary of the Public servant's findings.

4.3 Summary of Public Servants' Findings

The above findings and analysis suggest strongly that faith is a possible contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS. The overriding themes from these interviews highlighted faith as a contributory factor to the public servants' achievements, this is not surprising as the purposive sampling expressed that these participants were chosen as they were devout Christians. Moreover, the findings further confirm that the participants accepted that their personal faith was a vital part of their achieving their goal and that their personal faith could be identified as the concept Faith Capital. Furthermore, evidence emerged about the aspirations of the public servants, their history and how they achieved success.

In analysing their interview responses, I uncovered that they have all used faith to succeed. All participants reflected on college and university, which infers they all attended Further and Higher Education. I draw together the view of all the participants acknowledging their difficulty in initially achieving; in particular academic exams or employment positions of high standing. All the participants tapped into their personal faith, they dared to believe God undoubtedly and activated the concept Faith Capital

obtained in their cultural habitus as described by Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital theory.

However, for many young people who are disenfranchised even this goal is often not attained. While many factors contribute to these disparities, these interviews illuminate the fact that the public servants did not adjust their expectations (what they thought they could achieve) for the future in relation to their idealised aspirations (what they would like to achieve). This primary research highlights two factors that were found to predict expectations which matched the public servants' aspirations.

These factors were academic motivation and a personal belief beyond fear in God, identified earlier as the concept Faith Capital.

I surmise there is a possibility that the concept Faith Capital may well be a momentous discovery, and therefore a plausible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBCS. I refer the reader once again and hopefully the final time to my methodological thinking and my constructivist approach to this study, that the revelations from each analysis has spurred me on to commence upon a new piece of research to interrogate the new findings.

The emergence of the new concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success begged for interrogation, and I believe that the views of the public servants have solidified the possible existence of Faith Capital, as a contributory factor to Educational Success. Nevertheless, my reflective perspective, provoked me to ask one more question.

I pause here to also refer the reader to my reflexive process where I ask the question is Faith Capital a contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS? I needed to ask YBS about their view of this concept. Therefore, another piece of research was deemed necessary to enable a firm

establishment of this concept as contribution to knowledge. This study moves on to discuss the interviews with the YBCS who have become the central focus of this study.

4.4 Discussion on the Interviews with YBCS

These interviews in this part of the research serves to solidify and validate the earlier findings during the preliminary research. Its main aim is to strengthen the emergent concept Faith Capital. It also hopes to confirm the findings identified within this chapter from the young Black public servants that suggest that Faith Capital is a plausible concept. To further confirm and establish the concept Faith Capital this final primary research was conducted with YBCS.

All participants were checked to see if they met the inclusion strategy. Each participant was given an explanation about the research and the confidentiality clause explained. They were asked did they wish to continue with the interview, they all agreed. Each participant signed a consent form to say they agreed to take part (see appendix 6a). A half hour timeframe was agreed at first with participants allowing for the main questions with relevant subsidiaries. There were five main interview questions which are listed below.

1. Do you think that your faith has contributed to Educational Success?
2. Would you say that your religion has contributed to your Educational Success?
3. What would you say are the benefits of your faith/religion?
4. Do you think being a Black young man/woman and having faith has contributed to you being in university?
5. What do you think are the factors about faith or religion that influence Educational Success?

Importantly, each interviewee's identity was kept hidden within the text in line with the ethical agreement. Hence pseudonyms were used for ease of referencing each person's narrative. Interviews were used to collect stories and narratives on a number of themes, such as faith, religion, family and being Black. Each interview lasted between twenty to thirty minutes, included some occasional unstructured conversations that were not recorded. Excerpts of the narratives of thirteen YBCS follow, sharing their views on the impact of faith on their Educational Success. I now focus on the findings emerging from the narratives of my participants.

4.5 Findings of the YBCS Interviews

The emerging themes from the narratives and subsequent analysis represent the views of the YBCS and allows for exploration and interrogation of their perceptions and beliefs. These are presented as small stories as identified by Georgakopoulou (2006, 2017).

The findings are presented with the theme words; Black, Relationships, Negativity, God/Christ Bible/Word underlined to highlight their significance. These themes have been presented within individual portraits and not simply as themes with reference to individuals to illuminate the context in which the themes were identified.

Annie

This participant is studying midwifery and shared freely about her faith in God and claimed it was her reason for her Educational Success. On the issue of being Black she explained how being Black helped her to focus on her goals. With regards to Relationships she talked about her religion not being a religion but a relationship with God. She spoke of the positive principals of her belief;

'Looking after your family, not out getting drunk, and being conscious of how you treat and act towards people.'

She also shared the fact that neither her mum nor her grandma attended university, so she wanted to attend university for them. In the area of Negativity, she revealed that she had difficulties at school. She described how the teachers thought she was dyslexic and how she chose not to be tested as she didn't want to be labelled. She further highlighted the heartbreak she felt when she failed her assignments. The revelation that Annie felt she was being singled out and treated negatively resonates with studies by Gillborn (2012) which highlight, low teacher expectation for Black students. Throughout the interview with every mention of God or Christ Annie would become animated and passionate about how her faith had allowed her to achieve. She would begin to quote verses from the Bible saying;

'That she could do all things through Christ that strengthens her'

She would almost begin preaching declaring;

'That God has her back; and 'that having faith changes your mind-set; it lets you believe that you can achieve, and that God is always telling you yes you can'.

The above outburst correlates with Ellison 's (1992) view discussed earlier, that studying the Bible (or being able to recite Bible verses) kept Black students on track to achieving Educational Success.

Annie further claimed that;

'Having God in your life allowed you to know that you can do anything and that you can make it'.

With regards to the Bible she announced that

'Any one can read the Bible'.... But,' she said that 'faith was more than just reading the Bible but believing in it and knowing...

Barbara

Barbara is a sociology student who described her faith as her reason for success. With regards to her achievement as a young Black woman she stated that she wanted to prove to the world that;

'We can do this as Black women that we can achieve'.

Her views resonate with Mirza's (2000) study which highlights the academic achievement of young Black girls in contrast to young Black men. Mirza's study is also discussed in Chapter Two and Three of this study. When asked about religion Barbara claimed that her religion was about relationship with God and people. She acknowledged the positive spiritual and financial encouragement she received from her relationship with her church community. Barbara also reiterated that she received financial help from her church community, which supports Bourdieu's (1987) claim that religion has a positive effect in bringing communities together in the sharing and caring elements of society.

Barbara also highlighted the bond she had with her parents as part of this religious relationship. This was due to the fact that they attended the same church. Barbara's parents did not study at university but they wanted Barbara to attend. She also mentioned she was the first in her family to progress straight from school to college and then university. This highlights the strong family influence for students to progress to university and confirms Gillborn's (2011) view that ethnic minority families encourage their children to continue in education after leaving school. Barbara was specific about her relationship with God comparing it to her relationship with her natural father she stated;

'You could talk to Him at any time about anything'.

Barbara did not mention any negative aspects to her Educational Success. However, she reflected on the ability to take time out to pray and claimed

that prayer and fasting allowed her to achieve success within her studies. She justified her claim with the anecdote about her belief:

'That even though you prayed sometimes and did not get an answer straight away, you had to believe that God was always there, encouraging you pushing you forward.'

Once again, the mention of relationship and communication with God reinforces the aspects of the concept Faith Capital as a personal belief.

Clive

This participant is studying Business and he relished the idea of being able to share his faith with me. On the question of faith and being Black Clive stated that;

'Because I'm Black I am automatically stereotyped';

He testified of how he was watched and followed around the shopping centres. However, he claimed that his faith allowed him to know that he was not what people thought he was, and that he was not going to do what people thought he was going to do. Clive asserted;

'Yes, I'm Black and yes I have faith to believe that I can achieve'.

Clive further stated;

'I am studying for my degree and trying to make something of myself and break the myth and the stereotype.'

Clive alluded to the negative stereotype he receives as a young Black man; his views are supported by Wright's (2011) assertions that Britain is institutionally and contemporary racist. Clive also claimed that he did not have a religion but he had a relationship with God, the one that made a difference in his life. Clive believes that through this relationship he can speak to God directly and that there is no need to visit a priest for confessions.

Clive further explained that this relationship consisted of a time of devotion with God and that in the morning he would wake up and speak to God just like he was speaking to me. He could tell God everything and he could vent if he wanted to and know that God was there to help. Clive's response seemed to resonate with Ellison's (1992) study mentioned in the literature review, (see Chapter Three), that claims prayer and devotional activities are to be adhered to if Black students wish to achieve Educational Success. This further corresponds with the preliminary study findings with the focus groups discussed earlier.

On the issue of negativity Clive shared that he had been very ill with sinusitis during school and that he had experienced every kind of physical and mental low. He said he struggled with his A levels and at one point also lost all his course work. Clive also revealed his insecurities stating:

'... the fact that I'm a big Black guy 6ft 2in and 20 stone people may think I look menacing or that I could be violent because of my size.'

Nonetheless as soon as it came to talking about faith and God Clive stepped into preaching mode and exclaimed that;

'My God is in control and that when I am stressed God gives me a peace that passes all understanding; and that God gives me grace and mercy and faith to know that I can succeed.'

Concluding the interview Clive pronounced that;

'Prayer is a massive help and that faith gives me 24hour access to God, I can have faith anywhere I don't need to go to a church to have faith.'

Clive's concluding oration seemed to re-iterate the mantra the concept Faith Capital and confirmed Pattillo-McCoy's (1998) view that prayer nonetheless is prevalent in the everyday life of Black Christians.

Danny

Danny is studying finance, he stated that being Black and having faith were the perfect ingredients to thrust you into believing that you can achieve. He claimed that;

'Our ancestors believed they could come out of slavery and they did.'

He asserted that;

'Being Black makes you want to work out purpose and with purpose comes responsibility and with responsibility comes the feeling of being valued.'

Danny concluded his comment with the statement;

'Being Black and having faith helps you to navigate through life's many challenges'.

Danny embraced the fact that he was Black and used it as a positive he linked it to faith and decided this made him formidable.

Danny's further discourse also claimed that his religion was about a relationship, about realizing and valuing the fact that he was God's child and God was his father. He commented that this is so much more than an earthly relationship, identifying that sometimes family relationships can let you down, families can sometimes be so negative. Notwithstanding this he also expressed that;

'You can have good parents too, like my mum she always told me that education is a tool in your hand to be realised and to realise the potential of what education and faith can bring.'

Danny confirmed his mum's influence on his aspirations supporting Byfield's (2006) UK study, which claim that successful Black male students have compensatory factors in their lives, such as supportive parents with strong religious beliefs and church communities. On the issue of negativity Danny asserts that;

'Society can be negative towards Christianity, faith, the young and especially to the young Black man.'

Finally, with regards to God and Christ Danny gave a mini sermon. He expounded his views that scripture (the Bible) can bring affirmation of hope. He then began to quote Bible verses;

'I am the head not the tail' 'I am above not beneath' 'I am royalty a child of the king'.

He concluded his oration with this statement spoken as a matter of fact.

'The guy who created the universe has got me in his hands, therefore that's why faith brings hope, and faith makes me realise there's more to life than what meets the eye.'

Danny's concluding remarks adds weight to the concept Faith Capital, his statements on faith and what faith could achieve confirms that he believed he could achieve anything. Moreover, his belief in the Bible verses and ability to recite those supports Muller's and Ellison's (2001) view that devoutly religious young people report greater educational expectations for themselves.

Eric

Eric is studying philosophy and sociology. He opened the discourse with the sentiments that being Black and having faith has had an impact on his life and that of his forefathers. Eric began to clarify his view on faith saying;

'I can see how faith has contributed to his life and he can see how faith had contributed to Apartheid, in terms of bringing about faith to believe in freedom'.

He then continued with his opinion on how racial stigma is not as bad as it was for our grandparents and some of our parents. Eric asserted that;

'In the society, we now live in we can apply for any job we want as long as we have the qualifications, it doesn't matter that we are Black.'

He said this was not so for some of our parents, Modood's (1998) study acknowledged the difficulty West Indians had in settling in Britain due to the constant racist attacks. Eric's view on being Black was different to Danny's in that he felt that racial stigma didn't exist and that there was no negativity to being Black. His views concur with the church seniors' study in the preliminary research that regardless of your race you can achieve Educational Success.

With regards to religion Eric declared that;

'I do not have a religion but I have a relationship because we have this father son relationship with God and therefore we can achieve anything.'

Eric's view that he does not have a religion but a relationship may be due to Bourdieu's (1987) assertion that religion establishes, legitimises and reproduces social inequalities. Eric then asserted that;

'We have the faith of our forefathers that's why we can achieve'.

With regards to negativity, Eric mentioned his failed assignments but stated that his faith helped him to believe that there would always be a silver lining in every cloud. Eric also boasted about not having to be at the mercy of people who had a negative perception of him. He claimed that people in high authority did not have the final say. He said; `

When teachers say you can't achieve something, then God says you can.

He shared the following metaphor;

'When things feel cold and lonely there is a blanket of comfort that comes from having faith in Christ. I rely on that faith that God has great success planned for me I also know I have a higher power I can go to; that gives me greater confidence in myself. God is the final authority faith is my support system.'

Notably Eric's view of being able to overcome negativity plays into the concept Faith Capital as He believes that the faith he has in God will allow him to achieve success.

Frances

Frances is studying classical music she shared her negative experience of school and how she struggled with her A levels. She spoke about how she found the coursework difficult and therefore began to miss lessons. She reflected on the teacher's negative comments;

'You are failing and you will fail everything due to your non-attendance and lack of commitment.'

Once again, the teacher's negative comments are mentioned this reiterates Coard's (1971) exposition that teacher expectations are low for Black students. Frances mentioned that she had received an E grade for her coursework and mock exam. She reflected on her feelings of despair that she felt at the time. This was partly due to the guilt she felt at the prospect of letting her father down. Frances explained that her application to this particular school was rejected initially. It was only after her father's appeal; a place was offered hence the feeling of guilt.

With regards to being a Black woman Frances felt that;

'...it's difficult as the system did not work for me, I was the only Black student in my class and classical music was not seen as a subject for Black students.'

Frances shared how she sat her final exam and got a grade B. She had pleasure in explaining to the teacher that it was God that helped her. Frances said the negativity of the teacher allowed her to build her confidence in God and reminded her that;

'God is on my side with whatever I am going through'

Frances said she prayed and believed God and ended up with good grades. This further supports the concept Faith Capital and endorses Carter's (2003) view that prayer is a valued capital in the Black community.

Georgette

Georgette is a participant studying nursing. She began the interview by sharing this view:

'Being a Black female is hard; teachers mark you harder because you are Black'

She stated that;

'Teachers think less of you because you're Black, but the positivity I have from being Black is amazing.'

Georgette aired the views acknowledged by the Rampton's (1980) report which highlighted low teacher expectations as discussed in Chapters Two and Three. However, she asserts the views of the positivity of being Black as expressed by Rhamie (2007) that students can achieve greater success because they are Black. Georgette expressed that she was a natural academic always getting good grades at school. However, this changed at university as she became complacent and began to receive poor grades and referrals. She explained how her confidence was knocked and how she began to worry and get depressed. She then reflected on the word of God, Philippians 4, which stated 'study to show yourself approved'. She began to exhort the following;

...that if God has got your back you don't need to worry, God is bigger than my fears, bigger than my pass mark, bigger than my issues.

Once again, this participant reflected on the Bible quoting verses that seemed to support her faith and her belief that she can achieve anything. She stated that she had faith that went beyond fear, expounding that God is bigger than her fear and God's got her back, resonates strongly with the

concept Faith Capital. This is explicit of my definition that one should possess a belief beyond doubt that you can achieve (Chapter One).

Henry

Henry is studying engineering he began his story by talking about religion he stated that he did not have a religion but he had a relationship with God. He said;

'You can just speak to God the way he was speaking to me.'

He expressed that he had a great personal relationship with God. Henry confirmed his relationship with God and talked about this being a personal relationship, further supporting the concept Faith Capital. Henry talked about how society stereotypes young Black men, claiming they just end up having children outside of marriage, however Henry revokes this view. He shared how his success was down to Godly family role models and other Christian friends that are role models. With regards to negativity, Henry stated that even when things got tricky or hard he would look to God. As God would never leave or forsake him, God would be his comfort.

Concerning the Bible Henry stated that reading the word was paramount as it affirmed that God would never leave you and that He is a provider and protector. Henry's views resonate quite strongly with several of the previous participants, his view of being stereotyped and the negativity he received caused him to look to God for comfort. He also affirmed that he found the Bible supportive in times of difficulties, thus agreeing with Parcel's and Geschwender's (1995) views that religious practice or involvement generally affects education positively'.

Indie

Indie is a participant who is studying religion and psychology. Her view on being a Black woman was that being Black had nothing to do with whether

you were educationally successful or not. She said it was your faith that allowed you to succeed regardless of your colour. This was an interesting take on the issue of being Black and seemed to support other participant's views that racism was no longer an issue.

It seems to accept Rhamie's (2007) view that if you want to achieve Educational Success then you can. Her view on Faith further validates the concept Faith Capital as she believed it is your faith that helps you to achieve. Indie stated that the positive influences in her life were her family especially her mum. Indie said that her mum encouraged her and her mum's faith helped to activate Indie's faith. Indie talked about the struggles she had at school and at college and even the struggles she was facing at university. However, she also began to 'preach' stating;

'I know some-one much bigger, much greater than me that has got my back. I just got confidence that someone much bigger will sort things out. Just knowing that I am part of a bigger picture gives me faith to continue.'

She concluded that her confidence in her faith in God allowed her to keep going.

Julia

This participant is studying English and media and has spent 3 months of her course in America. She begins her discourse saying;

'Society is not set up for the Black woman and that in general Black women are seen as the lesser people.'

This is contrary to Indie's view above; Julia feels that society is still negative and racist towards the Black woman thus heralding the view of Gillborn (2011) as discussed in earlier.

Positively she hails her mum as her heroine, a woman of faith and a praying woman. She notes that her mum was constantly encouraging her, she claims it's the relationship she had with her mother which also spurred her

on to complete her studies. Julia reveals how she has had medical problems throughout her whole life. She reflects on the teacher's negative attitude and their claim that she would not achieve her GCSEs at school. Similarly, at college the teachers said she would not achieve her BTEC.

In America, the tutor failed her work; she talked about feeling like her world was going to end. However, she claimed that she reflected on the scriptures; 'I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me'. She stated that knowing that there is a God strengthened her resolve and that speaking positive affirmations over her life strengthened her belief that she could achieve. The final result is that God fixed it and she passed the first year with flying colours. Teacher negativity was mentioned again, however none of this seemed to deter this participant, this may be due to the ability to recite the Bible verses that she claimed encouraged and ignited her faith to achieve.

Karen

This participant is studying for an educational degree hoping to be a teacher. With regards to the issue of being Black she stated that there are so many negative stereotypes. She claimed that people have a negative view of Black women that; 'they drop out of school to have children and they have loads of children with different fathers'. Karen was aware of the negative views by DCSF (2007) identifying the reasons for school dropouts. However, on the positive issues Karen stated that, 'going to church I get to share my faith with like-minded people, I have a relationship not a religion with which I can talk to God at any time. I have great role models in my family and within my church community and friendship groups.'

Karen seemed to combine all her answers to the questions in one large response. She agreed with previous participants stating she had a relationship with God and that it was not a religion, making a distinct difference between Religious Capital and the concept Faith Capital. She

also mentioned that; 'studying can be a struggle sometimes but I know I can call on God any time, again referring to the use of prayer as noted earlier in Carter's (2003) study. She referred to the Bible, and quoted verses again concurring with previous participants on their faith placed in the Bible.

Her exposition on the worth of the Bible reinforced her personal faith. On the other hand, she mentioned the great role models and community links she achieved from attending the church. This concurs with Byfield's (2006) study that claims; success can be achieved through strong church communities, and also supports my preliminary research findings on supportive church role models.

Lawrence

This participant is studying for a music Degree hoping to become a music producer. Lawrence began his story by talking about religion and stated that he does have religion which is Pentecostalism. Interestingly this was the only participant that stated that he had a religion. He said it's about the Holy Spirit that gives him access to God through prayer. He said;

'The spirit gives him confidence to speak to God through prayer at any time'.

He claimed he had a personal faith relationship with God. Once again, the participant's response partially describes my definition of the concept Faith Capital. He also expressed that his music success was down to his faith in God and his God given ability to sing. With regards to negativity, he claimed that his parents were very positive people and encouraged him to stand-up for himself, his culture and colour.

He confirmed that the Bible was the way that God communicated to him through the word and that through faith he was able to achieve success. Lawrence also claimed that the Bible was God's way of speaking to him and through faith he was able to achieve. Smith's (2002) study supports this

and states; religious experiences such as reading the Bible prompts young people to act positively.

Mia

Mia is a young lady studying Theology. She began the interview by sharing this view:

'Just because I am studying theology does not mean that I understand faith in its entirety.'

Mia expressed that she wanted to become a Christian youth counsellor. However, she found university challenging and realised that she was not as academic as she should be. She was then quiet for a moment (seemingly reflecting) before changing into a Pentecostal preacher mode and stated;

'Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen....'

Mia had begun to quote from the Bible, this seemed to change the ethos of the interview; she explained how her faith kicked in and allowed her to achieve sufficient grades on her course, confirming again faiths' ability to help one to succeed, which concurs with several earlier participant's views.

I have presented excerpts of the thirteen interviews. The excerpts were taken from all the data collected from the transcripts of the recorded interviews and then allocated to categories, so as to identify similarities and themes within each narrative. The reviewing of my reflective diary substantiated the notion that participants found the question about their faith experience emotive, resulting at times in animated responses of preaching and excitement. Interestingly, this was the first question that was posed, which could have normally led to anxiety at the initial stages of the interview but this was to the contrary. The analysis of the arising themes follows next.

4.6 Analysis of arising themes

An analysis grid (see appendix 9) was used to aid the exploration of the thirteen individual participant's narratives in this additional data collection. The analysis grid highlighted five categories derived from the repetition of words used by each participant in the interview transcripts. The categories used are Black as defined in Chapter One, Relationships with regards to affiliation with family and the church community. Negativity, as perceived or received by the participant, and God or Christ and the Word or Scripture (Bible). These categories all refer to faith explicitly or implicitly and the word faith is captured throughout the analysis which is the centrality of the concept Faith Capital and highlights the influence of this concept on the Educational Success of the participant.

I move on to summarise this analysis sharing the overall findings within these five specific themes; the first theme I share is the theme surrounding the notion of being Black. The question asked:

Do you think being a Black young man/woman and having faith has contributed to you being in university?

This question was specifically designed to capture the view of the YBCS and to address the issue of being Black as discussed in Chapter One, as well as the overall study question: What role does faith play in the Educational Success of YBCS and is it a factor that contributes to the Educational Success of YBCS.

Being Black

All the females who answered this question stated that there were challenges to being a Black woman who wanted to achieve. They stated that they were ambitious and wanted to succeed educationally to prove that Black women can do this. Some mentioned the popular stereotyping

of Black women having children outside of marriage. However, these findings suggest that Black women can achieve and support Mirza's (2000) view that Black women achieve more than Black men and concur with SFR 2016 results which highlight the achievement gap between boys and girls.

The young men's responses to the question on being Black led to the majority of participants claiming that general consensus by the media that young Black men are failures lead to a stigma being attached to being Black. My observation on the responses to the question on being Black engendered certain emotional feelings and responses, both in the participants and myself. I felt uncomfortable at their willingness to share their encounters of racism through their stories. For example, hearing their narratives relating to the stereotyping that is still quite evident today triggered questions in my mind relating to racism, which I acknowledge is not the focus of this research but supports studies by Wright (2010) and Strand (2012). I move on to share the responses to the question on religion or relationships.

Religion or Relationships

The question on religion asked; would you say that your religion has contributed to your Educational Success. The responses heralded in new views on religion. Almost all participants reiterated that they do not have a religion but they have a relationship with God. Therefore, in analysing the responses the thematic answers to religion have been subdivided into relationships with family, relationships within the church and relationship with God. This question was raised to establish the demarcation between Religious Capital and the concept Faith Capital. The question sought to establish a difference, if any, within the views of the YBCS. However as with any research the responses to this question raised interesting views. I purposefully chose not to ask questions about the family as this had been identified in the preliminary research, that the family could be a possible contributory factor to the Educational Success of the YBS. I purposely

wanted to focus on the new concept Faith Capital. This had been established and supported literature by Strand (2011). However, the responses to the questions on religion often led to discussing the family. All participants mentioned the family in regard to relationships, as a positive influence on their Educational Success. Two participants mentioned that their parents did not go to university therefore they wanted their children to go. Two participants noted that parents reminded them that education is a tool to be realised in your hands. All the participants stated that their parents were great role models. The majority stated that having a good relationship with their parents allowed them to achieve Educational Success. Suffice to say the comments above support the findings of the preliminary research and views of the exploratory interviews with the church seniors.

Four of the thirteen participants mentioned that religion had a positive effect on their lives, in that it made you aware that you needed to look after your family and consider how you acted around people. Five of the participants stated that they were encouraged by the people in the church to study and that there was immense spiritual support. One participant stated that the church offered financial support thus backing Bourdieu's (1986) theory of cultural capital, in gaining financial support from social communities.

Finally, all the participants mentioned that they had a relationship with God as mentioned above and this supports the centrality of the study defined as the concept Faith Capital. All participants stated that within this relationship you can just have a conversation. One participant stated;

'you can talk to God like your father you can talk about anything, you can vent with God,'

Another participant stated;

'He's always available in the morning or at the end of the day. You can have an amazing relationship with God he is your father and you are his child.'

10 out of 13 participants stated;

'it is because we have faith to believe that he is our father that we have this father/son relationship.'

All the participants mentioned having a relationship with God. The fact that all participants identified this relationship serves to build up the existence of Faith Capital. This is because Faith Capital exists in the mind of the believer and the relationship is between the individual and God. Therefore, one of the fundamental elements of Faith Capital is the relationship. I move on to discuss the theme Negativity as perceived or received by the participant.

Negativity

The topic of negativity arose from the participants views of their Educational Success journeys. It was the frequent mention and reference to negative external influences that allowed this theme to be identified as a specific area. The negative theme centred around school, teachers and around participant's self-confidence, which was invariably knocked at school. The eight of the participants highlighted that teachers' views of their academic ability was very poor. Three participants stated that because they failed assignments they felt like a failure and receiving negative feedback from the teachers resulted in low esteem and depression. Another participant claimed that receiving negative comments because he was a 20-stone big, Black young man in a department store gave him low self-esteem. All the young men stated that society is negative towards Black young men.

However, at the end of all of the responses about negativity each participant that mentioned negativity combatted it with a positive response for example; saying

'... but there is a great blanket of comfort when things are negative'.

One participant stated that they are not at the mercy of the negative perception. All participants stated that they had received negative feedback from teachers at some point in their educational journey. Two participants stated how their confidence was knocked by the teacher but they believed they could still achieve. The overall view of negativity adds weight to the centrality of the concept Faith Capital in that all the participants overcame the negativity to achieve Educational Success. I move on to discuss the themes Faith and God.

Faith and God

The question: Do you think that your faith has contributed to your Educational Success? Is the fundamental question within this study? Moreover, in acknowledging the possible existence of the concept Faith Capital as a probable contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS. It was pertinent that a direct question about faith be included, in these interviews. The inevitability of a similar response to this question and question three; what you would say are the benefits of your faith/religion, have been acknowledged in the methodology chapter. Therefore, the themes God/Christ include inferences and acknowledgments of faith.

All participants stated that even when things go wrong they had a faith to believe you can achieve. Eleven of the participants attested that faith changes your mind-set it makes you believe you can achieve. Two of the participants stated that faith gives you 24-hour access to God. Six of the participants stated that faith brings hope and that faith combats negativity. Five stated that faith allowed you to believe that God's got your back. Some of the participants stated that just having faith helps to know that there is

a bigger picture and plan for your life. The participants stated that speaking positive affirmations of faith was sufficient to motivate you to carry on when things are rough I can call on Jesus. The number of responses that actually mentioned the word God was significant.

However, the word God was entangled with the word faith or the assumption of faith and therefore difficult to separate. The persistent responses that God's got your life, you know God's got your back, having God in your life; you know you can do anything, because of God I was the first to go straight from college to university. These responses suggest a belief and a faith that through believing in God you can achieve. The participants stated that knowing that God is in control gives a faith and peace, trust, grace and mercy. One of the participants stated just knowing that the guy who created the universe has got your back, and has great success planned for me is sufficient to enable me to achieve.

Seven of the responses stated that faith in God is a stable support system; faith in God is the final authority. The participants made sweeping statements that I can only identify as declarations of the concept Faith Capital.

The following are some of the statements. God's on your side, God is bigger than your issue, God is bigger than my pass mark, God is bigger than my fear, God has my back, God will fix it for me, God is a comforter, protector, provider, God will never leave me, God is a friend and brother, God is there for me, all the above statements in isolation do not attest to Faith per se. However, when viewed as a collective from several different YBCS it is possible to arrive at the centrality of this study which is the concept Faith Capital. The participants exhibited a personal belief in God that they could achieve and was expressed explicitly in their responses. Their responses seem to encompass my definition of the concept Faith Capital which is defined in Chapter One;

Faith Capital is based on a personal belief in God, it exists within the mind of the believer, it is not necessarily based on principles, rules, and rituals, but a belief in God that can allow individuals to achieve Educational Success. It is an unwavering sense of faith that far exceeds human limitations and draws from spiritual wealth in God.

This therefore strengthens the view that the concept Faith Capital exists even though the YBCS do not yet identify it as such. I pause here to highlight the responses to the word prayer; although not identified as a specific theme all participants mentioned prayer as a form of communicating with God. I move on to discuss the Bible as the final theme within this analysis.

The Bible/Word

The acknowledgement of the Bible within the responses of the interviews was not surprising as these are all YBCS. Additionally, the persistent quoting of actual verses and text from the Bible further cemented their belief in God and suggests a display of their Faith Capital. All the participants believed that answers to their prayers and their communication with God came through the Bible. All participants stated that they read the Bible, and all quoted a particular verse that established their faith in God. This concurs with Ellison (1992) who studied Religious Capital and researched Black Christianity in the USA and claims that Black students who engaged in frequent devotional activities such as prayer and reading the Bible, were kept on track to achieving Educational Success. Below are some of the excerpts from the Bible text (see appendix 9) for full transcripts.

- 'I can do all things through Christ'
- 'He gives rest when you're troubled'
- 'He gives peace that passes all understanding'
- 'The scripture can give affirmation of hope'

- 'The scripture states 'you're the head not the tail'
- 'The Bible says you are royalty, child of a king'
- 'Study to show thyself approved'
- 'Know that he's there in the good times and bad'
- 'Faith is the evidence of things not seen'

The YBCS all believed that the Bible was God's way of communicating with them. All YBCS quoted a particular Bible verse that they believed helped them in times of need; and, although some participants stated that you may not get an answer straight away but you know the answer is in the Bible.

The interview responses highlight that all participants had a personal relationship with God and that this experience influenced their ability to study. All the participants were impacted by several factors, these included parents, Bible, church, relationships and negativity as discussed above. Furthermore, five of the participants acknowledged that the negativity surrounding their colour and culture were significant in them acquiring the determination to succeed.

With reference to the question on faith and the impact on their Educational Success all participants revealed some adversity in applying for university or while studying at university. However, all participants named faith as the reason they were able to overcome their hurdles and remain focused. This was highlighted in their continued reference to their belief in God which supports my concept Faith Capital. The following summary with the YBCS helps to highlight this.

4.7 Summary of the interviews with the YBCS

The inference gained from the above thematic analysis supports an argument for incorporating each aspect of the YBCS' life; namely family,

faith and education. The personal aspirations and reflections in assessing how these contribute to Educational Success are phenomenal and relate to my description of the concept Faith Capital.

The above interview excerpts are presented to fulfil one intention of this study, that is, to explore the individual's view of their resultant impact of faith on their Educational Success. My preliminary research has acknowledged the possibility that faith may be a contributory factor and therefore this interrogation strengthens this concept. It contributes to the definition in terms that state if you have Faith Capital you can acquire Educational Success. I conclude this chapter with an overall summary before presenting the conclusion in Chapter Five.

4.8 Overall summary of Chapter

The emerging themes from the young Black public servants and YBCS's narratives and subsequent analysis represent a phase in this study that illuminates the interpretation of the preliminary findings mentioned earlier. The findings with the community group aided the announcement of the embryonic concept Faith Capital, and this chapter sought to establish and further validate this concept as a possible contributory factor to Educational Success of YBCS. It is evident from the interviews undertaken that the young Black public servants and the YBCS's narratives represented their lived experiences and was achieved through systematic, empirical processes that allowed the participants to share their feelings.

This chapter commenced with reflecting on the outcomes of the preliminary study, highlighting the emergent concept Faith Capital, and setting this in a contextual framework. It suggested that its foundations represented a contributory factor to Educational Success of YBCS. The chapter considered the perceptions and aspirations of the young Black public servants' and the YBCS's narratives regarding Educational Success. Furthermore, theoretical

research, discussed in the literature review Chapter Two, did not identify the concept Faith Capital within any literature, as discussed in the following Reflection 3.

Reflection 3

In my quest to establish a foundation to my findings of Faith Capital I began an extensive research investigation into the Cultural Capital concept. I searched for texts, studies and reports on Religious Capital education and Religious Capital, Educational Success, religion and academic achievement. I added Religious Capital to all academia search engines, none of the British books or diaries matched my search. A few American diaries mentioned Religious Capital with regard to success but not necessarily linked to Educational Success. I did not think for one minute that 'Faith Capital' would be out there so I did not search for it. I began to draw the conclusion that studies on Faith Capital within the UK did not exist and felt elated that this confirmation of my new emergent discovery did not exist elsewhere.

However, this elation seemed initially to be short lived. While sharing my findings with my sister who also believed I had discovered something new, I was asked the question "are you sure Faith Capital isn't already out there?" my reply was yes "am I sure there is nothing out there". Even though I told her I was sure I began to question myself. I decided to type the words Faith Capital into the search engine. I was met with horror and dismay as right before my eyes appeared the Words FAITH - CAPITAL. My heart sank and tears began to stream down my face. I called my sister and informed her that Faith Capital was already out there. She shared in my dismay. At that specific moment, I began to question my faith in God who I believed, would help me to achieve and who I was convinced had given me the term Faith Capital as a concept from the focus group findings. It took several days before I could bring myself to download the document I had encountered and to begin reading it. As I located the document on the internet I breathed a short prayer. I'm not sure if it was the prayer or that the title of the document had changed, or whether I was just oblivious to the title initially, but the document now read 'Faith AS SOCIAL CAPITAL', and not Faith Capital as I had first intimated. I read and re-read the title and my fears began to subside. I plucked up the courage to begin reading the whole document and was pleasantly surprised to find that this exploration on faith as a social capital was with regard to the government's interest in faith communities as partners in a range of social policies and regeneration programmes.

This research concerned FAITHS as described by Webster's dictionary; Faith as a social capital study reviewed Christianity, and Hinduism and Judaism as it relates to social capital and the effects that the buildings and communities had on individuals. Although the government is concerned with Educational Success it was not linked to that particular study. My time to exhale had arrived, I realised that I could still contribute to knowledge as my discovery of Faith Capital was with regards to faith and not faiths contributing to Educational Success.

Therefore, from the overwhelming response confirming the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success, by the Black public servants and the YBCS, I propose the concept Faith Capital as contribution to knowledge.

It is on this premise that Chapter Five next, offers a conclusion to this study.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the findings of my research and offers an explanation of the factors which impact on the Educational Success of YBCS through the use of the theoretical concept Faith Capital. As stated in Chapter One this study seeks to identify contributory factors to the Educational Success of Young Black Students (YBS), and specifically to Young Black Christian students (YBCS). This chapter offers a summary of the findings, my limitations to the research, and the contribution to the practice of education.

My research commenced with some concerns, thoughts and questions I held as to the underlying reasons for widely held views of the underachievement of Young Black Students (YBS). These views seemed to inform and shape the beliefs, ideologies and practices of some educational literature and academic practitioners. My research challenged such views, and in my opinion, these views seemed to permeate the Black arena and therefore inhibit the achievement of YBS. Search for literature that supports YBS achievement proved futile. The majority of literature and journalistic opinions mostly supported reasons for underachievement.

However, as I did not hold with the view that YBS were underachieving, and in response to the minimal literature available on the Educational Success of YBS, I commenced my search into identifying factors that contribute to their Educational Success. My alternative view to Educational Success of YBS and the minimal literature available identifying factors that contribute to the success of YBS allowed me to identify a possible gap in literature waiting to be filled and further justified my research.

Whilst subjective at the initial stages these thoughts and questions were placed within a theoretical framework for exploration. I remind the reader here that I have identified a new concept named Faith Capital and I believe that this concept is a possible contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBS, and especially YBCS. I move on to highlight my reflections of the concept Faith Capital.

5.1 Reflections

As I reflect on this study and the title of working towards the concept Faith Capital, I feel it expedient for me to reiterate that the term Faith Capital is the new emergent concept from within this study. The concept Faith Capital is not based on groups or a community as the concept Religious Capital. Faith Capital is based on the individual's personal experience and consequently does not fit Byfield's (2006) or Iannaccone's (1984) Religious Capital definition, which is a belief based on a group or community setting.

Prior to offering my conclusion, I offer a synopsis of the similarities between Faith Capital and Religious Capital in the following table.

Table 3 Differences between Faith Capital and Religious Capital

FAITH CAPITAL	RELIGIOUS CAPITAL
Non-attendance and affiliation to a religious community	Attendance and affiliation to a religious community
Individual and personal prayer only	Corporate prayer and individual prayer
Not tangible or measurable	Set of rules and beliefs
Individual	Part of a community
Self-focused	Group focused
Non-accountable	Accountable to the organisation
Do not acquire any further social capital	Gain and trade on other social capital
Offers psychological benefits – but no self-belonging	Offers social and psychological benefits, Gives a sense of belonging

No opportunity to develop social disciplines – but self-discipline is acquired through a daily/weekly devotional	Opportunity to develop relevant social disciplines
Although they can access the Bible it is not in a formal way – and reading is not done publicly	Access to the Bible not only helps to develop reading skills, but it also exposes them to historical language, extends their vocabulary and intellectual capacity

(Table 3)

The light shed from the table above allows for the supposition that Faith Capital is individual, and therefore not socialised. Faith Capital is borne out of the notion of faith, introduced to individuals usually by their parents or family members, nurtured by their church community and developed by the individual. Unlike faith, (the complete trust in something or someone) Faith Capital draws from a spiritual wealth in God which empowers the individual to believe they can achieve Educational Success. These individuals are said to have gained Faith Capital. This is discussed in detail later in this study. A full definition of the concept is that;

Faith Capital is based on a personal belief in God, it exists within the mind of the believer, it is not necessarily based on principles, rules, and rituals, but a belief in God that can allow individuals to achieve Educational Success. It is an unwavering sense of faith that far exceeds human limitations and draws from spiritual wealth in God.

The next section highlights the limitations and challenges of this research.

5.2 Limitations and challenges of the research

In Chapter Four, I represented narratives of YBCS' perspectives that confirmed faith as a contributory factor to their Educational Success. In suggesting that YBCS are aware of the contribution faith brings to their Educational Success; the cohort of participants represented in this study make a clear statement about how they see faith as a matter to be explored, and at the centre of their Educational Success.

Having said that let me not ignore or negate the willingness of the YBCS to engage in difficult conversations regarding their experiences with regard to Educational Success. They offered to share personal trials and testimonies that have aided the process towards identifying factors that contributed to their Educational Success. However, it is clear that there are some gaps and disconnectedness between the concept Faith Capital and Religious Capital as factors that contribute to the YBCS Educational Success from the YBCS' perspectives. From the YBCS there are examples advocating their obligation to attend church services and be part of a church community, supporting Byfield's (2008) assertion, who I would argue also represents a proportion of YBS. On the other hand, the majority of YBCS have represented thoughts that in essence oppose the notion of religion being relevant to their Educational Success (see appendix 6b); they categorically state that they do not have a religion.

As acknowledged in Chapter Four the efforts to construct a concept Faith Capital, moving beyond the present confines of Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital theory, and theories of the impacts of faith has not been without its challenges. In arguing for an additional contributory factor to aid the Educational Success of YBCS is in no way advocating a disconnect from other known contributory factors to the Educational Success of YBS, and therefore the next section recommends avenues for further study for professional practise.

5.3 Avenues for further work

This field contains a broad range of views as to what is important in terms of Educational Success and in terms of what contributes to this Educational Success, where differences over contributory factors are debated, speculated upon and argued over. My contention is rather than delineating and deciding in a preferential manner what constitutes Educational

Success, a more proactive and inclusive stance is needed to open up and explore Educational Success of individuals at all levels.

What has become more pronounced in this chapter are the challenges faced by YBCS who have a history of being labelled as poor achievers? This research has now taken the time to consider the narratives of a sample group of YBCS and heard from the public servants, highlighting some of the 'gaps' and 'disconnectors' mentioned above, between the established Religious Capital and the concept Faith Capital.

My experience during the process of undertaking this research has highlighted that most of the contributory factors to the Educational Success of YBS take into consideration their family, social, historical, and even their religious experiences. However, the effect of faith or belief on their Educational Success is rarely considered, and therein lies the opportunity for the concept Faith Capital. This concept Faith Capital is not derived from social capital as is Religious Capital but is a standalone capital that would probably be best placed as a derivative of Bourdieu's (1977) Cultural Capital. This is due to the assumption that the initial introduction to a faith or belief is usually within one's own cultural setting. As this research continues to represent a dynamic new concept and welcomes continued reflection, I anticipate new academic ideas and insights emerging that may lead to redefined actions. I therefore offer the following conclusion.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has identified some of the challenges of introducing the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS. The title question for this study explores the role that Religion plays in the Educational Success of Young Black Christian students: towards a concept of 'Faith Capital'. I believe that this research has uncovered the role religion plays in the Educational success of YBCS. In offering this

concept this chapter reflected and considered the key differences relating to Religious Capital and the concept Faith Capital. The chapter acknowledges that YBS are argued to be poor achievers, therefore the opportunity to offer a concept that may improve Educational Success should not be taken lightly. This chapter also acknowledged the possible challenges for some YBS who may not have a sense of faith or belief and therefore this concept may not be of benefit.

In presenting the concept Faith Capital, this chapter has considered the narratives of the YBCS and the response from the young Black public servants. It is therefore within the Bourdieu's (1987) Cultural Capital framework that this chapter has offered the concept Faith Capital as a standalone capital which might contribute to the Educational Success of YBS should they choose to engage with it.

This study has allowed me to hear the voices of YBCS who offered such rich data, allowing for greater understanding of their perception of the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success. Importantly, I am in no way advocating that the concept Faith Capital will be the only contributory factor to Educational Success of engaging YBCS, however, it seeks to support the notion that in the midst of the different contributory factors offered to support Educational Success, some aspects or perspectives of this research will be utilised.

In summarising, what has been revealed in this research, it is important to note that commentators and the data from previous studies place the contributory factors to Educational Success within two areas; these are religion and the family. This resonates with my initial thoughts in this study. However, this study progressed to reveal the participants' perception of an additional contributory factor to Educational Success-the idea of faith. I would argue then that despite the bombardment – and I choose the metaphor thoughtfully – of government initiatives for Black and ethnic

minority population, the anxiety of Black communities about Educational Success, and the poor public perceptions of YBS there remains a flicker of hope. This is due to the introduction of the additional contributory factor to the Educational Success of YBCS which the concept Faith Capital is. I move on to share my final thoughts.

5.5 Final Thoughts

As a lifelong educational practitioner, and a Christian Black woman, educator, I find this encouraging and a cause for optimism. Whether one agrees that the concept Faith Capital can be identified as a contributory factor to Educational Success within this study or not, this research demonstrates that a sense of this uplifting vision of pursuing Educational Success has not been eradicated by YBCS.

I conclude this research then on the premise that the concept Faith Capital is a contribution to knowledge, and the practise of education, as discovered through my research. My extensive literature search for the concept Faith Capital as a contributory factor to Educational Success of YBS does not seem to feature in any prior educational research. Yet it questions whether or not such findings would be genuinely recognised or welcomed by commentators of non-Christian backgrounds, because this concept is grounded in a belief in God.

I have understood more about Educational Success and its impact on YBS. My exploration has led to a need to articulate a different understanding of Educational Success with regards to one's faith. Therefore, I would welcome the opportunity to share my findings with YBS within Christian or Academic institutions. I further plan to submit articles to educational and Christian journals so as to hopefully influence educational policy.

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Appendix-1 list of tables

Table 1 Data Collection Chart

Table 1 Data Collection Chart

Date	Research Action	Participants
June 2008	Exploratory Interviews with church seniors	Members of my local church known to me
January 2009	Questionnaire	Students at my college
May 2009	Focus group (convenience)	Friendship group known to me
July 2010	Focus group	Follow-up group from the questionnaires
July 2012	Focus group	Church community youth group - known to me
June 2014	Interviews with the public servants	1. Minister of Religion 2. Director of Education 3. Social Services Manager
May 2015	Interviews with undergraduate students	13 Christian young people not known to me

(table 1)

Table 2 Sampling Strategy

Table 3 Differences between Faith Capital and Religious Capital

Appendix 2 Reflections

Reflection 1 Chapter 3

Reflection 2 Chapter 4

Reflection 3 Chapter 4

Appendix 3 Excerpts

Excerpt i	Findings the interviews with the public servants
Excerpt ii	Findings the interviews with the public servants
Excerpt iii	Findings the interviews with the public servants
Excerpt iv	Findings the interviews with the public servants

Appendix 4 Exploratory Questions

1. What is success?
2. What is Educational Success?
3. Do you have any brothers or/and sisters?
4. Do you live with your parents?
5. Did any of your parents attend university?

Appendix 5 Questionnaire

Factors Contributing to Success

This questionnaire seeks to ascertain your perceptions of factors contributing to Educational Success. I am a research student on a professional doctorate in Education, and would welcome your taking part nothing about you as an individual will be identifiable or divulged in any research. I will also need some basic information about you (e.g. age sex, course, qualifications) but this will be kept strictly confidential.

Please complete the following questions, by ticking the appropriate box

1.0 SUCCESS FACTORS

1.1 As a university student you may be considered an Educational Success; do you agree with this statement yes? No?

1.2 How would you define success?

1.3 Do you regard any of the following as indicators of success (tick all that apply)

Material wealth having lots of friends' being happy

Being healthy possessing a Degree Belief

Being educated Good job Supportive family other?

1.4 To what or whom do you attribute you're going to university?

2.0 FAMILY

2.1 Did you live in a two-parent household for most of your school years?

Yes no

2.1.1 If no was your main carer male? or female?

2.2 Do you have any brothers or/and sisters? Yes no

2.2.1 If so, how many brothers?1..... How many sisters?.....

2.2.2 If so, have any of them attended university? Yes no

2.3 Have any of your parents been to university? Yes no

2.4 What are your parent's occupations?

2.4.1 Parent 1 – manager professional technical admin/secretarial

skilled trades personal service sales /customer service

Machine operatives unemployed

2.4.2 Parent 2 – manager professional technical admin/secretarial

Skilled trades personal service sales /customer service

Machine operatives unemployed

2.5. Were your parents actively involved with your school activities? Yes no

2.5.1 If so how?

2.6. Do you believe your parents had an influence on your education? Yes no

2.6.1 If so for parent 1 - was it positive or negative

2.6.2 If so for parent 2 - was it positive or negative

2.7. Has anyone in your extended family had a positive impact on your education? Yes no

2.7.1 If so who?

3.0 **ROLE MODELS/MENTORS**

3.1. Have you ever had a role model? Yes no

3.1.1 If yes who?.....

3.2. Do you have a role model now? Yes no

3.2.1 If yes who?.....

3.3. Have you ever had a mentor? Yes no

3.3.1 If yes who?

3.4. Do you have a mentor now? Yes no

3.4.1 If yes who?.....

3.5. If you have or had a mentor or role model would you recommend one to others? Yes no

3.5.1 If so why?.....

4.0 **RELIGION**

4.1. Were you brought up in a religious family/home environment? Yes no

- 4.2 Do you have a religion? Yes no
- 4.2.1 If yes which one?.....
- 4.2.2. Are you actively involved in the practice of your religion? Yes no
- 4.2.3. Are you actively involved in activities and events organised by your religious community? Yes no
- 4.2.3.1 If yes how?.....
- 4.2.4 Do you believe that your religion has influenced your decision to attend university in any way? Yes no
- 4.2.4.1 If yes how?.....
- 4.2.5 Do you believe your religion will influence your success in the future?
Yes no
- 4.2.6.1 If so how?

5.0 SECONDARY EDUCATION

- 5.1 Did you enjoy school? Yes no
- 5.2 What school did you mainly attend? (Please tick all that apply)
State, Private, Faith, Grammar Comprehensive other
- 5.3 Which borough or county were you primarily educated in?.....
- 5.4 Have you ever been excluded from school? Yes no
- 5.4.1 If so for how long?
- 5.5 Were you ever taught by Black /Minority Ethnic teachers? Yes no
- 5.6 Did the curriculum reflect cultures other than your own? Yes no

6.0 Demographic Data

- 6.1 Name (optional).....
- 6.2 Age20.....

6.3 Sex.....male.....

6.4 At which university are you studyingHertfordshire.....

6.4.1 What course are you currently studying?Business and Finance.....

6.4.2 What were your entry qualifications for university?.....

6.5 Ethnicity

Please tick the category that you feel best describes your ethnic origin using the 2001 Census classification below.

White

British

Irish

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Any other White Background (please write in) any other Black Background (please write in)

.....

Asian or Asian British

India

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Asian Background (please write in) any other Mixed Background (please write in)

.....

Chinese or Other Ethnic Background

Chinese

Information Refused

Any other Ethnic background (please write in)

.....

6.8 Follow-up

If you are willing to be contacted by email or by phone for further discussions please give contact details below

Email.....

Tel. No.....

Thank you for taking part

If you would like to know more about this research or have any questions about it, please contact me Lois Vassell at lvassell@hrc.ac.uk

Appendix 6 Eligibility questions

1. Are you of Caribbean decent?
2. Are you Black British?
3. Are you currently studying at University, on a Degree course?
4. Are you between the ages 18-25?
5. Are you a practising Christian?

Appendix 6a YBCS Interview questions

Interview questions 2015

This interview seeks to ascertain your definition view of faith and religion is there a difference? Did they contribute to your Educational Success (i.e. you being on a degree course)? I am a research student on a professional doctorate in Education, and would welcome your taking part in my research, nothing about you as an individual will be identifiable or divulged in any research. Please sign to confirm your consent. I will also need some basic information about you (e.g. age sex, course, qualifications) but this will be kept strictly confidential.

Name..... Sex.....
Age..... Course.....
Nationality..... mobile (optional)
Signed.....

1. Do you think that your faith has contributed to Educational Success?
2. Would you say that your religion has contributed to your Educational Success?
3. What would you say are the benefits of your faith/religion?
4. Do you think being a Black young man/woman and having faith has contributed to you being in university?
5. What do you think are the factors about faith or religion that influence Educational Success?

Appendix 6b Copy of 1 transcript of YBCS narratives

Respondent 1

Interviewer: Ok can I ask you ...Do you think that your faith has contributed to your Educational Success?

Interviewee 1: I believe that my faith has contributed because at times where teachers probably said I wasn't the brightest, or you probably have that negative feedback off an assignment when you feel that you haven't done the best I believe that my faith has pushed me to believe that I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. that I am able just because you know it may not look like how I want it to look how its written I don't think I have got dyslexia but I think ...I might. I haven't had a test for it that's why I didn't want to test for it. so basically, I think that faith its changed my mind-set it makes me feel that if gods behind me if he's got my back he's making my way he's guiding my steps I know that it definitely what I'm able to do

Interviewer Would you say then that religion has contributed to your Educational Success?

Interviewee 1: Um...Not so much religion cause er... Christ is like a relationship with him I guess the principles you know the positivity that it brings providing for your family giving tithes to god I guess it kind of ties it together

Interviewer: Ok ..What would you say are the benefits of your faith?

Interviewee: ah.. The benefits of my faith are - When somebody tells you know you know that God is always saying yes

Interviewer: Do you think then that being Black and having faith has contributed to you going to university

Without a doubt because em.. many Black youths nowadays they do want to go to university but they think it's not for them or they are not ready for that step They probably do it later in life, but em...being Black and a young woman I think having that focus and that goal of my mother's mother and her my mother they didn't go to university so I wanted to go for them and for myself

Interviewer: What other factors about your faith do you think influenced your Educational Success? What other things?

Interviewee: I think the fact that you see ...when you're in university you see So many diverse people and so many different cultures and that fact that you are able to stand and say I'm a Christian or stand to say and I believe in my god in my lord I think that's what makes you different especially if you act differently maybe not partying or drinking not do different things than they do

Interviewer: what things do you do?

Interviewee: do maybe more of a conscience – more conscience of the people around me how I speak to people –

Interviewer: Is there something you would read that some-one without faith would read?

Interviewee: everyone can pick up the bible so I guess it's nothing new but its more to walk in it and have that attitude that presence to have that...

Interviewer: What about the relationship you have with God, how does that work in terms of your success

Interviewee: It makes me know that some-ones got my back some-times when feel like your all alone in a situation the enemy can make you feel like no one else understands what you're going through but the moment you have God and you're like God I know you can do this I've seen you do this many times before its nothing new to you its new to me that's what makes me have that go ahead like you can make it. Doesn't matter what it might be I can make it

Appendix 7 Second draft questions for public servants

Can I start by asking you.....?

1. What is your comment on this concept?
2. What or who influenced you to be in your current position?
3. What do you think has enabled you to be in this position?
4. What influence has your faith in God had on your achievement in public office?
5. What influence has your faith had on your Educational Success?
6. As a Christian what does faith mean to you?

Appendix 8 Respondent PS Y

- Interviewer: Can I start by asking you what your comment on this concept
- Participant: right, from the perspective of faith, I would agree that faith is not reliant or determined on anyone other than the individual. So, faith as it relates to relationship and belief and compute like Foundation translated from the Greek into English – the substrata the foundation the undergirding underpinning of belief hope cannot be a shared experience it has to be individual to the person.
The manifestation and realisation upon the evidence of faith becomes witnessed by others but the actual commodity of faith as it relates to knowing god has to be individual.
- Interview let me stop you there – and ask what influence has your faith in God had on your wider achievements
(Interruption)
- Respondent I haven't finished the 1st question I am going to come to it -Faith is one thing - Capital part of your faith, that part is interesting because this is me pretending to be academic in order to have capital which to me means plural. That is why I think the concept is interesting and almost paradoxical in its essence, capital it would suggest supply and demand and integration and interaction and faith you don't need it. As a concept, I think it's great
- Interviewer do you see Capital in terms of wealth
- Respondent Tangible wealth or Spiritual wealth?
- Interviewer Spiritual wealth?
- Respondent Not sure how Bourdieu uses capital but modern day, but capital is in some conversations used as a negative and as you have capitalistic society if used in the same way it becomes difficult to transfer the word faith it and use it next to faith. Faith is not exploited and Capital can some-time be exploited. My phrase I use 'Responsible capitalism' means yes make the wealth be responsible and share it. If you're using the same concept and applying become spiritually wealthy and have gifts and abilities talents use them. A Bible talk about a measure of faith is larger than some-one else be responsible and encourage someone to grow in faith. As a concept is plausible it's a fine line between spiritualising something that has been taken over by world with capitalism because when you do it. The intentions may be pure but the word has conations and denotations. Therefore, people will struggle to get over the pre-conceived ideas of what capitalism is but as a concept yes
- Interviewer: I'll go back to my previous question - ask what influence has your faith in God had on your wider achievements
- Participant: yes, it has - educationally I wouldn't call myself an academic I struggled through my first degree and struggled through my second degree and in the true sense of the word my academic achievement was just that a massive achievement whether or not my faith in god had a direct result on my academic grade but what I would say is

that my faith in god kept me at university kept me going back even when I didn't make the grade that's a challenge a sermon in fact so - My faith in God helped me to stay the course academically, (how) because there were times I could have given up easily my faith in God says If God has enabled me to get to this point in life, he must be able get me through every challenge.

Can I be bold and say My faith in God didn't make me study harder but my faith in god made me pray more about my studies, does that make sense - here's a perfect example concept Faith Capital, not my degree not my master I attended two classes for the whole term 9 months 2 classes but every Tuesday I would go and pray about Math's, went into the exam and passed, whether that's Faith Capital or faith - that's where I would say my faith in God helped me I didn't have faith I won't have been praying in that time, my specific faith in God said you have tried three times to pass math's iGCSEs and you failed every time - this time you're going to pray

Interviewer You have to live to certain standards and guidelines you are accountable - has your faith had any impact in how you carry yourself

Respondent Faith is essential as belief and faith as life style - faith as a belief gives me a set of rules and principles that I don't want to betray, because my faith has belief, says I stand ultimately accountable to God but Faith as lifestyle, is different because you can be a person of faith but not deep felt believe to make you act any differently. Defining faith as belief and lifestyle is important - I have Muslim friends from the Muslim faith but they don't live the Muslim lifestyle they would say they are nominal in their belief but of a faith in their lifestyle the food etc. Faith is intrinsic to who I am, its central to who I am I cannot separate faith as a belief or a lifestyle as it relates to me personally but I do understand there is a separation.

Interviewer Who has encouraged you to reach your goals or your aspirations.

Respondent That's a good one - to be honest Fathers and mothers played an important in my life. My grandmother has been central to me receiving certain revelation, my wife, children the way my perspective on life is about legacy and what we are leaving behind. Not only superiors, patriarch and matriarchs also those family members that have been important to me, also people I observe from a difference I met someone the other day whose presentation of the gospel of his faith as a lifestyle impressed me encouraged me to go further and when I see people in my field that are doing greater than me. That want to do those things don't make me want to sit down but they make me want to go forward and achieve a cacophony of things.

Appendix 9 Analysis grid

Analysis Grid

PARTICIPANTS	BEING BLACK	RELATIONSHIPS	NEGATIVITY	GOD/CHRIST/ FAITH	BIBLE/WORD
Number 1 Annie					
		Religion is Relationships	Teachers negative view	you have God in your life you know	Christ that strengthens me
		Positive principles looking after your family	Maybe dyslexia	Gods got my back	
	Being Black and a woman – focus and goal	Conscious of the people around me how I act what I say	Failing assignments	Faith changes your mind-set	
		Christian keeps you focused not drinking etc.		Gives you belief that you can	Read the Bible – not just read but walk in it
		Mum didn't go or grandma – so wanted to achieve for them		Having God in your life and knowing that you can do anything you can make it	God is always telling you yes you can
Number 2 Barbara					
		Encourage by the people in church		Take time away from study to pray has helped	You may not get answer straight away but you know he's always there for you encouraging you pushing you forward in the word
		Spiritual support through the church and financial support		Because of God I was the first to go straight from college to University	
	Prove that we can do this as Black women	Personal relationship with God		Through prayer and fasting	
		Mum didn't go to University		Also my passion for midwifery made me carry on	
		My dad didn't go University either			
		Christianity is like a relationship with			

		your father you can talk about things			
Number 3 Clive					
		Not religion it's a relationship	Every possible low	Know that Gods in control	He gives a rest
	Studying a degree trying to make something of my life to break that cycle all Blacks are failures	Being able to vent to God	Being ill with sinusitis	God gives me faith peace trust grace and mercy	He gives peace that passes all understandings
	Don't have to confess to father so and so	You can speak to God in the morning or at the end of the day	Struggled with a level – only got through with prayer	You can have faith anywhere don't need to go to church	
	Young Black male Automatic stereotype		loosing coursework	Faith is 24 hours access	
			Violent or steal something	Prayer is massive help	
			Big guy tall 6.1 20 stone		
Number 4 Danny					
	Being Black and having faith are like the ingredients that thrust you into believing you can achieve	Family is negative	Society is negative		Scripture can give affirmation and hope
	Being Black makes you want to work out purpose and with purpose comes responsibility	Relationship your Gods child			Scripture says you're the head not the tail
	Being Black makes you know your valued			Faith brings hope makes you realise there's more to faith that meets the eye	The bible says You are royalty, child of a King
	Being Black and having faith helps you navigate through life	Parents tell you that education is a tool to be realised in your hand		the guy who created the universe got you	
Number 5 Eric					
	I am Black and seeing how faith	Because we have the faith our forefathers had	Failed assignments –	God has great success planned for me	

	has contributed to our lives	Father/son relationship	see silver cloud		
	When you see how faith has contributed to Apartheid		Not at the mercy of people negative perception of me		Knowing you have a higher power you can go to
	Living in the times we are in and can apply for any job/career		People in higher authority do not have the final say		
	Racial stigma is not as bad as it once was		When teachers say you can't achieve something	God is stable support system	Greater confidence in oneself through Christ
			Great blanket of comfort when things go wrong	God is the Final authority	
Number 6 Frances					
			Pressure of my A levels – I was avoiding lessons	Result got B from praying before going into the exam that's what faith and prayer can do	
			My teacher told me I was failing my classical music		
	My father wanted me to go to a particular school		I was getting e's for coursework and my mocks	Faith to combat negativity	
	It can be discouraging for a Black child especially when the system doesn't work for you		Teachers negative	Having confidence knowing that Gods on your side	
			Couldn't get into the school so we had to appeal and I prayed and got in		
Number 7 Georgette					
	Being Black female makes it hard		Confidence was knocked when I got to uni	God is bigger than my issue	

	They mark you harder cos your Black		as I was getting poor grades	God is bigger than my pass mark	
	Teachers think less of you because your Black		I became complacent	God is bigger than my fear	Philippians 4 Study to show thyself approved
		As a Black woman, I have a great relationship with God	I was worried about failing	Gods got my back	
			I was worrier	He will fix it for me if I do my best	
Number 8 Henry					
		Religion is a relationship with God	Even things are tricky or hard		He will never leave us or forsake us
		Just speak to him like how I'm speaking to you Father son/daughter relationship		He will comfort us	
		Personal relationship		Protector and provider	
	Stereotypes being Black you will just end up having children out of marriage	Great role models and family role models		Knowing he will never leave us	
	Quite the contrary	Talking to other Christians			Reading the word
Number 9 Indie					
			Struggled at school		
			Struggled at college		
			And I am working as hard as I can at uni	Some-one greater got your back	
	I don't think being Black has anything to do with what I achieve its about my faith	Faith of my parents initially the relationship I have with them	Even when things go wrong you have a faith that	There is a bigger picture there are things I have to accomplish	Small confidence that some-one bigger than I will sort it out
Number 10 – Julia					
	We are seen as a lesser people being Black and being a woman	My mum is a praying woman	Medical problems through my whole life		Can do all things through Christ

	Society is not set up for the Black woman	My mum constantly encouraging me	Even when teachers said I wasn't get though my GCSEs	Knowing that there's a God	
		The relationship with my mum	Teachers said I wasn't get through my BTEC course	Speaking positive affirmations over my life	
			In amerce as part of my course – the tutor marked me down		
			You feel like the worlds going to end	But God fixed it	
Number 11- Karen					
	Lot of negative stereotype for Black women	Youth groups and likeminded people			I can always refer to the word
	Drop out of school	Personal relationship with God can just speak to him like I'm speaking to you	When things are rough or hard I can call to him	I can pray to him at any time	
	Having loads of children	Relationships with my friends and family and role models within my church community	Can sometimes struggle	Constant friend protector brother	Knowing that he will never leave you or forsake you
				I can put my faith and trust in God	I can read the bible Know that he's there in the good times and bad
				Faith in God	
				I can talk to him anytime	
Interview 12 Lawrie					
		Relationships with my parents		God is there for me	
				God is there for me	The bible was God's way of communicating
Interview 13 – Mia					
				Faith is the evidence of things not seen	The bible