

OUTLINE OF RESEARCH.

This research study focuses on the childhood experiences of abuse of seven black women, two Asian, one African Caribbean and four of mixed heritage, living in Britain, a majority white culture. The abuse described includes physical, sexual, emotional and racial abuse. It is a phenomenological exploration aiming to determine the meaning for the participants of their experiences. Significant statements are extracted from each co-researchers description; statements are formulated into meanings and clustered into themes. The themes, which emerge are discussed in relation to the relevant literature and summarised into a description of the essence of the experience of being abused for a black child. The findings are also considered from a Gestalt perspective with implications for theory and practice. Racial abuse and the impact of racism emerge as significant factors, with particular implications for the understanding and practice of white therapists.