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**Mixed Experiences: a study of the childhood narratives of
mixed race people related to risks to their mental health and
capacity for developing resilience.**

Volume One

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**This thesis is submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Community and Health Sciences Research.**

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Table of Contents
Volume 1

Contents	pps
Index of Tables	v
List of Abbreviations	vi
Acknowledgements and Declaration of Powers	vii
Abstract	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1-29
Background and context	1- 7
Popular discourse	7-10
Creative writing and personal accounts	10-11
Demographic trends	12-13
Reasons for undertaking this study	13-16
Risk and resilience as a theoretical framework	16-19
Methodological approach and method	19-20
Positionality	20-22
Terminology	22-26
<i>Race, ethnicity and culture</i>	22-25
<i>Mental health</i>	25-26
The Structure of the Thesis	27-29
Chapter 2: A Review of the Literature	30-47
Chapter overview	30-31
Mental health and ethnicity	31-35
Mixed race young people	35-44
Service delivery issues as they affect young people of mixed race	45-47
Chapter Summary	47
Chapter 3: Risk and Resilience	48-67
Chapter overview	48
The Literature	49-53
Risk factors relating to family	53-57
Risks associated with the wider community	57-61
<i>The school</i>	58-59
<i>Peers</i>	60
<i>The community beyond the school</i>	60-61
Resilience	61-66
Chapter summary	66-67
Chapter 4: Relevant Demographic Data	68-86
Chapter Overview	68
Robustness of the data as it relates to mixedness	68-69
Ethnicity	69-72
Location	73

Education	73- 78
Crime	78- 80
Victims of Crime	81
Early Pregnancy	81
Children in Public Care	81- 82
Mental Disorder	82- 85
Summary of statistical information	85
Chapter 5: Methodology	87-100
Chapter overview	87
Using phenomenology	87- 90
Interpreter bias and reflexivity	90- 94
Using narrative	94
Rationale for the use of deductive material in the secondary analysis	95- 99
Methodological approach summary	99-100
Chapter 6: Method	101-119
Chapter overview	101
Participant eligibility	101-102
The recruitment process	102
The chosen web sites	103
Contacts and participants recruited	103-105
Sample size	105-106
Types of responses – pros and cons	107-108
Confidentiality, anonymity and integrity	109-110
Reflexive aspects	110
Use of the internet to identify participants	111
Who uses the internet?	111-114
Other recruitment methods	114
Data quality	114-116
The thematic analysis	116-118
Reliability	118
Chapter summary	120-121
Chapter 7: The Thematic Analysis	122-188
Chapter overview	122
The analysis process	122-123
Telling the stories	124-126
Identifying the dominant themes	127-128
Themes and risks relating to the child	129-139
<i>Appearance</i>	134-138
<i>Involvement in anti-racist work of some participants</i>	139
Themes and risks relating to the family	139-159
<i>Attitudes of family members</i>	142-149
<i>Access to wider family and visits for parents' home countries</i>	149-155
<i>Sibling differences</i>	157-159
<i>Class</i>	159-160
<i>Meeting the absent parent</i>	161
Themes and risks relating to the community	161-188
<i>Mixed race isolation</i>	162-165
<i>School experiences</i>	165-172
<i>The multi-cultural nature of the community</i>	172-178
<i>Access to groups outside the family and school, including black groups</i>	178-181
<i>How public services respond to children on mixed race</i>	181-187
Chapter summary	187-188

Chapter 8: The Obama Election	189-199
Chapter overview	189
Background	189-191
Participants' views	191-199
Chapter summary	199
Chapter 9: Analysis of Risk and Resilience Issues	200-214
Chapter overview	200-201
Grouping the risk factors	201-202
<i>Poor self esteem</i>	202
<i>Hostile and rejecting relationships</i>	202-203
<i>Discrimination</i>	203-204
Establishing proxy indicators	204-208
Disconfirming evidence	208
Racism	208-209
Identity	209
Isolation	209-210
Overview of risk	210-211
Resilience	211-212
The continuum of risk to resilience	212-214
Chapter summary	214
Chapter 10: Theoretical Possibilities: an exploration of 'risk' and 'mixed race' from a sociological perspective	215-230
Chapter overview	215
Theorising mixed race in the context of globalisation and the risk society	215-229
Chapter summary	229-230
Chapter 11: Discussion of Findings and their Context	231-253
Chapter overview	231
Reviewing and assessing the thematic findings	231-247
<i>Identity confusion</i>	231-234
<i>Otherness and isolation</i>	234-236
<i>Secondary school experiences</i>	236-238
<i>Racism</i>	238-239
<i>Family support or lack of it</i>	240-243
Review of the methodology	243-245
Policy and practice implications	245-249
Strengths, limitations and future opportunities	249-252
Chapter summary	253
Chapter 12: Concluding Remarks	254-259

Appendices

Volume 2

Index of Tables

Table 1: Prevalence of specific child and adolescent mental health risk factors and impact on rate of mental disorder	p. 57
Table 2: Mixed race demography (UK) 2001	p. 71
Table 3: Mixed race demography (E&W) 2001	p. 72
Table 4: Age distributions across the ethnic groups	p. 72
Table 5: Location of people of mixed race in the UK - 2001 Census.	p. 73
Table 6: Educational attainment (higher educational qualification) as a proportion of ethnic population (16-74yrs). 2001 Census E&W)	p. 74
Table 7: 5 A-C passes gained by 15-year olds in GCSE and equivalent by ethnicity – England)	p. 75
Table 8: Attainment at Key Stage 4 (KS4) - percentage of pupils gaining 5 A*-C grades of pupils of mixed race, by gender, ethnicity and free school meals (FSM) eligibility in England	p. 76
Table 9: Criminal justice disposals of young people aged 12-17 by ethnicity	p. 79
Table 10: Convictions for drug usage by ethnicity in young people aged 10 – 17	p. 80
Table 11: Children in Public Care by Ethnic Group. (DfES 2006)	p. 82
Table 12: Initial response grid	p.105
Table 13: Households with access to the Internet in Great Britain.	p.112
Table 14: Length of written submissions	p.116
Table 15: Characteristics of participants, showing pseudonyms	p.125
Table 16: Clusters of Themes	p.128
Table 17: Family status of participants	p.140
Table 18: Wider family relationships and influences	p.147
Table 19: Growing up without two birth parents	p.161
Table 20: Indicators of specific risks for mixed race young people	p.205
Table 21: Proxy indicators showing the presence of risk factors in relation to the significant findings for the selected sample	p.206/7

List of Abbreviations

AESOP	Aetiology and Ethnicity in Schizophrenia and Other Psychoses
ASBOs	Anti Social Behaviour Orders
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
COSICAPS	Costs, Outcomes and Satisfaction for Inpatient Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Services
CRES	Cash Releasing Efficiency Savings
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DOAS	Do Once And Share
E&W	England and Wales
FSM	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HAS	Health Advisory Service
IPA	Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis
ISER	Institute for Social and Economic Research
IT	Information technology
KS4	Key Stage Four
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NSF	National Service Framework
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PSE	Present State Examination
PSRs	Pre-Sentencing Reports
YOTs	Youth Offending Teams
YJB	Youth Justice Board
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Abstract

Background

The mixed race child population is growing proportionately faster than any other group. Whilst there is a body of research in this country, albeit small, that looks at the experiences of mixed race children, none of this research examines specifically the risks for mental health and the possibilities for developing resilience which may be related to growing up as a mixed race child.

Methods

Twenty-one adults, recruited through the internet, were asked to reflect on their childhood experiences in relation to being mixed race. They were offered a choice of response methods. The majority chose to provide a written account.

A thematic analysis was carried out, within a phenomenological framework. A further analysis was undertaken to assess whether risks to mental health or opportunities to develop resilience could be identified in the findings from the phenomenological analysis using known risk and resilience factors relating to the mental health of children and young people.

Results

The data show that there are some additional risks to the mental health of mixed race young people. As well as difficulties experienced in establishing personal identity, they show that there are specific difficulties in secondary school and that young people of mixed race experience racism and prejudice from both black and white peers. The data indicate a capacity for building resilience, necessitated by their mixedness, linked to supportive families.

Conclusions

The overarching findings from this study mirror many of those from other mixed race studies. However this study shows how mixed race young people may experience some additional risks to mental health which need to be understood and considered by professionals in health, social care, education and justice systems.