TRIPLE GLAZED CEILING

BARRIERS TO BLACK, ASIAN AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BAME) WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN THE ECONOMY

DR HADE TURKMET
JULY 2019
# Contents

Acknowledgement ................................................................................................................. 4

1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 5

2. Literature Review .................................................................................................................. 7

2.1. Diversity within Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups ............................ 7

2.2. Experiences of BAME women in (self)employment ......................................................... 11

2.2.1. In employment ............................................................................................................ 11

2.2.2. In self-employment .................................................................................................. 13

2.2.3. Qualifications and promotion opportunities ............................................................... 15

2.3. Barriers to BAME women in employment .................................................................... 17

2.3.1. Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap ................................................................................... 18

2.3.2. Bias, discrimination and racism ................................................................................. 19

2.3.3. Poverty and lack of resources .................................................................................... 25

2.3.4. Lack of language proficiency and qualifications ........................................................ 27

2.3.5. Confidence, lack of role models ............................................................................... 28

2.4. Recommendations from the literature ........................................................................... 29

2.5. Policy Framework ........................................................................................................... 31

2.6. Conclusion ....................................................................................................................... 32

3. Methodology ....................................................................................................................... 34

4. BAME women's employment in Wales ............................................................................. 36

4.1. Population dynamics ....................................................................................................... 36

4.2. Economic activity by ethnicity and gender ................................................................... 39

4.2.1. Employment rate by ethnicity .................................................................................... 39

4.2.2. Unemployment rate by ethnicity ............................................................................... 40

4.2.3. Economic inactivity rates by ethnicity ..................................................................... 42

4.2.4. Employee jobs and Self-employment by gender and ethnicity .................................. 44

4.3. Economic activity by religion and gender .................................................................... 46

4.3.1. Employee jobs and Self-employment by gender and religion .................................... 47

4.4. Industry and Occupation by ethnicity, religion and gender ........................................... 48

4.4.1. Industry by ethnic group and sex ............................................................................... 48

4.4.2. Industry by religion and gender ............................................................................... 49

4.4.3. Occupation by ethnic group by sex by age ................................................................. 51

4.4.4. Occupation by religion by sex by age ....................................................................... 56
4.5. Poverty by ethnicity ........................................................................................................... 56
4.6. Conclusion ......................................................................................................................... 58
5. Barriers experienced by BAME Women in the Welsh Economy ........................................... 60
  5.1. Factors compounding the barriers to BAME women ....................................................... 61
    5.1.1. Ethnicity and religion ............................................................................................... 61
    5.1.2. Age ............................................................................................................................ 61
    5.1.3. Nationality and immigration status ......................................................................... 62
    5.1.4. Geographical differences ....................................................................................... 63
    5.1.5. Educational background and social capital ............................................................. 63
  5.2. Bias and discrimination .................................................................................................... 64
    5.2.1. Entry to work ........................................................................................................... 67
    5.2.2. Retaining work and career progression .................................................................. 68
    5.2.3. Exploitation ............................................................................................................ 69
    5.2.4. Strategies to overcome discrimination .................................................................. 71
  5.3. Lack of language proficiency, professional qualification and experience; difficulty in accessing training and under-utilisation of skills in the labour market ...................................................... 74
    5.3.1. Language proficiency .............................................................................................. 74
    5.3.2. Access to training and employment support programmes ..................................... 77
    5.3.3. Access to support to self-employment .................................................................... 78
    5.3.4. Underutilisation of skills and difficulty in accessing skill recognition .................. 80
  5.4. Limited recourses and access to social networks ............................................................. 84
  5.5. Cultural barriers .............................................................................................................. 87
  5.6. Lack of confidence and role models .............................................................................. 88
    5.6.1. Lack of confidence .................................................................................................. 88
    5.6.2. Lack of role models and underrepresentation of BAME women .......................... 89
  5.7. Gaps in the policies and their implementation ............................................................... 91
6. The changes BAME women want to see ............................................................................ 93
  6.1. Tackling bias, discrimination and racism ....................................................................... 93
  6.2. Improving access to training and employment support programmes ........................ 97
    6.2.1. Improving provision of language courses ............................................................. 97
    6.2.2. Improving access to training .................................................................................. 99
    6.2.3. Skills conversion and recognition ......................................................................... 101
    6.2.4. Access to self-employment ................................................................................... 102
  6.3. Supporting BAME women ............................................................................................. 103
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.3.1.</th>
<th>Networks</th>
<th>104</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2.</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.</td>
<td>Representation of BAME Women and role models</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5.</td>
<td>Developing and improving communication</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6.</td>
<td>Promoting diversity and improving policy frameworks</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Conclusion and recommendations</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommendations from the research</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The McGregor-Smith review - Call for action to business</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnic group categories used in the Census 2011</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview list</td>
<td>123</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round Table Discussion Participants</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgement

This research was carried out by Chwarae Teg’s research partner Dr Hade Turkmen with the contributions of Chwarae Teg’s then European Lead Amy Kordiak and Policy and Communications Partner Polly Winn throughout the research process.

We would like to thank to the Analytical Volunteer Programme for giving us the chance take part in the programme and to the Programme volunteer Sam Aggrey for helping the analysis of some statistical data presented in this research.

We would like to offer our special thanks to the participant organisations who made this research possible. We are grateful to all research participants listed in Appendix 2 for their invaluable contribution and support throughout the research.

If you have any queries in relation to this report, please contact Dr Hade Turkmen (Hade.Turkmen@chwaraeteg.com) or the Policy and Research Team (Policy&Research@chwaraeteg.com).

August 2019
1. Introduction

Since Chwarae Teg was established, much progress has been made towards achieving gender equality in Wales. However, the picture of progress towards equality changes dramatically when we focus on the intersectional experiences of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women living in Wales.

BAME women are increasingly marginalised; they are further away from the labour market, under-represented in positions of power and influence, and are more likely to be living in poverty. While BAME women experience the well-documented gendered barriers to the workplace, such as access to childcare, they face additional racial inequalities and biases that make it increasingly difficult to access, enter and progress in work.

However, the experiences of BAME women are not homogenous; they vary significantly on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, age, religion and migration status as well as other factors of their identity. Therefore a one-size fits all approach to addressing barriers faced by BAME women will not work. It is crucial that the voices and experiences of different BAME women are heard, and inform policy and practice at Government level, in business, in trade unions and in wider civil society. Ensuring that these institutions are more representative, with fair representation of BAME women, would be an important step in ensuring different voices are heard.

To date, the experiences of BAME women have largely been overlooked in research, particularly in a Welsh context, with a lack of disaggregated and regularly collected data making it difficult to measure progress. This research aims to begin to correct this gap in knowledge about the experiences of BAME women in the Welsh economy, and start a discussion based on their own recommendations for Wales.

The current climate makes this research particularly pertinent. Repercussions from the 2016 European Referendum have affected communities and resources in Wales. Threats to funding pose a particular risk to BAME women who often depend on these community groups, services and programmes promoting equality. Political divisions are also having a significant impact on BAME women, often exacerbating existing racial tensions and biases, and recent years have seen a sharp increase in hate crime incidents. It is important that during this volatile time we listen to the voices of BAME women to inform how we progress equality and create cohesive communities.

With this research we set out policy recommendations for Government, Business, Trade Unions and other agencies in order to address some of the barriers that BAME women face to employment. We also aim to spark a wider conversation about the role of BAME women in the Welsh economy, to ensure that their voices are heard and that they are able to achieve their potential. The key findings and recommendations are specified in this Summary Report, but a more detailed understanding and analysis can be found in the substantive report.

We are extremely mindful in publishing this research that it is never possible to speak for all women, and we are conscious of our position at Chwarae Teg and how we use it to ensure that the
experiences and interests of all women are considered, represented and empowered as we strive to be a truly equal Wales. Many of our findings and recommendations will be clearly felt and understood by BAME women themselves, but should be illuminating for others. We commit to using our position and influence for all women.
2. Literature Review

Research shows that, people from minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty, and tend to have the lowest employment rates; when employed, they are concentrated in low-paid sectors and occupations.\(^1\) BAME individuals in the UK face barriers to developing and advancing in a career, an ethnicity pay gap and significant unemployment. They are less likely to participate in employment and then less likely to progress in their careers compared to white people.\(^2\) Discrimination and racism against BAME people in the workplace persists which affect BAME individuals’ participation in economy, career development and progression.

The situation is significantly worse for BAME women as they experience both the specific gendered barriers reported by women more broadly, and barriers that BAME people experience at the same time. BAME women are more likely to face barriers to accessing employment and be unemployed or economically inactive compared to men in their ethnic groups and white women.

According to the analysis of the UK Government’s Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), if full representation of BAME individuals across the labour market through improved participation and progression is achieved, we could potentially benefit from an additional £24billion a year to the UK economy, which is 1.3% of GDP.\(^3\)

In this section, we will provide context by looking at existing research and discussions around BAME people’s employment, before we move to analyse the Welsh case. While literature exists around BAME people in employment, there is a lack of gender specific research – or research that considers other intersectional elements of BAME women’s experiences such as religion, age or migration status. We will address the diverse and differentiated experiences within BAME groups, the employment patterns for BAME women and barriers that BAME individuals and women face to participating in the economy. Policies that affect BAME women’s participation in the workforce will be also discussed in this section.

2.1. Diversity within Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups

BAME individuals have differentiated experiences than their White British counterpart in participating in economy and public life. Yet, it is a misconception to consider ethnic minority groups as a homogeneous group, since BAME individuals from different ethnic minority background have differentiated experiences and the tendency to do this can disguise the experiences of BAME

---


individuals from different ethnic and religious background. The term BAME does not refer to a community or a homogeneous group defined with particular characteristics.

The position of disadvantage in the labour market and the extent of the pay penalty change among different ethnic groups. Evidence shows that while Indian and Chinese groups fare well compared with the White majority group, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, Black African and Black Caribbean groups do not, with Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups being the most severely disadvantaged.  

BAME individuals experience ethnicity bias in their workplace and everyday life differently. Research commissioned by the Guardian and published in December 2018 found that half of black and mixed-race people felt they had been unfairly overlooked for a promotion or job application, compared with 41% of people from Asian backgrounds. Black people were more likely to feel they had to work harder to succeed because of their ethnicity.

Gender is one of the key factors that affect the different patterns between ethnic groups. Evidence shows that “the concentration of men and women in different types of jobs (occupational segregation) varies for different ethnic groups, with women and men in each ethnic group being occupationally segregated from the rest of the labour force to varying degrees.” For example, in the UK, Black Caribbean women have employment rates similar to, or better than, White majority women, but Black Caribbean men have much lower employment rates than White majority men.

In the analysis of experiences of BAME people in employment, alongside ethnicity and gender, some other intersectional factors should be acknowledged to understand the differentiated experiences of BAME people. These factors include,

- **Religion**: BAME individuals’ experiences are differentiated according to their religion and religious practices.

- **Skin Colour**: Racial discrimination based on skin colour is still one of the worst issues that BAME individuals experience in their day-to-day life.

- **Nationality and migration status**: Nationality of an individual affects their experience. For example, British BAME nationals might have a differentiated experience compared to other nationals including commonwealth citizens, citizens from EU and overseas. Migration status also affects the employment and welfare rights of women, as well as women’s vulnerability due to having no recourse to public funds.

---


6 Ibid.


9 No recourse to public funds is a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status. If someone is subject to immigration control, they will have no recourse to public funds – this means that while they might
- **Age**: The experiences of BAME people differ according to their age.
- **Disability**: The inequality and discrimination that BAME individuals experience accelerate if they have any physical or mental impairments.
- **Class and Socio-economic status**: Racial discrimination is experienced differently by BAME individuals from different class and socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Geography**: The place that BAME people live has an impact on their experiences of employment.

These intersecting factors create a complicated map in analysis of the experience of BAME individuals. In our research, religion is one of the key intersectional elements that we focus as it has a greater impact on BAME women’s participation in the labour market. Rising islamophobia, racism against Muslim people makes Muslim women’s experiences in employment a particular interest of this research. A recent survey found that Muslims living in Britain are more likely than Christians, people with no religion and other smaller religions to be stopped by the police, left out of social functions at work or college and find that people seem not to want to sit next to them on public transport.  

Muslim women experience multi-layered facets of identities and disadvantages due to their ethnicity, religion and gender. A recent piece of research investigating the differentiated experiences of Muslim women in Britain suggests that:

Most non-White women face significant labour market penalties, with religion having a greater impact on labour market outcomes than race/ethnicity; Muslim women were the most disadvantaged, compared to other religious minorities, more so in relation to unemployment levels, part-time jobs and out of employment history, than in relation to occupational class and over-qualification. (…) the penalties facing Muslim women shaped by their ethnicity; not all Muslim women were similarly disadvantaged.

Ethnic categorisation constitutes the base of many studies on ethnicity, which creates a data gap in the literature about the experiences of women from different religious backgrounds. For example, as the second biggest religion in the UK, there is a data gap in the experiences of Muslim women’s participation in economy and public life in the UK, notably the differentiated experiences of women educated in the UK with English is their first language, Arab and White-British Muslim women.

Colour based racism and discrimination persists, and dreadfully, it still affects everyday life of people of colour in the UK. A 2016 review of Equality and Human Rights Commision (EHRC) into race equality in Britain reveals that

Black people are much more likely to be victims of crime and be treated more harshly in the criminal justice system. You are more than twice as likely to be murdered if you are Black in

---


11 Ibid. p 19.

12 Ibid.
England and Wales and three times more likely to be prosecuted and sentenced than if you are White.\(^{13}\)

The review shows that Black workers with degrees earn 23.1% less on average than White workers, just 6% of Black school leavers attended a Russell Group university, compared with 12% of Mixed and Asian school leavers and 11% of White school leavers and Black Caribbean and Mixed White/Black Caribbean children have rates of permanent exclusion about three times that of the pupil population as a whole.

Another important intersectional factor is the migration status of ethnic minority individuals affecting employment and welfare rights and the right to remain in the UK. In this research, we have limited place to discuss the details of differentiated experiences of migrants from different countries, but it is important to highlight that nationality and migration status make a big difference in the experiences of BAME women. To illustrate, while migrants from EU single market area have the right to work in the UK,\(^{14}\) migrants from overseas and commonwealth countries need to go through a complicated application process to obtain the right to remain and work in Britain.\(^{15}\) The other important aspect of migration status, is the employment rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Once a person obtains refugee status, they will have the right to work and remain in Britain. However, asylum seekers do not have the right to work until their refugee status is approved.

Age is also an important intersectional factor affecting the experiences of BAME individuals. Although both first and second generation ethnic minority people experience disadvantage in employment and pay penalties, the experiences differ. Research shows that those who are second generation have a better ability to bridge the gap in terms of their performance relative to first generation counterparts.\(^{16}\)

Research also suggests that geography affects the employment of the BAME people.\(^{17}\) Unemployment rates are hugely varied across local authorities in England and Wales, with some places offering more positive experiences for ethnic minority groups than others; yet, even though there are some common patterns between groups, there is no clear consistency in which places perform better or worse in employment between ethnic groups.\(^{18}\)

Overall, BAME individuals experience discriminatory practices due to intersecting factors. In this research, we use the term BAME with acknowledgment of the diversity within BAME communities, with a focus on Black and minority ethnic groups.

---


\(^{14}\) These rights might be change as the details of Brexit become clear.

\(^{15}\) In 2012, Home Office Secretary Theresa May announced that their aim was to create a “really hostile environment for illegal immigration”. (Hostile environment: anatomy of a policy disaster, Guardian 27.08.2018). The “hostile environment” strategy went beyond tackling with illegal immigration and has caused many unexpected consequences including deportation of British Citizens from Caribbean heritage (a.k.a. Windrush Generation).


and interpreting the term BAME as groups and people who identify themselves as other than White British. We analyse and are concerned with the differentiated experiences of women from different ethnic and religious backgrounds when possible.

2.2. Experiences of BAME women in (self)employment

2.2.1. In employment

BAME individuals find it difficult to enter the labour market, and if they do so, barriers remain in terms of job progression and promotion. They are over-represented in low-paid occupations and precarious jobs, underrepresented in senior positions and more likely to be overqualified than white British counterparts.\(^{19}\)

There are critical differences in the experiences of men and women within many ethnic groups, as well as the differences between the women from different ethnic groups. Low-pay occupations account for more female than male employment. The proportion of female employment in low-pay occupations is greatest for Bangladeshi, Any other Asian and Pakistani groups, and least for Indian and Chinese groups.\(^{20}\) The JRF report analysing employment in 2001 and 2011 censuses points out that women’s unemployment rates in both census were lowest for all White groups and also relatively low for Chinese, Indian and Mixed White-Asian women.\(^{21}\) In contrast, unemployment rates were high for Bangladeshi (20%) and Pakistani women (17%) in both census periods. Relatively high women’s unemployment is also apparent for African and Mixed White-Caribbean groups 16% in the 2011 census. There is an increase observed in the unemployment rate of these groups between two censuses; while in 2001 Caribbean women had a nearly comparable rate of employment to White British and White Irish women, this decreased in the ten-year period, from 88% to 83%.\(^{22}\) The increase in the unemployment rate of this group can be related to the economic recession globally occurred in 2008.

Ethnic groups are unevenly distributed by industry; Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups are concentrated in the trade, accommodation and transport sector (including hotels and restaurants), whereas Black ethnic groups account for a greater than average share of employment in public sector services.\(^{23}\) The research carried out by JRF suggests that between 2012 and 2022 the occupational structure of employment is expected to be polarised, with high-pay occupations due to increase, intermediate occupations due to decrease and low-pay occupations will increase.\(^{24}\) It found that by 2022, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Any other Asian, Black and Other groups are most likely to be in low-pay or intermediate occupations, but Indian and Chinese groups are most likely to be in high-pay occupations. They also project that, in 2022, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Chinese and any other Asian

---

\(^{19}\) We will discuss the economic activity and employment figures in detail in Chapter 4 of the report where we look at the figures for Wales.


\(^{22}\) Ibid.


\(^{24}\) Ibid.
groups will be over-represented in trade, accommodation and transport, and are likely to be at greater-than average risk of low earnings. In contrast, women from the mixed parentage, Indian and Chinese groups are over-represented in business and other services. Black women are projected to remain over-represented in public sector services.25

TUC research shows that the BAME workforce are not only overrepresented in the low-paid occupations, but also they are more than twice as likely than the average to be in temporary work.26 Therefore, while BAME people are already disadvantaged in terms of the quantity of work they have access to, they are also disadvantaged in terms of the quality of the jobs. Overall, almost 1.5 million people (6%) in the UK are working in insecure jobs including temporary work and zero-hours contracts. BAME workers are more likely to be in insecure jobs with 8% compare to their white counterparts (5%). Those in insecure jobs are likely to be at risk of missing out on essential rights, such as maternity, paternity and adoption. Black employees are more at risk to be a temporary, insecure work, with the current figure at 12%;27 the research has also found that the growth in temporary work within Black communities has been female dominated.28 The overall increase in temporary work for Black workers was 58% during 2011-2016, women however it was a substantial 82%, while the proportion of Black men in temporary work increased by 37%.

Access to employment and the way that BAME women look for jobs is an important area to consider within this research. A survey conducted by YouGov in collaboration with Business in the Community (BITC) in 2015 found that both white and BAME women believe that previous work experience is the top factor that helped most when trying to get job.29 However, the survey found that there are significant differences in the levels of importance given to previous work experience by ethnic minority women, with 85% of Black Caribbean as well as White women rating the previous work experience as the highest, compared to just 55% of Pakistani/Bangladeshi women. While 21% of BAME women believe that technical skills help, and only 10% believe that luck is the most helpful element when they are looking for a job; for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women these factors are helpful 12% and 24% respectively. These figures show that work experience is significant for BAME women in finding a job, but there are differences between ethnic groups.30

The survey also shows that the most popular route for all women in getting to their current position was by applying directly; but we can observe clear differences between White women and BAME women.31 While 43% of white women applied for their current position directly, 23% again applied directly after hearing about the position through an acquaintance. The figures for BAME women are

25 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid. p.11
31 Ibid.
38% and 19% respectively, while 20% of BAME women overall, compared to just 10% of white women would use a recruitment agency. The younger the age of BAME women, the more likely they are to submit an application through recruitment agency. Another survey by BITC shows that likeliness to register with a recruitment agency is higher among BAME employees (57%) than White British employees (46%).\(^{32}\) Those from a Black African background are most likely to register with an agency at 75%, with those from Black Caribbean background at 64% and those from a mixed-race background at 59%. Increased use of recruitment agencies can be a result of lack of networks, applying for low-paid or agency jobs, or avoiding unconscious bias in application processes.

The 2015 BITC report also found that, in terms of how women would search for their next job; 69% of white women indicated that they will look directly at the job website, 28% will search through a recruitment agency and 27% through personal networks, whereas, 73% of BAME women indicated that they will look at the job website, 42% will search through an agency and 34% through their personal networks. These figures indicate that job-seeking activities vary between ethnic minority and white women. Recruitment agencies are applied more by BAME women, which might be related to more access to low-paid, temporary jobs through recruitment agencies.

2.2.2. **In self-employment**

The number of women who are self-employed has continued to increase in recent years in the UK. By the first half of 2018, there were approximately 1.62 million self-employed, women of which 11% were BAME women.\(^{33}\) Women from Indian (22.2%), Black African/Caribbean/British (21.3%) and Other Ethnic (14.5%) groups have the highest representation amongst BAME self-employed women, while Bangladeshi (3%) and Arab (2.6%) women are the least represented.\(^{34}\)

The self-employment of BAME groups is concentrated in low-paid service sectors such as retail, restaurants and taxi-driving for men; and domestic work, caring occupations (such as childminders and domestic care), and retail (hairdresser and beauty salons) for women.\(^{35}\)

Research shows that women are likely to choose self-employment as a career path if they have difficulty entering or retaining employment.\(^{36}\) BITC suggests that the high proportion of BAME women in self-employment needs further analysis to better understand if it is due to difficulties

---


\(^{33}\) Annual Population Survey (APS) July 2017-June 2018 release via NOMIS. The proportions for Wales couldn’t be released due to the small sample size. We will explore more in the following section about BAME women’s self-employment in Wales by looking at the Census 2011.

\(^{34}\) Ibid.


gaining mainstream employment with the flexibility that may be required.\(^{38}\) It is also worth underlining that the need for flexibility can be varied for BAME women, as some cultural reasons may also require flexibility, as well as other reasons including those more commonly-cited reasons like childcare. Discrimination in workplace could be a driving reason for going for the self-employment pathway for BAME women. A poll commissioned by Guardian found that 57% of BAME women were treated differently because of their clothing, hairstyle or general appearance at work, university or school in the last five years, while only 29% of their white counterparts said they were treated differently.\(^{38}\) Under these circumstances, BAME women might choose self-employment to avoid discrimination. In fact, in the research carried out by Chwarae Teg with young women, some Muslim participants stated that they consider self-employment due to discrimination experienced in the workplace as a result of their religious clothing, or they are unable practice their religion due to lack of facilities; resulting in Muslim women viewing self-employment as an alternative career path.\(^{40}\)

Carter and Mwaura et al. (2015) underline the considerable practical similarities between women’s enterprises and BAME enterprises, not only because of the lower enterprise participation and performance of women and some ethnic minorities, but also the lower levels of resources and other factors necessary for business entry and growth.\(^{41}\) They mention that the vital building blocks for business which are Money, Market and Management Skills (3Ms) are not easily accessible to women and ethnic minority businesses, and even less accessible to BAME women.

Access to finance is one of the key barriers for women in self-employment and similarly for ethnic minorities in self-employment. Research shows that ethnic minorities tend to be excluded from accessing bank loans.\(^{42}\) Research published in 2009 found that Black African led firms are more than four times as likely as white led firms to be denied a loan outright, with Black Caribbean firms 3.5 times as likely, Bangladeshi firms 2.5 times as likely and Pakistani firms 1.5 times as likely.\(^{43}\) Indian firms had a slightly lower loan denial rate than White firms. The research suggests that financial exclusion creates discouragement, and creates a situation where firms that would like to apply for finance don’t out of fear of rejection.\(^{44}\)

---


\(^{42}\) Ibid.


This financial exclusion is likely to be felt harder by BAME women, given that they are likely to have a poor credit record, lack of formal savings and assets, and poor financial records, alongside the perception of discrimination by the monetary institutions. Furthermore, complicated bureaucratic procedures are likely to affect BAME women negatively, particularly if they also struggle with language barriers.

On self-employment, it is also worth highlighting that some ethnic groups are over-represented within high-skilled occupations, and, as the JRF research on ethnic minority disadvantage in the labour market suggests, it may not necessarily reflect ‘career success’, but could reflect the number of self-employed BAME individuals.45

2.2.3. Qualifications and promotion opportunities

Challenges that BAME individuals experience in employment and career progression start before they enter the labour market. Bias in schools against BAME pupils and lack of support and career advice are important elements in the career development of BAME people, which might prevent them from having a successful transition from school to further education and/or the labour market. As Chwarae Teg’s Bright research also underlines, the lack of sufficient career advice and prevalent stereotyping remain among the primary challenges for many young women, and they are felt more by the people from ethnic minority backgrounds.46

Research by Resolution Foundation found that even though the proportion of graduates increased across all ethnic groups in recent years, ethnic minority graduates still face significant employment and pay penalties in the workforce.47 While the proportion of working-age Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people with degrees has more than trebled since the end of the 1990s (50%, 30% and 25% respectively), Pakistani and Bangladeshi graduates are about 12% less likely to be in work than white British graduates, and Indian and Black Caribbean graduates have a jobs gap of about 5%. Black African and Bangladeshi graduates are twice as likely as Indian, White and Chinese graduates to work in low-paying occupations.48

A piece of research by Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 201549 highlights how the ethnic and class background of pupils affect their experience in education and entering the labour market. In general, ethnic minority groups tend to have high levels of education compared with the white majority. At the top end of educational performance, 54.9% of Indians have a degree in contrast to only 31.6% of the white majority population. The Bangladeshi group is the lowest and an exception, with only 25.9% having a degree, and 25.4% having no qualification at all compared with 16.7% for the white

47 People from ethnic minorities still facing major jobs gap in UK; Guardian, 07.10.2017.
48 Ibid.
majority. Teachers’ own biases on the ability levels of pupils with an African Caribbean background in secondary school is also a factor in underachievement among this group.\textsuperscript{50}

Although ethnic minority groups have slightly higher educational qualifications than the white majority on average, fewer work in graduate occupations.\textsuperscript{51} Work published by JRF in 2015 shows that over 40% of all Black African employees with A-level and graduate-level qualifications are overqualified for their current jobs and Black African and Pakistani/Bangladeshi women in particular, are taking jobs well below their qualification level. Furthermore, despite achieving better grades, BAME individuals are less likely to attend Russell Group universities.\textsuperscript{52}

Analysis by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in 2015 shows significant differences in professional employment rates amongst ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{53} Black Caribbean qualifiers have the lowest rate of professional employment six months after graduation, at 55.4%, which is 9.3 percentage points lower than the highest rate of 64.7% for White qualifiers. At 40 months after graduation, it is Black African qualifiers who have the lowest rates of professional employment, at 65.9%, while Asian Indian and White qualifiers have the highest rates at 79.1% and 78.7% respectively.\textsuperscript{54}

Career advancement and promotion is another area where BAME people’s experiences differ. Ethnic minority groups are less likely to have equal access to opportunities for development and promotion. The Race at Work Scorecard 2018 underlines that 70% of BAME employees say that career progression is important to them, compared to 42% of White British employees; yet, over half of BAME employees (52%) believe that they will have to leave their current organisation to progress in their career, in contrast to 38% of White British employees.\textsuperscript{55} This could be due to discrimination or unconscious bias in the workplace, or lack of clear and transparent information about training and progression routes within the workplace.\textsuperscript{56}

The McGregor-Smith Review’s Call for Evidence research shows that 79% of BAME individuals reported that they were not satisfied with their career progression, compared with only 26% of

---

\textsuperscript{50} There is a wealth of evidence demonstrating the disparities in the schools that ethnic minority students experiences. Some research findings can be seen in these links: Ethnic minority pupils get worse degrees and jobs, even if they have better A-levels; NewStatesman 05.02.2019. https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/education/2019/02/ethnic-minority-pupils-get-worse-degrees-and-jobs-even-if-they-have; Audit lays bare racial disparities in UK schools, courts and workplaces; Guardian, 09.10.2017. https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/oct/09/audit-lays-bare-racial-disparities-in-uk-schools-courts-and-workplaces Access: April 2019.
\textsuperscript{51} Entry to, and Progression in, Work; JRF, 2015. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56} Entry to, and Progression in, Work. JRF, 2015. Op cit.
white individuals. The survey also found 88% of BAME individuals said they perceived there to be difficulties which have limited their chances to progressing in work, compared with only 52% of White respondents. The survey concludes that individuals felt they did not struggle due to a lack of qualifications or competency, but due to other factors which limited their career progression. Among factors cited, lack of connection to the right people (71%), discrimination (58%) and lack of role models (48%) come at the top. Other factors referenced by respondents included: a lack of jobs available in their area, issues with recognition of qualifications, lack of training, lack of opportunities, inability to work flexibly, non-transparent processes and a lack of cultural awareness including during social activities. Among those individual respondents who mentioned that their ethnicity had an impact on their opportunities to progress, 52% felt there was an inability to progress to senior levels, whilst 23% felt they were not taken seriously or did not fit in. Being discouraged to take up opportunities was also mention by around 13%, demonstrating that attitudes within the workplace and workplace environment affect the confidence and self-esteem of individuals.

2.3. Barriers to BAME women in employment

Research shows that BAME individuals experience discrimination and bias at every stage of their career, even before it begins. BAME individuals are more likely to perceive the workplace as hostile, they are less likely to benefit from networks, to apply for and be given promotions and “they are more likely to be disciplined or judged harshly”.

The barriers and the areas that the barriers mostly experienced by the BAME individuals are summarised in the McGregor-Smith Review as such:

- Individual expectations and aspirations;
- Human capital such as training, education and skills relevant to job performance;
- Lack of language skills;
- Geography (many ethnic minorities live in areas with high unemployment and lack of mobility);
- Financial capital for setting up a business;
- Social capital such as social relations and network;
- Access to professions and integration policies;
- Cultural preferences and other cultural barriers;
- Direct discrimination (positive or negative) by employers, banks or co-workers;
- Indirect discrimination.

In this part of the report, we will discuss the gender and ethnicity pay gap; discrimination, sexism and racism; poverty; language proficiency and cultural barriers; lack of confidence and role models.

57 The Call for Evidence section of the review presents the figures from 416 individuals, 26 employers and 37 organisations. 49% of them identified as Black African/Caribbean/Black British, 16% of respondents identified as Indian, 9% identified as Pakistani, 8% identified as belonging to mixed/multiple ethnic groups and 7% identified as White; meaning that 93% of the respondents are from BAME background. The McGregor-Smith Review, 2017 p.3 Op cit.
58 Ibid. p.3
59 Ibid. P. 56
2.3.1. Gender and Ethnicity Pay Gap

Women from almost all minority ethnic groups, including white ethnic groups, experience the gender pay gap; but the gender pay gap in Britain is also shaped by racial inequality. According to Fawcett Society’s latest analysis of the gender pay gap by ethnicity, covering the years from the 1990s until the 2010s, women from different ethnic backgrounds face different gender pay gaps, and unlike the gender pay gap, there is no one single figure for the gender pay gap of all BAME groups. The Fawcett Society’s report demonstrates that rather than having a generic ‘ethnic minority pay penalty’, it is important to look at the individual characteristics of each group in order to better understand the socio-economic background of pay inequality. In this regard, the report shows that the full-time pay gap can range from a reversed gender pay gap of -5.6% for Chinese women in Great Britain to 19.6% for Black African women in comparison with white men.

The research by Fawcett Society shows that there are significant differences in pay by gender within the same ethnic group. As the table below shows, Indian women experience the widest full-time gender pay gap compared to the equivalent gender pay gap between Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women. On the other hand, the gender pay gap between Black Caribbean women and men is reversed, Chinese women in Britain have closed their gender pay gap with White British men. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women have the largest gender pay gap of all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Internal GPG (within the given ethnic group)</th>
<th>External GPG (with White British men)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Irish</td>
<td>-3.7%</td>
<td>-17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Other</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani and Bangladeshi</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>-8.8%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>-5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures demonstrate the occupational differences between ethnic groups in general and by gender. Ethnic minority groups tend to be overrepresented in low-paying occupations – for example in retail, catering, elementary personal services, hairdressing, textiles and clothing – and

---


underrepresented in well-paid jobs.\textsuperscript{62} However, there are differences between ethnic groups, and some such as Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups experience more disadvantage. This helps to explain the small pay gap between men and women of Pakistani/ Bangladeshi origin as they are likely to be working in lower paying occupations, whereas Indian men have more representation in senior, high paid occupations leading to a higher pay gap between men and women from Indian ethnic groups. Research shows that disadvantage also increases by gender, age and geographical lines. All of these intersecting factors create the “ethnicity pay gap” which is multi-layered and gives varied figures in a comparative analysis.

Resolution Foundation research published at the end of 2018 found that the UK pay gap for BAME workers is approaching £3.2bn.\textsuperscript{63} It found that black male graduates face the biggest pay penalties of all groups included in the research, with an average penalty of £3.90 an hour (17%). Pakistani and Bangladeshi male graduates earned an average £2.67 an hour (12%) less, while among female graduates, black women faced the biggest pay penalty, of £1.62 an hour (9%).\textsuperscript{64} The report highlights the differences in the ethnicity pay gap between graduates and non-graduates, with generally lower differentials among non-graduates. Pakistani and Bangladeshi men face the biggest pay penalties at 14% while black male non-graduates face a pay penalty at 9%. The pay penalties for female non-graduates, while lower, are still significant at 55p for Bangladeshi and Pakistani women (5%), 61p for black women (6 %), and 44p for Indian women (4%).

A stark figure about the ethnicity gender pay gap was published at the end of 2018 by the BBC concerning the pay gap in academic institutions. It found that ethnic minority academics earn less than white colleagues, and among them ethnic minority women have the lowest pay.\textsuperscript{65} The figures received from 22 Russell group Universities show that Black and Arab academics at the UK’s top universities earn an average 26% less than their white colleagues. Compared to white men, on average, white women received 15% less, Asian women received 22% less and black women received 39% less in the universities.

\subsection*{2.3.2. Bias, discrimination and racism}

BAME people experience discrimination, conscious and unconscious bias\textsuperscript{66} and racism because of the colour of their skin, their religion, ethnicity and even their accent. For BAME women, conditions are

\textsuperscript{62} Entry to, and Progression in, Work; JRF, 2015. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{64} Black and ethnic minority workers face a £3.2bn annual pay penalty. Resolution Foundation, 2018. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{66} Unconscious (implicit bias) is defined as the prejudices that people are not necessarily aware of – i.e. implicit to our attitudes, perceptions and opinions. While some of our biases may begin on an unconscious level, experts caution that the concept of unconscious bias should not absolve people of discriminatory behaviour. The findings of the Guardian surveys published in December 2018 demonstrates some blunt examples of
more difficult as they experience both the barriers previously mentioned, and barriers reported by women in general, such as sexism and gender stereotyping.

Qualitative analysis of the 2015 Race at Work survey conducted by YouGov  
underlines that:

Racism very much remains a persistent, if not routine and systematic, feature of work life in Britain, thus contributing to the organisation of society in ways that structurally disadvantage ethnic minority workers. (…) Racism is experienced in a wide variety of ways, ranging from ‘everyday banter’ to violence and intimidation. Alongside Islamophobia and antisemitism, crude and overt forms of anti-Black and anti-Asian racism are also prevalent.

**Entering work**

Prejudice, stereotyping or conscious and unconscious biases within recruitment processes are one of the most voiced barrier that BAME individuals experience. Research finds that uncommon names of applicants reduce their chance of employment if the application is not anonymised, or hinder further progression when in work.  

Non-anonymised, non-blind application processes are, in fact, one of the indicators that highlight the discrimination that can take place during recruitment processes. A survey by the Department for Work and Pension in the UK (2009) sent practically identical applications out to different vacancies, with two out of three under names typically associated with a certain ethnic group. Of 987 applications with a ‘white’ name, 10.7% received a positive response compared to 6.2% of the 1,974 applications with an ethnic minority name—making applications from white sounding names 74% more likely to have some success.

Recent research from the Oxford University Nuffield College reveals that levels of discrimination in the labour market persist; applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds have to send 60% more applications to get a positive response from an employer than white British candidate. The discrimination faced by applicants with Pakistani and Nigerian backgrounds is particularly alarming, with research showing that they needed to send on average 70% and 80% respectively more

unconscious bias. For example, 38% of people from ethnic minorities said they had been wrongly suspected of shoplifting in the last five years, compared with 14% of white people, with black people and women in particular more likely to be wrongly suspected. Revealed: the stark evidence of everyday racial bias in Britain, Guardian, 02.12.2018. Op. cit.


applications to receive a positive response from an employer. In terms of gender difference, the research found that the discrimination encountered by minorities does not vary by gender. Yet, it is also underlines that the ethnic minority women from Indian, East Asian women and Black African, Black Caribbean women encounter stronger discrimination relative to women from the majority group. It also found that only female applicants from Western Europe and the US receive equal treatment relative to the majority group, while male applicants from the same countries do experience discrimination. The researchers conclude that discrimination is persistent, suggesting; “employers may simply read no further as soon as they see a Middle East-sounding or African-sounding name.”

A lack of familiarity with formal recruitment practices among some ethnic minority groups can also pose a barrier during the recruitment process; however, evidence suggests that discrimination is more about bias, whether it is conscious or unconscious. Lack of diversity in senior roles and in recruitment panels feeds the unconscious bias in workplaces. The theory of “homosocial reproduction” introduced by Rosabeth Moss Kanter in 1977 to explain the lack of progression in women’s careers has been also adopted to explain the lack of BAME employers and the barriers in their career progression. According to this theory, employers are likely to select employees who are similar to themselves. This means that the dominant gender and ethnic background within the management team will reproduce itself by appointing people from the same gender and ethnic background. A recent term used to describe this selection is the “affinity bias” which explains people’s choice of sticking to what somebody is used to. This term is used to explain why people socialise and spend time with others who are similar to them, why people favour someone similar to themselves (particularly in the recruitment processes) and why white males are over-represented in boardrooms.

In work
In December 2018, the Guardian published a research demonstrating the stark racial bias in Britain. The poll found that 57% of minorities said they felt they had to work harder to succeed in Britain because of their ethnicity. 40% of the BAME respondents to the survey also said they earn less or had worse employment prospects than other people in Britain because of their ethnicity; only 29% of respondents disagreed with this statement.

71 Ibid.
73 Enter to, and Progression in Work, JRF2015.
74 The reference to the theory is retrieved from The McGregor-Smith Review 2017.
76 The first part of the Guardian’s poll on racial bias on Britain was published on December 2nd, 2018. The poll surveyed 1000 BAME people and 1797 white people across Britain. Revealed: the stark evidence of everyday racial bias in Britain; The Guardian. Op cit.
77 Ibid.
The Guardian’s poll also found that 43% of those from a minority ethnic background had been overlooked for a work promotion in a way that felt unfair in the last five years – more than twice the proportion of white people (18%) who reported the same experience. 57% of BAME women and 59% of BAME men felt that they were overlooked in a job application or for promotion at work unfairly. The proportion of white people who felt they had been unfairly overlooked was 35%; 32% white women and 38% white men. These factors also reduce opportunities for accessing training and career progression.

Research shows that promotion of equality, diversity and fairness is inconsistent across workplaces. Confusion about equality and diversity policies in the workplace remain among employees as these policies are not effectively communicated or put into practice.

BAME individuals experience discrimination and racial harassment in their work life and workplace, not only from their employer but also from their colleagues, clients and customers. According to the Race at Work Scorecard 2018, 1 in 4 BAME employees (25%) reported that they had witnessed or experienced racist harassment or bullying from managers in the last two years. While some managers have taken a zero-tolerance approach to racism in the workplace and support BAME employees, some of them are among the culprits when it comes to racism at work, or they are indifferent to racism.

The Race at Work Scorecard 2018 also warns that there has been an increase from 16% in 2015 to 19% in 2018 in the proportion of people from a BAME background who report having witnessed or experienced racist harassment or bullying from customers or service users. This rise should be considered carefully in relation to the result of the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union in 2016.

However, even though the figures about discrimination and racial harassment are stark, there is still a persistent stigma around talking about race and religion, and most people still find it difficult, particularly in the workplace. Another survey by YouGov found that 67% of respondents do not feel comfortable talking about race. The Race at Work Scorecard 2018 report also found that only

---

79 Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace: A Qualitative Analysis of the 2015 Race at Work Survey. Ashe, S.D. and Nazroo, J. (2016) ESRC Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity University of Manchester, commissioned by BITC.
80 ibid.
81 Published in September 2018, the report compares the findings between 2015 survey and 2018 survey. The findings of 2018 Scorecard are based upon a representative sample of 6,506 working adults in the UK delivered by YouGov. In total 3,837 white employees and 2,669 BAME employees responded to the survey. Race at Work 2018: The Scorecard report 2018. BITC, 2018. Op cit.
38% of the employees who responded to the survey are comfortable talking about race and only 35% are comfortable to talking about religion.\textsuperscript{86}

**Everyday racism/structural racism and the impact on individuals**

The Guardian’s Bias in Britain survey found that 43% of BAME respondents regularly experience bias in Britain because of their ethnicity, and 50% of the respondents said that sometimes people don’t realise that they treat other people differently because of their ethnicity. 69% of the respondents think that Britain today has a problem with racism, and only 11% disagree with this statement.

The poll also shows that BAME people are discriminated against in their everyday activities: 30% of BAME women and 39% of BAME men who responded to the survey had been refused entrance or asked to leave a restaurant, bar or club for no good reason in the year before the poll was carried out. The proportion of white women refused entrance or asked to leave a restaurant, bar or a club is 13% and proportion of white men is 26.

Zubaida Haque, the deputy director of the racial equality think-tank Runnymede Trust, emphasises that racism and discrimination against BAME people and minority faith groups isn’t restricted to one area of life. She highlights that:

> If you’re not welcome in a restaurant as a guest because of the colour of your skin, you’re unlikely to get a job in the restaurant for the same reason. Structural and institutional racism is difficult to identify or prove, but it has much more far-reaching effects on people’s life chances.\textsuperscript{87}

According to a YouGov survey, 72% of those polled thought racism existed either a great deal or a fair amount; 52% thought it existed ‘a fair amount’; and 20% said ‘a great deal’ of racism was present. Yet, one in five (20%) thought “not very much” racism existed in the UK.\textsuperscript{88} The survey also found that men are almost twice as likely as women to say racism does not exist very much or at all (27% of men vs 17% of women). The survey found that up to 40% of British people do not think those from ethnic minority backgrounds face greater discrimination than white people in areas of life such as jobs, education and access to finance.\textsuperscript{89} The majority of the population think people from ethnic minority backgrounds face no more discrimination than white people in the workplace (54%), and in access to finance (57%), access to jobs (52%), university (52%) or good schooling (54%).\textsuperscript{90}

Analysis of YouGov’s 2018 survey results demonstrate that racism is not perceived in a consistent way by the public; people do not have the same interpretation of what a racist act is, thus their perception of racism is varied.\textsuperscript{91} For example, according to the survey, “assuming that someone is of a particular race based on their name alone is seen as always/usually racist by 46%, compared to

\textsuperscript{86} Race at Work 2018: The Scorecard report 2018.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{91} Up to 40% of Britons think BAME people do not face more discrimination, Guardian, 2018. Op cit.
41% who believe it’s not usually/never racist.”

Given that people might be discriminated against because of their name as previously discussed, assumptions made about an individual’s race because of their name can in fact be discriminatory.

The survey shows that while people can agree on everyday racism more easily, when it comes to institutional racism, they are more divided. The data analyst says: “People seem to think it’s a one-on-one issue, instead of an institutional one.”

Discrimination and exclusion can have a wide-reaching and catastrophic impact on BAME people, leading to feeling disempowered, alienated and lonely. Even those who have progressed and are seen to be successful, or as role models, feel the heavy psychological impact of exclusion. The Guardian’s poll found that 55% of BAME people felt that they were left out of social events at work, university or school; and 14% of them said that it was due to their ethnicity. Being left out and excluded from social events at work or in school not only has a damaging impact on the confidence and self-esteem of BAME individuals, but also creates a barrier to career development as they are excluded from social and professional networks that could help them to progress in their career.

It is not easy to tackle bias and racism, particularly in the workplace as discrimination is often subtle, and in many cases fairness, equality and diversity policies do not provide a clear guidance on how to take action. Trade Union representatives are seen as being an important source of support in helping BAME individuals address discrimination and racism in the workplace. However, research shows Trade Unions are not except from bias, and some representatives indifferent to racism in the workplace. Research reveals can be ‘white resentment’ in the workplace, with some suggesting that equality and diversity policies are unnecessary as BAME people do not experience inequality; they suggest that implementing equality policies would actually create unfairness between the BAME and white employees. This demonstrates the importance of equality & diversity and unconscious bias training at all levels in the workplace, and the need to talk openly about race in the workplace and the structural disadvantages that BAME people experience to improve understanding and raise awareness.

Another mechanism to cope with bias and discrimination utilised by BAME individuals, particularly by women, is to attain higher qualifications. Research carried out with Muslim women shows that

---


93 Up to 40% of Britons think BAME people do not face more discrimination, Guardian, 2018. Op cit.

94 Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith, who commissioned the “Race in the Workplace Review” explains her feelings as “the feelings of exclusion and judgement on the colour of my skin, my underprivileged background and being a woman, were all things I had hoped were in the past. However, I have been saddened to see that it is not the case. (...) It (Britain) was very painful at times, because feeling excluded is a very lonely, difficult place to be.” [emphasis original]. The Mc-Gregor-Smith Review, 2017 Op cit.


98 Ibid. P. 5
obtaining higher educational qualifications is perceived the only viable way to tackle discrimination.\textsuperscript{99}

A number of studies also suggest that people who are exposed to racism and discrimination tend to change their jobs or seek alternative forms of employment as a direct response to experiencing racism.\textsuperscript{100} This is also cited as one of the reasons that BAME individuals look for opportunities to set up their own businesses; hence self-employment becoming more prevalent amongst BAME individuals.

\subsection*{2.3.3. Poverty and lack of resources}

Evidence suggests that compared to the white population, most ethnic minority groups are more economically disadvantaged; particularly because of their disadvantaged position in employment, pay penalties and the higher rate of persistent poverty among ethnic minority households.\textsuperscript{101} Persistent inequalities experienced by ethnic minority households in education, employment, health and housing mean that they have also been disproportionately affected by austerity measures taken after the 2008 economic recession.\textsuperscript{102} Research shows that women have been disproportionately affected by austerity as a result of structural inequalities which means they earn less, own less and have more responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work; and for the BAME women, the gender inequalities intersect with and compound racial inequalities.\textsuperscript{103}

In 2015/16, 50\% of Bangladeshi households, 46\% of Pakistani households and 40\% of Black African/Caribbean households were living in poverty compared to 19\% of White British households.\textsuperscript{104} Ethnic minority households are more likely to be larger than white British families; 51\% of Black African, 65\% of Pakistani and 64\% of Bangladeshi children live in large families, compared to 30\% of those in White British families.\textsuperscript{105} Figures prove that BAME women are more likely to be affected by cuts to benefits and tax credits because they are more likely to be living in poverty, more likely to be living with dependent children and more likely to be living in large families. Research by Runnymede Trust and Women’s Budget Group shows that as a result of benefit cuts and tax changes:\textsuperscript{106}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Women will lose more than men.
  \item Asian women in the poorest third of households lose on average 19\% of their income by 2020 (over £2200) compared to if the policies in place in May 2010 had continued to 2020.11
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{99} Religion and ethnicity at work: a study of British Muslim women’s labour market performance; 2019.
\textsuperscript{100} Equality, Diversity and Racism in the Workplace; BITC 2016. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
• Black women in the poorest households will lose on average 14% of their income (over £2000 a year).
• Black and Asian lone mothers, respectively, stand to lose £4,000 and £4,200 a year on average by 2020 from the changes since 2010, about 15 and 17% of their net income.

Another piece of research by JRF highlights how BAME households have been affected by the recession: 107 before the recession, the household income of Chinese and Other White groups was higher, with it slightly lower than the White majority within Indian groups; after the recession however, Chinese households saw a major fall in their income, falling behind the white majority. While White majority and Black Caribbean families did not observe a major change in their weekly income, all other ethnic groups saw a noticeable fall in their incomes.

The JRF research also shows that BAME women’s unemployment rates change slightly (2-3%) during the recession due to the low economic participation rates. 108 It demonstrates that benefits are an important income contributor, particularly for Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups (around one third of their income) and Black African/Caribbean groups (around a quarter of their income). 109

The disadvantage faced by BAME people in employment and the likelihood of being in low paid jobs and occupations are likely to persist, with research showing that only a fifth of low-paid workers have escaped low pay ten years later. 110 This evidence also references another concern about poverty among ethnic groups; “while being in a poor economic position and poverty is a serious concern, not being able to get out of such a state is of greater concern”. 111

JRF research found that persistent poverty was most prevalent among the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups, with 37% of Pakistanis in poverty for two consecutive years and 14% in poverty for three consecutive years. 112 Although Black African and Black Caribbean groups did not have especially high poverty rates, they had high rates of persistent poverty (31% and 23% respectively). The White majority group have relatively low rates of persistent poverty and high rates of never being poor. Nearly 72% are never in poverty, 13% in poverty at least twice and 5% are poor in all three years in which they were observed. The Chinese and Other White groups have very similar experiences to the White majority. Indians experience slightly higher persistent poverty rates (16%) but a similar proportion was poor in all three years (6%).

Having no qualifications, being out of work, being separated/divorced/a single parent are some significant preconditions of persistent poverty. Another piece of research by JRF suggests that social

108 Among Black Caribbean and Black African women, who have higher labour market participation rates, unemployment it increased by 7–8 percentage points. Bangladeshi women, however, have seen a decrease in unemployment rates by 13%. Their participation in labour market increased between 2009-2013 13% while Bangladeshi men’s employment fell down 6% in the same period. There was an 11% decrease in the number of Bangladeshi women economically inactive. Poverty across Ethnic Groups Through Recession and Austerity. JRF 2015.
109 Ibid.
network compositions can also be factors contributing to a risk of being poor. Exploring the connections among poverty, ethnicity and social networks, the research suggests that having a mixed ethnic friendship network, having friends from outside your neighbourhood, and having all friends who are employed are three factors related to reducing the likelihood of being poor. Mixed ethnic group networks are most common for Mixed, Black African and Black Caribbean ethnic groups and least common for White British and White Irish ethnic groups. Having friends from outside their neighbourhood is most common for Black African and Mixed ethnic groups and least common for Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups.

Social networks, including friend and family networks are important for BAME women, not only in reducing the likelihood of poverty, but also in their entrance to employment and career development. Supporting people to diversify and expand their social networks; increasing their understanding of the potential to draw social, emotional and financial support from their networks, and the ways in which these benefits may be maximised can be areas of focus in developing support programmes to BAME women. Later in the report, we will discuss the significance of BAME women’s social network organisations in improving BAME women’s participation in the economy and public life.

2.3.4. Lack of language proficiency and qualifications

Lack of qualifications, failure to gain recognition for existing qualifications, and language proficiency are significant barriers to BAME women participating in labour market and sustaining an independent life. These barriers are concurrent with the structural barriers that affect BAME women’s participation in the economy discussed previously, and create additional conditions that make it harder for BAME women to join the labour market and integrate in the workplace.

English language skills are an important factor for BAME women, not only in participating in economy, but also as a route out of poverty and utilising the welfare system and other support mechanisms that are available. Research by JRF (2015) indicates that there is a correlation between English language skills and persistent poverty within BAME communities, with the report arguing that having English as a first language reduces the probability of being in persistent poverty by 5%. Furthermore, a number of studies suggest that lack of language skills, knowledge and familiarity with the social services and welfare system (particularly for new migrants and refugees), especially in relation to how the labour market operates, and lack of social networks can create barriers for women in particular.

114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
Austerity has hit the support mechanisms available for individuals to overcome these problems severely. One of the most damaging cuts has been seen in the funding of English classes (ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages) which has had a direct impact on BAME women. New migrants and refugees in particular need substantial support to be able to settle in, improve their language proficiency, understand the regulations and rules around employment and deal with the bureaucracy around registration and skill recognition. While the organisations working with and supporting migrants and refugees, and some local councils provide information about living and working in Britain, we lack a cohesive systemic and gender-lensed approach.

2.3.5. Confidence, lack of role models

Research shows that lack of confidence is a critical barrier to women being able to progress in their careers. Some underlying reasons for a lack of confidence can be gender stereotyping, unconscious bias, lack of support mechanisms such as mentoring, a lack of and career advice, role models and access to social networks. While BAME women are affected by all these factors, they also experience the racial inequalities and barriers which intersect with barriers faced by women more generally.

The Guardian’s poll from 2018 shows that 47% of BAME respondents said they did not feel comfortable expressing their views or beliefs because of their ethnicity (31% of them felt this within the last year), 38% of BAME respondents felt the need to alter their appearance because of their ethnicity, and 37% of respondents felt the need to alter their voice because of their ethnicity. 44% of BAME respondents also said that people of their ethnicity are treated in a way that means they can’t be fully true to themselves in Britain today. These figures demonstrate how BAME people often feel they need to alter aspects of their personality or appearance in order to be accepted.

Research shows that experiencing and/or witnessing racism, and being anxious or on edge due to the continuous risk of discrimination and racial harassment has an impact on ethnic minority employees’ mental health, emotional and psychological well-being, which directly affects their confidence level. 72% of BAME respondents to the Guardian’s bias survey said they have experienced someone using racist language in their presence, although it was not directed at them (44% of which happened in the last year). 66% of respondents experienced racist language directed at them (6% of which happened in the week before they responded to the poll, 23% of which happened more than a week ago but within the last year).

---

122 Ibid.
The McGregor-Smith review indicates that BAME people have lower expectations from their careers due to the poorer career progression and unequal access to opportunities for career development and progression.\textsuperscript{125} The belief that they would not be able to achieve the career that they would like due to the structural barriers, including racism and unconscious bias, is strengthened if individuals face discrimination.

One way to overcome the lack of confidence experienced by BAME women is to have visible and relatable role models, however, as evidence also shows, BAME people are underrepresented in senior roles, in public life and media; and visible BAME role models also have to fight against bias and discrimination.\textsuperscript{126} Lack of visible BAME role models and failing to celebrate the achievements of BAME people have a negative impact on career aspirations and outcomes. The underrepresentation of BAME people, women in particular, in political and public life, in media and senior roles within business is a critical barrier to BAME women. A study conducted by Operation Black Vote and The Guardian found out that only 36 (3.4\%) of the 1000 most powerful people in Britain were from ethnic minorities and just 0.7\% of them were BAME women.\textsuperscript{127}

\section*{2.4. Recommendations from the literature}

There has been a wealth of discussion around what can be done to tackle the barriers that BAME individuals experience in employment, and to create equal, diverse and fair work practices. In this section, we will summarise some key action points from the literature for organisations and government in this part.\textsuperscript{128}

To start with, anonymised job applications, blind shortlisting and diversity in recruitment boards and panels are two key action points that are most commonly voiced in the literature. Diverse applicant lists should be prioritised by businesses and recruitment agencies. The JRF report on entry and progression in work also recommends that outreach services in job centres should be reopened and improved, as these services are vital for supporting BAME people.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{126} The constant abuse that one of the prominent black women politician Dianne Abbot has been widely revealed recently, but the abuse still persists. See for the discussions: Diane Abbott more abused than any other female MP during election; Guardian 05.09.2017 https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/sep/05/diane-abbott-more-abused-than-any-other-mp-during-election; Diane Abbott accuses BBC of legitimising racist abuse in Question Time row; Politics Home, 18.01.2019. https://www.politicshome.com/news/uk/political-parties/labour-party/news/101220/diane-abbott-accuses-bbc-legitimising-racist
\textsuperscript{127} Revealed: Britain’s most powerful elite is 97\% white; 27.09.2107, The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/inequality/2017/sep/24/revealed-britains-most-powerful-elite-is-97-white
\textsuperscript{128} The action points detailed in the McGregor-Smith Reviews (which were also concerned by the UK government and some other follow up research, such as the Race at Work Scorecard 2018 of BITC and YouGov) can be found in the Appendix 1.
\textsuperscript{129} Entry to and progress in work; JRF, 2015. Op cit.
Setting specific targets, which consider intersectional factors affecting those ethnic groups which systematically appear most disadvantaged is recommended as an important action to tackle barriers.\textsuperscript{130} Geographical inequalities should be considered in developing a targeted approach. Alongside these targets, career advice services focusing on BAME individuals should be improved.\textsuperscript{131}

One of the common calls for businesses and organisations is around transparency.\textsuperscript{132} Organisations should regularly make performance assessments and make their policies around recruitment, career progression, pay and reward guidelines, and how and why people are promoted clear for all members of staff. As well as implementing and clarifying workplace policies, appraising organisational culture is crucial in order to understand what is happening in the organisation. Ultimately, improving awareness of the intersectional challenges facing BAME women in progressing in the workplace, and analysing these through multiple lenses is a key action for businesses to achieve cultural change and break down these barriers.

Management and leadership play a critical role in overcoming the bias and discrimination prevalent in some workplaces, and is key to creating and sustaining an equal and fair workplace culture. Leaders have to create inclusive cultures that allow people to talk openly about race and ethnicity and bring their authentic selves to workplace.\textsuperscript{133} Furthermore, workplace programmes, such as career development training, outreach programmes, networks, unconscious bias and discrimination training, and mentoring programmes are essential and progressive actions to support BAME employees and change the workplace culture.

In terms of workplace policies, EHRC supports faith-friendly workplaces to go beyond minimum legal requirements and seek to attract, welcome, support and retain people of all faiths.\textsuperscript{134} EHRC Wales prepared a guideline to support organisations to create faith-friendly workplaces, which include implementing all-staff training on different religions and beliefs to influence culture change. This training helps challenge existing stereotypes and assumptions about different faiths, and supports employees to explore how they and their colleagues can maintain their faith in the workplace.

Alongside workplace policies, there is also a call to support BAME women in self-employment. Businesses and government agencies are expected to develop, improve and sustain a supplier diversity programme to engage with different businesses, self-employed women and BAME groups in particular. In addition to this, existing support programmes for self-employed people should be more accessible to BAME women.

\textsuperscript{130} Ethnic Minority Disadvantage in the Labour Market; JRF, 2015. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{131} Entry to and progress in work; JRF, 2015. Op cit.
\textsuperscript{133} McGregor-Smith review; 2017. Op cit.
As well as individual businesses, UK and Welsh Government also have a crucial responsibilities in tackling the barriers faced by BAME women. JRF research\textsuperscript{135} recommends that the public sector should be at the forefront of recruiting people from ethnic minority groups, particularly those who face systematic disadvantage in the labour market. As institutions that should have a clear commitment to improving diversity and equality, governments need to ensure that they are leading by example. At the same time, businesses need to be adequately supported to create more diverse workforces. Respondents to the McGregor-Smith review Government’s to enforce of legislation (25%), work alongside/provide incentives for businesses to promote diversity (24%), and to lead by example (19%).\textsuperscript{136} Calls have also been made for Government to make Race/Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting mandatory for bigger businesses, as in the case of the Gender Pay Gap. The UK Government carried out a consultation about this which was finalised in January 2019, we look forward to seeing the published response and hope the Government will act on this recommendation.

\section*{2.5. Policy Framework}

Ethnicity, race and gender are issues crosscutting many policy areas; therefore, it is not possible to carry out a detailed policy analysis in this limited space. In this part, we would highlight three baseline policy frameworks in Wales that set up ground for race and gender policies: Equality Act (2010), Public Sector Equality Duty (2011) and Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015).

**Equality Act (2010):** The most significant policy affecting the employment of BAME individuals is the Equality Act, which came into force in 2010. The Equality Act brought together 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act; among them are the Equal Pay Act (1970), the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Race Relations Act (1976), the Disability Discrimination Act (1995), the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations (2003), the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003), the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (2006), the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2007).\textsuperscript{137} The Equality Act outlawed discrimination on the grounds of nine protected characteristics, which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex.

**Public sector Equality Duty (2011):** The Public Sector Duty means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. Public bodies are required to publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty, and to set equality objectives.

**Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015):** The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act articulates a more equal and prosperous future for Wales through seven well-being goals, which all public bodies are expected to contribute to. These are: A Prosperous Wales, A Resilient Wales, A More Equal Wales, A Healthier Wales, A Wales Of Cohesive Communities, A Wales Of Vibrant Culture And Welsh Language, A Globally Responsible Wales.

**2.6. Conclusion**

Research shows that BAME individuals face barriers to developing and advancing in a career, an ethnicity pay gap and significant unemployment. People from minority ethnic groups tend to have lower employment rates and when employed, they are concentrated in low-paid sectors and occupations. They are also more likely to be in poverty.

However, the experiences of BAME individuals change among different ethnic groups. The term BAME does not refer to a community or a homogeneous group defined with particular characteristics. The position of disadvantage in the labour market is affected by some compounding factors such ethnic background, religion, colour of skin, gender, nationality and migration status, age, disability, class and socio-economic status, and geography. There are critical differences in the experiences of men and women within many ethnic groups, as well as the differences between the women from different ethnic groups.

BAME individuals are not only disadvantaged in terms of quantity of work they have access to, they are also disadvantaged in terms of the quality of jobs. Research shows that although ethnic minority groups have slightly higher educational qualifications than the white majority on average, fewer of them work in graduate occupations. Evidence shows that ethnic minority graduates still face significant employment and pay penalties in the workforce. Furthermore, ethnic minority groups are less likely to have equal access to opportunities for career development and promotion.

One of the persistent barriers to BAME individuals, which affects their participation in economy, career development and progression, is discrimination and racism in the workplace. They face discrimination and racism in both entering the work and retaining in the work. Research found that uncommon names of applicants reduce their chance of employment if the application is not anonymised, or hinder further progression when in work. A lack of diversity in senior roles and in recruitment panels also feeds the unconscious bias in workplaces.

In work, BAME individuals experience discrimination and racial harassment, not only from their employer but also from their colleagues, clients and customers. They feel that they need to work harder to succeed; they sense they were overlooked in a job application or for promotion at work unfairly. Yet, attempts to overcome bias, discrimination and racism are not strong and consistent enough that racial discrimination is still the biggest barrier that BAME individuals experience in work and in their day-to-day life.

BAME women experience the disadvantages in labour market different to their male and white women counterparts. Evidence suggests that women have been disproportionately affected by
austerity as a result of structural inequalities which means they earn less, own less and have more responsibilities for unpaid care and domestic work; and for the BAME women, the gender inequalities intersect with and compound racial inequalities.

Gender pay gap figures shows that the labour market in Britain is not gendered but also ethnically segregated. Research suggests that rather than calculating a generic gender pay gap for ethnic minority groups, it is important to look at the individual characteristics of each group to better understand the socio-economic background of pay inequality.

Lack of qualifications, failure to gain recognition for existing qualifications, and language proficiency are significant barriers to BAME women participating in labour market and sustaining an independent life.

Research also shows that lack of confidence is a critical barrier to women being able to progress in their careers. Some underlying reasons for a lack of confidence can be gender stereotyping, unconscious bias, lack of support mechanisms such as mentoring, a lack of and career advice, role models and access to social networks.
3. **Methodology**

This research aims to understand the experiences of BAME women in employment in Wales. The research asks:

*What are the experiences of BAME women in accessing and progressing in work/the Welsh economy?*

In order to establish this, the research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What does the statistical evidence demonstrate about BAME women’s participation in the Welsh economy?
2. What are the barriers that BAME women experience to participating in the economy?
3. How accessible and inclusive are employability and careers support programmes for BAME women?
4. What changes would BAME women in Wales suggest are needed to tackle the barriers they experience?

The research prioritises and uses a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data aims to demonstrate the current condition of BAME women’s employment based on existing statistical data sets, such as the Annual Population Survey and Census 2011. However this information is limited, as there’s an absence of recent, Welsh-specific, gender-disaggregated statistical data broken down by ethnicity. Certain sets of statistics also use different classifications of ethnic groups, with some grouped together.

There are some challenges and limitations in taking up this methodology:

- Firstly, as it is discussed in the literature review, it is challenging to address the experiences of all different BAME groups as they are shaped by the impact of many intersecting factors.
- Secondly, it is challenging and in some cases not possible to find (statistical) data demonstrating ethnicity figures by gender. Additionally, different data sets use different classifications of ethnic groups, or merge some ethnic groups into one category, which makes it difficult to address the difference. For example, even though the experiences of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are remarkably different, they are sometimes represented under the “Asian” category as a whole.
- Thirdly, accessing all different ethnic groups to reflect their experiences in research with limited time and space is not possible.

In order to overcome these challenges, the following steps were taken:

- An extensive literature review was carried out to acknowledge the differences among BAME communities and map out factors affecting the career development of BAME women.
- To demonstrate the employment statistics for BAME women, different data sets were examined, including Annual Population Survey (July 2017-June 2018 release), Census 2011 and available Stats Wales demographic, education and equality and diversity statistics.
In the classification of ethnic groups, the classification of Census was considered (see Appendix Chapter 3).

To understand the differentiated experiences of women from different BAME groups, we carried out interviews with representatives of organisations working with BAME women (see the list of the participants in Appendix Chapter 3). In total, 18 people were interviewed from 17 organisations. The total duration of the interviews is approximately 21 hours 24 minutes.

Alongside the interviews, we attended events and meetings in which the experiences of BAME people were discussed. In particular, Chwarae Teg’s first State of the Nation Conference focused on BAME women’s experiences in the Welsh economy; initial findings of this research was presented, and a workshop was organised to discuss key recommendations which are widely addressed in this report.

A round table discussion was held in May 2019 after the finalisation of the final draft of the research to discuss the recommendations of the research with a number of stakeholders.
4. BAME women’s employment in Wales

In this section, statistical data demonstrating BAME women’s employment in Wales is analysed. The experience of BAME women in Wales has remained unexplored statistically, and it is common to reference UK statistics whilst discussing the participation of BAME women in economy in Wales. Yet, rely on UK statistics is limited as Wales has a differentiated economic and political landscape that needs a particular focus to understand the present situation. In that sense, we looked at Welsh breakdowns in the available data sets even though the sample size for some ethnic and religious groups is small. The statistics included here demonstrate the varied experiences of different ethnic groups and therefore the importance of recognising this diversity in policy discussions.

4.1. Population dynamics

In Wales, BAME people make up 5% of the population. As the graphic\textsuperscript{138} below shows, the working age (aged 16-64) BAME population in Wales also makes up 5% of the population of this age group, whereas in the UK, it is around 15%.

The BAME population in Wales is agglomerated in the industrial cities of South Wales. The biggest BAME population is in Cardiff with 18.4% followed by Swansea (9.5%), Newport (8.8%), Vale of Glamorgan (3.5%) and Wrexham (3.3%).\textsuperscript{139} In other local authorities, the proportion of ethnic minority population is under 3%. In fact, in eight local authorities, the BAME population is less than 2%.

The graphics below show the proportion of different ethnic groups within the BAME population by gender in Wales. The highest ethnic minority female group population in Wales is the Black/Black British group, making up 20.9% of the ethnic minority female population aged 16-64. This group is followed by the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population with 14% and then mixed ethnic group and Indian population. In the male population, the highest population is the mixed ethnic group with 17.2%, followed by Black or Black British population.

The graphic below shows that, 53% of ethnic minority females aged 16 and over are between 25-49 years old. This means that Wales has a young population of BAME women at working age.

---

140 APS, June 2017-July 2018 estimates. Retrieved through NOMIS, January 2018
141 Ibid.
The table and graphic below show the population figures by citizenship, which gives the opportunity to find out the proportion of the migrant population in Wales. According to estimates, 40% of the ethnic minorities living in Wales are white.

### BAME population in Wales by citizenship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAME population in Wales by citizenship</th>
<th>White not UK national</th>
<th>Ethnic minority UK national</th>
<th>Ethnic minority not UK national</th>
<th>Total population of BAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White not UK national</td>
<td>63,800</td>
<td>53,900</td>
<td>43,500</td>
<td>161,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority UK national</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic minority not UK national</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population of BAME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table below demonstrates the population aged 16-64 by religion, age, and gender in Wales.

### Religion by age and gender in Wales (Aged 16+)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religion</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table shows, the Christian population is highest with 65% of the religious people aged 16 and over in Wales, which is followed by Muslims with 1.3% and Hindus with 0.4%. According to 2015 figures retrieved from StatsWales, female Christians make up 69% (827,152) of the female population aged 16 and over, Muslims make up 1.1% (13,389). With all religious groups considered, the proportion of women having a faith is higher than men with a faith. While the population of

---

142 Ibid.
Christians increases as the age grows, the population of Muslims drops in reverse. Wales has a younger Muslim population, with 49% of the Muslim population under the age of 25.\textsuperscript{144}

### 4.2. Economic activity by ethnicity and gender

#### 4.2.1. Employment rate by ethnicity

When we look at the employment rates, we see the stark figures of the ethnicity and gender gap in employment in Wales. The employment rate of white males in Wales is 76.7% whereas for the ethnic minority males, the ratio drops to 70.2%. White females’ employment rate is just below ethnic minority males with 69.9%. Only 48.1% of BAME women are in employment in Wales, which is below the UK average of 72.6% for white females and 56.9% for ethnic minority females. Wales is below the UK average in regards to the employment rates of BAME people.\textsuperscript{145}

The graphic below shows the employment rate of ethnic minority females from different ethnic backgrounds. Indian females have the highest proportion of employment with 63.5% in the Welsh economy, which is similar to the UK figure of 68.6%. The lowest employment rate is among the Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Wales with 30.2% and 18.3%. At the UK level, the lowest employment rate is among Arab women, followed by Bangladeshi and Pakistani women.

\textsuperscript{144} Census 2011.
\textsuperscript{145} APS, June 2017-July 2018 estimates. Retrieved through NOMIS, January 2018
4.2.2. Unemployment rate by ethnicity

The unemployment rate for white males in Wales is 4.8% and for white females is 4.3%. When the rate for ethnic minorities by gender is considered, the stark ethnicity gap is observed again. The unemployment rate for ethnic minority males is 6.2% and 14.2% for the ethnic minority women. This means that 1 in 7 BAME women of working age in Wales are seeking work but are currently unable to find any, whereas the figure is just 1 in 23 for their white counterparts. The unemployment figure in Wales for ethnic minority females is 5% higher than the UK average.

---

146 Ibid.
The highest unemployment rate is observed among Black/Black British females at 25.8%. It is lowest among Indian ethnic females. In the UK, the unemployment rate is highest among the Pakistani/Bangladeshi population with 14.4%. These figures demonstrate that Wales has a particular issue with low rates of employment among ethnic minority women.\textsuperscript{147}

We also examined how the unemployment rate has change in the last ten years by gender and ethnicity to consider the impact of the economic recession of 2008 in the graphics below.\textsuperscript{148} While White female unemployment in Wales follows a stable line close to white female unemployment rates in the UK, ethnic minority female unemployment in Wales fluctuates to a greater extent. (The labels on the graphic excludes the UK figures and only show the proportion of unemployment rates in Wales.)

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{148} Annual Population Survey 2008-2018, retrieved via Nomis. To note, the confidence level for the data of the ethnic minority female and male unemployment in Wales is low.
The graphic above shows the male unemployment rates by ethnicity. As the graphic shows, ethnic minority males’ unemployment fluctuates compared to their white counterparts, but it still fluctuates less than female unemployment, and more importantly, the gap between white males and ethnic minority males is narrower than the gap between white females and ethnic minority females.

4.2.3. Economic inactivity rates by ethnicity

Economic inactivity rates for white males in Wales is 19.3% and for ethnic minority males it is 25.1%.\footnote{APS, June 2017-July 2018 estimates. Retrieved through NOMIS, January 2018} The economic inactivity rate for white females is slightly higher than ethnic minority males.
with 26.9%, showing another example of gendered labour market dynamics. When we look at the economic inactivity rate for ethnic minority females, the gendered and ethnically segregated labour market becomes much more visible. 43.8% of BAME women aged 16-64 in Wales are economically inactive.\textsuperscript{150}

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{economic_inactivity_rates_graph}
\caption{Economic inactivity rates for aged 16-64 by ethnicity}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

The economic inactivity rate is highest among Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Wales at 69.1%, with this group also having the highest economic inactivity rate in the UK. The lowest economic inactivity rate in Wales is among mixed ethnic females at 29.1%.\textsuperscript{151}

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{economic_inactivity_rate_women_graph}
\caption{Economic inactivity rate for women aged 16-64 by ethnicity}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid.
The graphic below shows the economic inactivity rates of females since 2008 in Wales and the UK. The economic inactivity rates of White females in Wales increased in the years following the recession and started to fall after 2012, while the reverse is observed in the economic inactivity rates of ethnic minority females. Between 2013 and 2017, economic inactivity of ethnic minority females rose, while rates for their white counterparts was declining.

4.2.4. **Employee jobs and Self-employment by gender and ethnicity**

Only 8% of the economically active women in Wales are self-employed. The graphic below shows that self-employment is higher among women from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and other Asian ethnic groups. However, it is important to bear in mind that the overall economic activity rate of these ethnic groups is low; hence, it is not statistically viable to make a substantive comparison of self-employment figures between different ethnic groups. Still, the figures show that there is an appetite for self-employment among ethnic minority women.

---

152 Annual Population Survey 2008-2018, retrieved via Nomis. To note, the confidence level for the data of the ethnic minority female and male unemployment in Wales is low.


Proportion of employee and self-employed by ethnicity and gender - Aged 16+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Employee</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Female</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: British</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Other White</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/multiple ethnic group</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean/British: Arab</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other ethnic group</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: British</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Other White</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/multiple ethnic group</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean/British: Arab</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other ethnic group</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3. Economic activity by religion and gender

The graphic below shows economic activity by gender and religion in Wales. The highest rates of female employment by religion is among the Hindu and Buddhist religious groups at 56.3%. The highest female unemployment level is among Muslims at 7.6%, and the lowest among the Christian females. Muslim females have the highest economic inactivity rate with 63% followed by Jewish and Christian religious groups. It is worth noting also that the Jewish population in Wales is aging, with 57% of females aged 50 and over.

---

4.3.1. *Employee jobs and Self-employment by gender and religion*

The below graphic also highlights figures of employees and those in self-employment by religion and gender.¹⁵⁶ Female self-employment is higher among religious groups other than Christians, whereas employed jobs are higher among Christians. It is clear that a significant number of BAME women consider self-employment, meaning that their position in these areas of the labour market should be considered when support programmes are developed.

---

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.
4.4. Industry and Occupation by ethnicity, religion and gender

4.4.1. Industry by ethnic group and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry and Occupation</th>
<th>All ethnic groups</th>
<th>White British</th>
<th>White Other</th>
<th>Mixed/multiple ethnic group</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Pakistani/Bangladeshi</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Other Asian</th>
<th>Black/African/Caribbean/British</th>
<th>Any other ethnic group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, energy and water</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail trade, vehicle repair</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and storage</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and food service activities</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and communication</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial and insurance activities</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real estate activities</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific and technical activities</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and support service activities</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration and defence</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human health and social work activities</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Census 2011, Industry by ethnic group and by sex*
The table above shows the proportion of women from different ethnic groups within Welsh industries, and the table below shows the top five industries by gender and ethnicity.\(^{157}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Ethnic Groups</th>
<th>White British</th>
<th>White Other</th>
<th>Mixed/multiple ethnic group</th>
<th>Indian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Manufacturing</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public Adm.</td>
<td>• Public Adm.</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Public Adm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pakistani/ Bangladeshi</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Other Asian</th>
<th>Black African /Caribbean/ British</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Health and Social Work</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Education</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
<td>• Public Adm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Finance and Insurance</td>
<td>• Professional, scientific and tech</td>
<td>• Wholesale and retail</td>
<td>• Administrative and Support</td>
<td>• Accommodation and food</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It highlights that except for Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese ethnic minority women, the top sector for women’s employment is Health and Social work sector. The manufacturing sector ranks second for women from white other ethnic background, which is most likely a result of the domination of EU migrant workers within the manufacturing industry. Public service and administration only appears in three ethnic groups which are White British, Mixed/multiple ethnic groups and Indian.

### 4.4.2. Industry by religion and gender

The table below shows the proportion of women in Welsh sectors by religion. As the first line of the table shows, the number of women from different religious backgrounds is uneven, and some groups, such as Sikh and Jewish women, have smaller representation. Therefore, a comparative analysis between the groups will not be astute.

\(^{157}\) The only available data on industry by ethnicity and religion is Census 2011; hence, the figures are slightly outdated.
### Proportion of women in Welsh industries in given characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of women in all industries</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Other religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>397,820</td>
<td>3,938</td>
<td>2,013</td>
<td>2,422</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Agriculture, energy and water 1.9% 0.9% 1.1% 1.2% 0.7% 0.5% 1.6%
Manufacturing 4.8% 3.3% 4.6% 5.5% 3.7% 3.0% 3.6%
Construction 1.8% 1.0% 0.6% 1.1% 1.1% 1.2% 1.5%
Wholesale and retail trade, vehicle repair 15.3% 19.8% 17.0% 11.5% 31.9% 16.2% 12.8%
Transport and storage 1.5% 1.6% 1.4% 0.6% 1.8% 0.9% 1.4%
Accommodation and food service activities 6.7% 9.7% 5.5% 18.2% 8.5% 4.7% 6.4%
Information and communication 1.3% 1.5% 3.5% 1.4% 1.1% 1.9% 2.3%
Financial and insurance activities 3.5% 4.9% 3.4% 2.0% 5.0% 4.0% 2.7%
Real estate activities 1.5% 1.5% 1.2% 0.9% 0.9% 0.9% 1.8%
Professional, scientific and technical activities 4.2% 4.4% 3.7% 3.8% 3.7% 12.4% 5.2%
Administrative and support service activities 3.4% 5.0% 4.7% 4.3% 3.7% 4.2% 3.3%
Public administration and defence 8.7% 4.6% 4.8% 5.2% 6.7% 7.5% 7.6%
Education 16.4% 14.4% 8.4% 13.6% 9.0% 16.4% 13.9%
Human health and social work activities 24.2% 24.2% 37.9% 22.8% 19.1% 18.7% 27.4%
Other 5.0% 3.1% 2.3% 7.9% 3.0% 7.5% 8.6%
Total 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100%

**Source:** Religion by economic activity, age and gender, 2015. StatsWales, based on 2011 Census. This graphic does not include the 'no religion' figures.
The table shows that women from all religious backgrounds are predominantly working in the traditionally women dominated sectors. Yet, we can observe some differences among religious groups within the sectors; for example, the proportion of Hindu women working in the Information and Communication sector is higher than the proportion in the other religious groups, whereas the proportion of Muslim women working in the Financial and Insurance sector is higher compared to other religious groups. Muslim and Hindu women’s representation in public administration and the Defence sector is relatively low compared to the other religious groups.

### 4.4.3. Occupation by ethnic group by sex by age

The graphic below shows the occupations of women by ethnicity.\textsuperscript{158} The occupational categories of “Professional Occupations” and “Associate Professional and Technical occupations” are merged, as are the categories of “Professional and Technical Occupations” and “Skilled Trades Occupations” and “Process, Plant and Machine Operatives” are merged as “Vocational Occupations”.

\textsuperscript{158} Census 2011 retrieved through NOMIS.
The figures show that proportions of ethnic groups within different occupations are varied. In reference to the literature, the high proportion in managerial occupations (such as Pakistani/Bangladeshi and Chinese) can be related to self-employed women rather than women in senior roles in employment.  

The graphic below shows the NS-SeC (National Statistics Socio-economic Classification) of women aged 16 and over by ethnicity.  

---

160 Census 2011 through NOMIS; January 2019. It is important to bear in mind that the population in the ethnic groups are small.
The graphic shows that women from Indian ethnic groups are better represented in higher and lower managerial occupations. The economic inactivity and long-term unemployment is higher among women from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black African/Caribbean/British ethnic backgrounds.

The graphic below shows the NS-SeC for males by ethnicity.\textsuperscript{161}

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid.
As the graphic shows, the proportion of men from Indian ethnic backgrounds is higher than other ethnic groups. Managerial occupations are lower among men from Bangladeshi backgrounds. The graphic also shows that, compared to women, economic inactivity and unemployment is higher among Black/Black British and Mixed Ethnic group males.
The below graphic shows the proportion of people who have never worked and the long-term unemployed by gender and ethnicity.\textsuperscript{162}

![Proportion of people never worked or long-term unemployed by gender and ethnicity]

As the graphic shows, the proportion of women who have never worked is higher than the proportion of men who have never worked for every ethnic group.

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.
### 4.4.4. Occupation by religion by sex by age

#### Women's occupations by religion (aged 16+)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Type</th>
<th>All categories</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Other religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial Occ.</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; Technical Occ.</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>30.7%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative &amp; Secretarial Occ.</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring, Leisure and Service Occ.</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Customer Service Occ.</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Occ.</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Occ.</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures\(^{163}\) above demonstrate that almost in every religious group, women are most represented in the professional and technical occupations. Only Sikhs are more represented in managerial occupations, and again, this could be related to the proportion of self-employed women in this group.

### 4.5. Poverty by ethnicity

Compared to their white counterparts, BAME households are at greater risk of being in relative income poverty. Overall, 23% of all households in Wales are at risk of relative income poverty.\(^{164}\) The graphic below shows the risk of being in relative income poverty by ethnicity. 39% of the households with a non-white household reference person are in relative income poverty, compared to the 23% of households with a reference person from white background.

---

\(^{163}\) Ibid.

The figures also show that the risk of relative income poverty in non-white households is decreasing sharply by multi-year periods. For white ethnic groups, the risk of being in relative income poverty for working age adults is 23% for the periods 2016 and 2017 whereas, for the non-white working age adults, figures for these periods are 42% and 36%.165

Children’s poverty rates by ethnic groups highlight worrying figures; in the period covering the years from 2011-16 children’s poverty in Wales for all households was 30%, of which 91% are from white ethnic groups, and 9% are from non-white ethnic groups.166 The proportion of children within the given non-white ethnic groups at risk of being in relative income poverty is 62%, whereas the proportion for children from white ethnic backgrounds is 29%. These figures demonstrate that a worrying number of children from non-white households are in relative income poverty, or at risk of experiencing relative income poverty.167

---


167 Ibid.
The statistics shows us that employment in Wales (and in the UK) is not only gendered but also ethnically segregated. BAME women are more likely to be unemployed, have trouble finding a job, and more likely to be economically inactive.

The significant diversity of different BAME groups must be acknowledged as the figures demonstrate that women from different ethnic groups experience different levels of engagement in economy. BAME women’s experiences in employment can vary based on ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, social capital and geography. The figures show that these differences must be considered in order to understand the barriers and areas that need policy interventions.

The figures also highlight that Wales has a particular issue with BAME women’s economic engagement. The unemployment and economic inactivity rates for BAME women in Wales is significantly and consistently higher than the UK average and there is big gap between the figures for BAME women and their white counterparts. Unemployment and economic inactivity among Muslim Women in particular is higher than their counterparts, which need further investigation. It is clear that there is a need for further Welsh aggregated data, as the picture is very different in Wales and requires different, specific interventions. The Welsh Government Statistics and Research department might consider different means of collecting data including improving regional geographical focus in collecting data.

In general, the majority of BAME women work in traditional female dominated industries, particularly the health, social care and retail sectors. Manufacturing work is common among White Other ethnic groups as they are likely to work in factories. The figures also show that rates of BAME women are higher in professional and technical occupations, which might be also related to self-employment rates.

### 4.6. Conclusion

The statistics shows us that employment in Wales (and in the UK) is not only gendered but also ethnically segregated. BAME women are more likely to be unemployed, have trouble finding a job, and more likely to be economically inactive.

The significant diversity of different BAME groups must be acknowledged as the figures demonstrate that women from different ethnic groups experience different levels of engagement in economy. BAME women’s experiences in employment can vary based on ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, social capital and geography. The figures show that these differences must be considered in order to understand the barriers and areas that need policy interventions.

The figures also highlight that Wales has a particular issue with BAME women’s economic engagement. The unemployment and economic inactivity rates for BAME women in Wales is significantly and consistently higher than the UK average and there is big gap between the figures for BAME women and their white counterparts. Unemployment and economic inactivity among Muslim Women in particular is higher than their counterparts, which need further investigation. It is clear that there is a need for further Welsh aggregated data, as the picture is very different in Wales and requires different, specific interventions. The Welsh Government Statistics and Research department might consider different means of collecting data including improving regional geographical focus in collecting data.

In general, the majority of BAME women work in traditional female dominated industries, particularly the health, social care and retail sectors. Manufacturing work is common among White Other ethnic groups as they are likely to work in factories. The figures also show that rates of BAME women are higher in professional and technical occupations, which might be also related to self-employment rates.
The figures demonstrate that there is an appetite among BAME women to take-up self-employment as the rates of self-employment are higher among BAME women in comparison to their white counterparts.

Ethnic minority households are more likely to be in poverty and child poverty is significantly higher among BAME population.
5. Barriers experienced by BAME Women in the Welsh Economy

As the statistics demonstrate, BAME women are more likely to be unemployed and economically inactive than their white counterparts and BAME men. Research shows that BAME women in the UK are disadvantaged in the labour market, exposed to both gender and race inequalities, and face barriers to their career advancement and progression. The Chief Executive Officer of Race Council Cymru, Uzo Iwobi (OBE) described the experiences of BAME women as like a ‘triple glazed’ glass ceiling:

They talk about a glass ceiling [for women]. I talk about it [for BAME women] double glazed, triple glazed, black glass ceiling, which is even more difficult to break through.

Even though many of the experiences of BAME women in Wales resonate with the experiences of BAME women elsewhere in the UK, there are some differences between Wales and the rest of the UK that need to be discussed in order to develop effective, Welsh-specific policies. The statistics show that the employment rates of BAME women in Wales are lower than the UK average and BAME women in Wales are more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive. However, there is limited insight about the reasons behind the statistics, why the experiences of BAME women in Wales differ, and how BAME women in Wales think we should be tackling these barriers.

In the rest of the report, we will discuss the barriers experienced by BAME women to participating in the Welsh economy and how they can be overcome by voicing the observations, experiences and work of the organisations who work with and support BAME women in Wales. The first part of the discussion based on the qualitative data will focus on the barriers to and experiences of BAME women in entering the labour market, employment and self-employment. The second part, Chapter 6, will discuss the changes BAME women want to see, according to our research participants.

Before we examine the differentiated experiences of BAME women’s participation in the economy in Wales, it should be noted that many barriers experienced by women generally are ultimately shared and are still a significant factor in shaping the experiences of BAME women. First and foremost, childcare (and other caring) responsibilities were stressed as a major barrier to BAME women in participating in the economy and public life. Childcare responsibilities in particular might present a stronger barrier to BAME women’s career development and progression for several reasons:

- In some BAME communities, the caring role for women is traditionally stronger. Women become full-time careers to look after children without being provided with external support.
- Evidence shows that BAME women are more likely to be living with dependent children and in large families.
- Lack of support from extended family with childcare is a critical issue particularly for migrant families. Many women do not have the social and family network to ask for support with childcare.
• Unaffordable childcare hits BAME women harder, since, as statistics show, BAME households are more likely to be in relative income poverty and BAME individuals in employment are concentrated in low-paid occupations. Thus, even though they have access to the early foundational phase of education and childcare support, their access to out-of-school childcare services is likely to be limited.

• Many public services (such as ESOL classes) and support programmes which have the potential to enable BAME women develop their skills and help them with their day-to-day activities, lack childcare support facilities such as crèches, which can prevent BAME women accessing these services and activities.

The barriers faced by women in general are more complex for BAME women due to the accumulating and intersecting inequalities they experience. It is also important to note that the barriers we will discuss below affect different ethnic groups to varying extents, or according to personal circumstances, and are not applicable to everyone. This section will highlight some of the intersectional factors highlighted by research participants, which affect BAME women’s experiences in Wales.

5.1. Factors compounding the barriers to BAME women

As discussed in the literature review, intersectional factors, such as ethnicity, age, nationality, immigration status, and other factors such as geography and class affect the formation of women’s experiences. This intersectionality, and the diversity within BAME communities in Wales, was emphasised strongly and consistently throughout our research.

5.1.1. Ethnicity and religion

Faith should be one of the key factors of equality and diversity discussions alongside ethnicity and race, particularly the discrimination against Muslim women, which was raised to a greater extent by research participants. The majority of research participants voiced rising Islamophobia as a serious concern and risk to BAME communities. As one of the research participants reminded us, in the contemporary political environment “Islamophobia is seen as the new racism of the present”\(^{168}\). It was highlighted that Muslim women of colour experience triple discrimination at a minimum, based on their faith, gender and colour.\(^{169}\)

5.1.2. Age

The barriers that BAME women from the younger generations experience differ to the experiences of older generations, which means that these groups tackle the barriers they face in different ways.

\(^{168}\) Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND)/Muslim Council Wales interviews.

\(^{169}\) Women Connect First, Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS)/Trade Union Congress (TUC), MEND/Muslim Council Wales interviews.
According to research participants, younger generation BAME women are more resilient and confident; they adapt better to the conditions they experience and often have more qualifications. The greater confidence of younger BAME women, particularly those born and raised in Britain, makes them more vocal about the barriers that they experience. Participants also highlighted that the younger generation has adapted to life in Britain and they are more capable of coping with the problems they face.

The participant from the Ethnic Minority Welsh Women Achievement Association (EMWWAA) explained the differences between younger and older generations:

BAME women have, particularly of my generation, suffered from lack of confidence. Also they're not very good with communication skills, and those two things could also be barriers in employment. (...) [The younger generation] have confidence, they have excellent communication skills, and they do not speak with this accent so they don't have language barriers. Their skin colour may look different but they dress up like European people. (...) But, [still] they cannot change their inherited appearance.

Older generations are also more likely to be isolated under the burden of the household responsibilities. As one of the research participants said, the younger generation is much more outgoing and their attitude towards household responsibilities is changing:

The middle aged women, the ones who didn’t get the further education and just focused on bringing up the children as it is their culture, are the ones, I think, that face the most barriers, because they haven't learned to be outspoken. May be they can’t... Their English is not very good, and they've kind of relied on the husband because that's the way the culture is. It’s that middle band that concerns me because of the underlying issues of isolation which can lead to mental health issues.¹⁷⁰

The decisive factors leading to divergence between the younger and the older generations and that differentiate their experiences in the labour market are: levels of confidence, language proficiency, access to education and training, and access to wider social networks. As these issues affect the economic activity of BAME women, age is a critical factor to be included in an intersectional approach to tackling barriers.

5.1.3. Nationality and immigration status

Barriers faced by BAME women also vary according to nationality and immigration status. Nationality and immigration status identifies not only working rights but also access to the welfare system and social services.¹⁷¹ The differentiated experiences of migrants from European Countries, overseas, as well as refugees and asylum seekers, exemplify this.

¹⁷⁰ Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team (EYST) 1 interview.
¹⁷¹ No recourse to public funds is a condition imposed on someone due to their immigration status. If someone is subject to immigration control, they will have no recourse to public funds – this means that while they might have a permit that allows them to live in the UK, they have no access to benefits, tax credits or housing assistance that are paid by the state.
Experiences also differ between refugees and asylum seekers, and within different refugee groups. For example, in the scope of the Syrian Resettlement Programme, Syrian refugee families are given support and often appointed a caseworker, which helps families with their resettlement. However, such support is often not available for refugees from other countries and asylum seekers. The latter group in particular are only left with the support of the voluntary sector if it is available. Asylum seekers do not have the right to work until they attain their refugee status, and they do not have access to public services, such as childcare offers.

5.1.4. Geographical differences

The accessibility of services in different areas of Wales is also varied, therefore BAME women across Wales can’t all access the same support. Both public and voluntary services are concentrated in South Wales, with other parts of Wales less resourced. This disparity is again well observed in the case of refugees and asylum seekers.

Cardiff is a capital city; it’s relatively well resourced in terms of colleges, in terms of free English classes, in terms of volunteering opportunities, employment opportunities. Whereas all the areas that I have been working in, are all convergence areas. They are areas of low GDP, relatively low economic activity... In places like Rhondda Cynon Taff and Port Talbot, you have got some employers but they are really quite deprived parts of Wales. So the challenges for women in these areas, some are similar I would say, and some are different. (...) There are huge challenges to just resettling, because all of these local authorities have only resettled a handful of families each. So you have just got maybe three families in an area that is already deprived, that doesn’t have a huge migrant population, so doesn’t have any migrant organisation...

Developing social networks, access to training (including English classes) and public and voluntary support with finding a job are varied between different geographical settings, depending on the resources and social capital in a local authority.

5.1.5. Educational background and social capital

Family relationships, education level, and ability to access social and family networks affect the experiences of BAME women in employment. Women with better access to education and social networks can be more confident about accessing the labour market.

Particularly for migrant and refugee women, a lack of social networks and social capital is a critical barrier. It does not only affect entering the labour market, but it affects accessing the support programmes, training and other opportunities, as social networks are one of the most important

---

172 Due to the Syrian war and the extensive number of people displaced, UK government developed a programme called Syrian Resettlement Programme to which Welsh local authorities has signed up.
173 Refugee Council Wales, Displaced People in Action interviews.
174 Refugee Council Wales interview
175 Refugee Council Wales interview
176 Portuguese speaking community rep, SiemaBizz, Refugee Council Wales, EYST 2 interviews.
mediums for finding out about and accessing opportunities. This also extends to accessing public services including benefits, childcare and health services.  

5.2. Bias and discrimination

As discussed in the literature review, one of the most perilous barriers experienced by BAME women is the bias, discrimination, harassment and racism that affect not only their participation in the economy but also their day-to-day life and wellbeing. Reported cases related to discrimination and racism in Wales are increasing and this topic was widely discussed by research participants. Particularly after the EU referendum in 2016, hate crimes against BAME individuals have seen a significant rise. In North Wales, after the referendum, shops and cafés of Portuguese and Polish communities were targeted:

I remember that the next day of the referendum, I reported four different cases of hate incidents. (...) They broke the chairs [in the Portuguese café]. I wasn’t there, I didn’t see it but that was reported, and we told the police this is not going to stop. Very luckily, we had a lot of support from North Wales police in Wrexham. They are normally here, having coffee, in and out all day and they do that in every Portuguese shop.

Research participants told us that they faced shouts of “go back to your country” regardless of their colour, nationality and citizenship. The CEO of the Race Council Cymru said people are still shocked if they hear that she still faces everyday racism in her daily life:

Every single day people say, go back to your country. People say, you’re not wanted here, you live in the jungle, go back to the jungle where you came from, you come here to take our jobs and our money. I say, actually, the British came to Nigeria first, colonised Nigeria and made us part of the Commonwealth. I am here because you came. And this is my home, I’m sorry, I’m not going to go anywhere.

The participant from the Polish community also told a similar story:

I myself face some really hateful comments of White British people; swearing at me and telling me to go back home because I don’t deserve to be here. However, this is my home now, I’ve been living here for the past 11 years. I’m quite flexible and I don’t feel offended by these comments, however, this is not nice anyway because I don’t think there is a greater right of living in any country.

The discrimination experienced by Muslims in particular was emphasised widely in our research, as Islamophobia is viewed as one of the most harmful types of racism in the current political climate. One of the Muslim research participants, who has been personally targeted by far right groups, emphasises that Islamophobia is a type of racism that has a severely harmful impact on individuals as well as on social relations, and is recognised as such by the All Party Parliamentary Group.

177 Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust interviews.
179 Portuguese speaking community rep interview.
180 Race Council Cymru interview.
181 Siema Biz Forum interview.
182 MEND interview.
defines. However, even though attacks on Muslim women are increasing, there is no accepted definition of Islamophobia and many cases of abuse and harassment remain unreported and under-investigated.

Our research participant tells us that people who conduct Islamophobic attacks do not want to see Muslim women participating in public life:

> What I realised [is] that both DAESH [the so-called Islamic State] and Henry Jackson Society [a far right group] like, the last thing they want to see is a Muslim woman participating in public life. All they want from me is to stay in the kitchen. And I’m not like this! I will never stay in the kitchen! I think that’s what motivates me. If that’s what they want to achieve, then I will participate even more in public life and I will get more women to do that, to normalise the presence of women in the public sphere, especially the political sphere, because otherwise they just get excluded from it. For me, it’s a form of institutionalised Islamophobia, when you exclude Muslims from public life and you label them extremist, and that’s the problem.

Participants consistently raised the way that bias and discrimination can be subtle, and this makes it difficult to tackle or report, even where policies to prevent discrimination are in place. As the participant from EMWWAA says; “There are some rules and laws in place actually so they [people in the workplace] are careful about it. But having said that, still there is subtle discrimination and it does not leave any evidence”.

Participants also noted that channels to report hate crime, harassment and discrimination are not clear and visible either in police forces or in workplaces and there is a lack of secure, supportive reporting mechanisms that will allow women to come forward. In many cases, victims of discrimination, harassment and hate crime rely on the services and support of third sector organisations, but if they do not have access to these support networks, it becomes much more challenging to report incidents. Research participants highlighted that more training in workplaces and even in police forces is needed, and reporting mechanisms should be made clearer and more visible to all women.

183 Recently, the All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims presented the results of the inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia to the UK government which calls for recognition of Islamophobia as a racist act: “Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.” ([APPG on British Muslims (2019), Report on the inquiry into A working definition of Islamophobia / anti-Muslim hatred](https://www.appgforbritishmuslims.org.uk/)
184 The APPG definition was proposed in November 2018 and has since been adopted by the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru and the London mayor’s office. However, in a letter to the prime minister, the head of the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) said they have some concerns about the definition and the change could “undermine many elements of counterterrorism powers and policies” and they are also concerned about “free speech”. APPG and Muslim groups reject these claims and have called for the UK Government to accept the definition of Islamophobia. However, the Government continues to reject it. ([Independent, 15.05.2019, Proposed Islamophobia definition ‘would undermine counterterror operations and threaten free speech’, police tell prime minister. BBC, 15.05.2019, Government rejects Islamophobia definition ahead of debate](https://www.independent.co.uk/)
185 MEND Interview.
186 Ibid.
187 MEND, CACV, EYST 1, PCS/TUC, Race Equality First, Race Council Cymru and Focus Group on 15.05.2019.
188 Focus Group on 15.05.2019
It was also emphasised that BAME women are less likely to come out and report hate crime and incidents of harassment and discrimination.\(^{189}\) The research participant from Race Equality First, a third sector organisation tackling racism and hate crime in Wales and England, highlighted that although BAME women face bias and discrimination in their everyday life, they tend not to come forward to report it:

BAME women in particular, there aren’t as many that’ll come forward. (...) Women are more hesitant to come forward, they’re the ones that will live with it and accept it. I think some of them kind of, what the attitude tends to be, not just in women but in men as well, sometimes from certain ethnic minority groups is that they think that they are a minority in this country and it’s to be expected and just shrug it off.\(^{190}\)

There are different factors which affect whether or not BAME women decide to come forward and report an incident; such as being scared of losing their jobs, a lack of knowledge of how to report incidents, a lack of support networks and courage and confidence. Failing to deal with incidents of harassment and discrimination could result in BAME women internalising the abuse and this having an impact on their mental health and well-being. A research participant who had been involved in a bullying case surrounding a BAME woman told us that it was the husband who approached her, not the victim herself:

This was a cleaning, canteen job and the woman was being treated really badly and it was affecting her mental health, which in turn, she was telling her husband. And it was the husband who came in to speak to me because he knew me, and he said “will you speak to my wife as she doesn’t like to complain?”\(^{191}\)

The research participant from Race Equality First also highlighted that there are differences between British born ethnic minorities and migrants in reporting discrimination and hate crime:

British born ethnic minorities obviously know about their rights and they’ll fight them a bit more than those who are immigrant and maybe those who’ve got accents or migrants even, they won’t fight it as much. Some of them will; you can’t just brush across the whole of the community group. (...) You’ll find that, we do have a number of Polish people and European migrants as well that’ll come to us. They’re just fed up and really sick and tired of the way they’ve been treated.\(^{192}\)

Similarly, a research participant from the Chinese Community in Wales pointed out that, in their community, discrimination is mostly internalised.\(^{193}\)

In the Chinese community, we think we are not good enough, rather than challenging the organisation. Because we are immigrants. We think it’s our problem, rather than the organisation discriminating... If you don’t dig into it, I can’t say they didn’t hire my people because they are Chinese, other people got the job. If you ask me whether there’s a

\(^{189}\) EYST 1, Portuguese Speaking Community, MEND, Race Equality First interviews.

\(^{190}\) Race Equality First interview

\(^{191}\) EYST 1 interview

\(^{192}\) Race Equality First interview

\(^{193}\) Chinese Association in Wales interview.
discrimination or race inequality issue coming up in the employment market, maybe... But, I definitely can say, in our community, we generally do not feel confident.

Many BAME women experience gender and race inequality, discrimination and harassment in everyday life and participating in the economy. Regarding the bias, discrimination and racism they experience in their professional life, we looked at two important stages of their journey: Entry to work, and retaining work and career progression.

5.2.1. Entry to work

Our research participants agreed with the findings discussed in the literature review about how non-anonymised job applications and non-blind application processes reveal the bias within recruitment practices, and result in discrimination against BAME women, preventing them from being able to access work. As the participant from EMWWAA remarked; “Your surname gives away the religion, the background, the culture. That is the biggest factor [which causes bias]. People are pre-biased, prejudiced about it.”

The personal experience of one research participant reveals the layers of discrimination that BAME women face in recruitment processes:

I stated my experiences in my CV, my degree, my Masters and obviously, a lot of the information in my CV is related to the Muslim community. Because I worked with them, I taught the Arabic language, I taught the Quran and I was involved in the Islamic society, and was invested in it. I put a long list of that, and I wasn’t getting anywhere. Then, I put my CV to one of my mentors who is Hindu, and asked for her advice, and she said to me "Look, I share your problem, because I am a woman of faith... your CV will not get anywhere because it's too Islamic". So, I had to remove everything Islamic from it. Instead of saying that I worked for the Muslim community, I worked for the local community. I wasn’t lying, certainly paraphrasing, so I can get somewhere. Apprehensively, I wasn’t happy, but I did it. It wasn’t right but I needed to get a job and I straight away got shortlisted. It shows you the biased subconscious people might have. I was shortlisted, I went for the interview, and then, I remember in the panel there were two white individuals, and one Muslim woman of colour, and I can't explain how relieved I was when I saw the Muslim woman there. It's like finally, someone like me, or who looks like me is there, right? They can create balance on the panel discussion. And I got the job indeed, I was wearing the face veil, so I didn’t have to take it off or anything, but then I was told later that the white man on the panel didn't want me actually. So, the white woman and the Muslim woman, they had to challenge the white man on the panel for me to be accepted and get the job. Other women do face misogyny in the workplace, they face discrimination, and it was good to see their collaborative work to get the job.\(^{194}\)

Even though the applicant was eventually successful, this account suggests unconscious bias likely affected the decision-making of the interview panel. This experience resonates with the experiences of other research participants, although some of these highlight that it is not possible in many cases...
to ascertain whether and to what extent bias played a role in the decision of interview the panel, and hence whether BAME candidates were discriminated against.\textsuperscript{195}

A number of research participants remarked that the low levels of success in securing a quality job in Wales cause a “brain drain” in Wales.\textsuperscript{196} They are concerned that young BAME people are leaving Wales to find secure, high quality jobs in which they feel welcome and can make progress. Participants acknowledge that it is not easy to find a job in Wales and there is a perception that young people have a better chance in England. However, they argue that the main problem is not the lack of job opportunities but the discrimination that BAME individuals experience in the Welsh labour market:

I think even for the younger generation, the barriers to boys or girls, really put them off when these people have graduated and are unemployed. Either driving a taxi or doing other lower paid jobs.\textsuperscript{197}

Wales is losing its skill pool and human resource as the younger, educated BAME generation emigrate.

\textbf{5.2.2. Retaining work and career progression}

Discrimination against BAME women does not only affect them when entering the labour market, but also in terms of retaining and progressing within their role. Research participants commonly observed that BAME women’s skills and experiences are overlooked and they often work in jobs that don’t match, or underutilise, their skills.

As mentioned, subtle racism and unconscious bias persist despite existing equality and diversity policies. Individuals don’t feel empowered or equipped to challenge behaviour or make the most of their rights, which create difficult working conditions for BAME women, and additional barriers to career progression. Not only does this affect individuals personally, but it also has an impact on workplace trust and collegiality. Our participant from Race Equality First highlighted that bias and discrimination from people in senior positions within the workplace are least likely to be reported:

Those in senior positions are the ones that are least likely to be addressed, because, I suppose, they [employees] feel like it’s going to have an impact on their career. They need seniors to notice them and to like them, and want to promote them and help them with their careers. If they actually created a problem for their employer, irrespective of the fact that they’ve been discriminated against, possibly by a peer, and very often even by senior people, in the past with promotion (...) they’re treated like that but they will still I suppose have the hope that they’ll still continue with their career, they’re going to be promoted at some point, and that they need not to create a fuss or attract attention. I think they also fear that it’s not in that organisation that they’re working but within the whole field of work.\textsuperscript{198}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{195} Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), Sub-Saharan Advisory panel (SSAP), EYST 1 interview.
  \item \textsuperscript{196} Chinese Association in Wales, Race Council Cymru, CAVC, PCS/TUC, Hayaat Women Trust, SSAP interviews.
  \item \textsuperscript{197} Hayaat Women Trust interview.
  \item \textsuperscript{198} Race Equality First interview.
\end{itemize}
Another participant told us about a personal experience revealing insidious racism and bias within a diverse workforce:

I left the hospital and I saw two teenagers trying to steal a bike from the hospital site. I stood against them and said, “You’ve got to leave the bikes, they are not yours, just go away, otherwise I’ll call the police”. As soon as I said that, they said, “you are a f***ing Muslim, go back to your country”... All of those kinds of things, and it was very stressful. I was literally thinking “gosh they’re physically going to beat me up now”. But then, one of my lab colleagues left work at the same time and was passing by, she stood by me, she protected me, she made sure that I was ok, and she provided a statement to the police about what she witnessed, which was amazing. I was really thankful. And then what happened, this is insidious racism, the police wanted to take a statement from me, they came to the work place the next day, in a full uniform, asking for me at the reception. And coincidentally, the Nice attacks in France happened around that period. So, my friends, my lab colleagues, saw the police in uniform, asking for me, they thought it was something to do with terrorism! It’s not because they wanted a statement of what happened the day before. And the fact that I had to explain myself, and tell them I had nothing to do with terrorism, let alone with the Nice attack! It was, by all means painful, because they were my lab colleagues, I share space with them, I couldn’t believe for the life of me that they thought I could be that person!

The limited career options and opportunities in Wales and a lack of diversity in the workplace were raised by research participants as a factor of continuous subtle discrimination and a result of slow progress in Wales. Lack of diversity in the workforce alienates BAME individuals, particularly women, and restricts their career aspirations. The Chair of PCS/TUC Wales told us that even though she was born and bred in Cardiff, had she not moved and worked in London for nine years, she would have never been where she is at the present. A similar story was told by another participant about her daughter, who was also born and brought up in Cardiff and had a relatively privileged education but could not find a job in Wales after her Masters degree and moved to London. Now working in an organisation with many people from BAME backgrounds at different levels of the organisation, she indicated to her mother that she feels safe and secure, which is having a positive impact on her career aspirations.

5.2.3. Exploitation

A serious problem voiced by participants, which BAME women – migrant and refugee workers in particular – experience in the workplace, is exploitation. The urgent need for an income and difficulty getting into a job due to previously cited reasons push some workers into precarious and exploitative work. Due to individuals’ fear of losing out on job opportunities, exploitation can become more systematic and difficult to challenge, particularly for migrant workers who are even more vulnerable in the labour market. A research participant working with migrant communities in North Wales told us about her experience of exploitation in a laundry firm:

There is this shift pattern... It starts at 6 o’clock, finishes at 2pm. All the British workers go home, but they force the rest to stay. They simply say, if you don’t stay, don’t come tomorrow. There are people who do two shifts, and some of these people are over 60. They

---

199 MEND interview.

200 CAVC, PCS/TUC, Hayaat Women Trust, SSAP, Race Equality First interviews.
are still working because they need the money, or because of their family, they need financial security. And the police know this, working with solicitors but it is very difficult to do anything about it because there isn’t any legal access…. Police matter, legal help matters...There isn't any legal aid for this at all.201

Similar cases were also put forward by research participants from organisations supporting refugees.202 They mentioned concerns that refugees, particularly those working on a contract-basis, are not treated equally in the workplace in terms of workload and hours; however, because of the fear of losing their jobs, they are hesitant to raise these issues with their employers.

Research participants also underlined that recruitment agencies can play a part in the exploitative system, particularly in the case of the recruitment of migrant workers. Some recruitment agencies recruit people in their country based on false promises about the work and working conditions in Britain:

Agencies have the external offices back in our country so they recruit people in Poland and these people have promised work, loads of hours, also accommodation, the right to work in terms of National Insurance number. And they're coming here and often they face a really hard reality, often end up homeless.203

A research participant working with the Portuguese speaking community in North Wales told us her experience when she arrived in the UK 18 years ago. She had been promised a placement in a supermarket in London by the recruitment agency but she woke up in Wrexham at the end of her journey:

P: As soon as we arrived [in London], there was a bus there. It was 50 of us. And they start dropping people on the way, but they even didn't stop for 10 min in London. The bus went for 6 hours, then we stopped to go to the toilet, but I didn't have a clue where we were. When I woke up the next day, I was like... where am I?

I: Did you complain to the recruitment agency?

P: I did. But they send me a letter saying they don't know me! (...) They don't need me anymore.204

Immediately after she had the letter from the recruitment agency, she decided to move on: “I remember that I saw an old lady in front of the bank and asked her if she know where the job centre is.”

Recruitment agencies’ exploitative attitudes might continue in Britain even though migrant workers have settled. A research participant working with the Polish community in North Wales said that workers finding jobs, particularly on zero-hours contracts, might experience exploitation from the recruitment agencies:

201 Portuguese Speaking Community Rep interview.
202 Refugee Council Wales, DPIA interviews.
203 Siema Biz Forum interview
204 Portuguese Speaking Community interview.
There are some factories with their internal agencies where people, when they refuse to go to work, they're banned for like three weeks of no work! How can we survive if we're on weekly wages, on weekly pay? And when you're offered a job you've got a choice but then you have no choice because if you refuse to come to work you will not get a work in the same workplace for the next three weeks.  

The lack of knowledge about their employment rights, lack of support networks, and lack of access to legal advice and trade unions make migrant workers considerably more vulnerable in the workplace. Even though trade unions can help with these issues, unionisation is not common among BAME women, and particularly among migrant workers.

Trade union membership among BAME workers, migrant workers in particular, is challenging as workers face obstacles such as fear of losing their jobs, working on precarious zero-hours contracts, and the discriminatory attitudes of employers. One of the research participants, who was tackling the exploitative working conditions in a factory in North Wales told us that she tried to sign up the migrant workers to a trade union but they were aggressed by security staff, whilst the employer threatened to lay off migrant workers for joining.

5.2.4. Strategies to overcome discrimination

BAME women develop a number of strategies to overcome the problems caused by bias and discrimination, enabling them to become more resilient and continue their career development. These strategies are common and are often based on personal compromise rather than developed collectively.

In order to overcome the problems that come with submitting non-blind CVs with a job application and revealing the ethnic identity of applicants, many women change their names and make amendments to their résumés to be shortlisted. A research participant from EYST told us one of her client’s experiences:

This girl, she’s got a degree and everything, but there were no jobs available... so, she went for [a job] in the department store in town and she filled in an application form, didn’t get an interview. What she decided to do was reapply when it come up again, and changed her surname. She changed her surname to an English sounding surname and she got an interview. She went along with the interview, she took her headdress off and got the job! And couple of weeks into the job, she put her headdress back on and they were fine.

The compromises occur more often when women are in the early stages of their career, lack confidence and do not have access to support that would enable them to challenge the barrier. One of the participants, who achieved a distinguished career and retired as an academic told us she had to make compromises in the early stages of her career, and she feels that sometimes making compromises can be a strategy that improves the resilience of BAME women: “How much can you

205 Siema Biz Forum interview.
206 PCS/TUC interview.
207 Portuguese Speaking Community rep and PCS/TUC Interviews.
208 Portuguese Speaking Community rep interview.
209 EYST 1 interview.
challenge? It is overwhelming because you can’t keep on challenging all the time! You just have to say, ‘okay, what is more comfortable for me right now?’”

She also told us that she has chosen not to challenge on some occasions, as a means to achieve her career goals:

I've always worn sari and I've been to many international conferences where I found, oh my God, I'm the only BAME person there. I used to go in my saris, and I stood out completely because, in the science, in genetics you will not find many women, many BAME women and for a woman to be in sari… That is very rare. Now if I'm travelling to America, I don't take saris with me I wear trousers, because I feel more comfortable in integrating with people because I don't stand out. I didn’t have to change but I was not confident enough. If I was confident enough, I would say I don’t care, this is my national dress and I will wear it regardless. Whether people like it or whether people make joke of me or whether people look at me as a stranger actually, I don’t care. If you have that confidence then it’s fine, but many people do not have that confidence.

This is not to suggest that BAME women need to make compromises or back down; rather, it is about acknowledging the discomfiting experience and easing the situation to empower further struggle. Almost all of the research participants, who support BAME women in different phases of their career and often became role models themselves, told us that it is not always possible to have a collective response to tackling the insidious barriers to BAME women’s employment and sometimes compromises become unavoidable.

The other strategy that BAME women follow is to utilise all career development opportunities that become available and to have qualifications. Access to higher education and continuous personal development are ways that BAME women ensure they can achieve career progression.211 One of the participants said, “We deeply think, that we [Muslim women] cannot survive without a degree or a Masters. There is no way for us to get anywhere, so that’s why we strive to have access to higher education.”212

Another participant also underlined that BAME women need to demonstrate their proficiency in their field: “They have to strive hard to demonstrate that they are worthy of these positions.”213

The participant from EYST also highlighted that education helps women to understand their rights, empowers them and gives them access to networks:

When they are educated, they become empowered. And they have an understanding of their rights and they also have an understanding of what constitutes good and bad treatment, you know, as in partners, husbands, etc. Education is the key factor underpinning all of the issues in my view. If we had education as a flat line, as the basis on which to start, then we may not have so many issues as we do, because it means that women are able to access services, because they understand what the services do. Not just that, when they have an education,

---

210 EMWWAAA interview.
211 Race Council Cymru, EYST1, NTFW and MEND interviews.
212 MEND and Muslim Council Wales interview.
213 National Training Federation for Wales (NTFW) interview.
it exposes them to other community groups and so they can make friends and the social network is a key factor in emotional health and wellbeing.\textsuperscript{214}

Although bias still persists, the level of discrimination against BAME women in the workplace and labour market eases once they progress and achieve in their careers, and hence become more resilient.\textsuperscript{215} Being accepted as successful in their profession is a challenging and exhausting process for BAME women, but once they achieve a name in their field and they have a chance to demonstrate expertise, the discrimination that they are exposed to is alleviated, at least in their professional environment. As one of the research participants said “in order to be accepted by people I really had to struggle. I had to work very hard, I had to work probably twice as hard as anybody. (...) now, in my profession, there is no barrier [to me]”.\textsuperscript{216}

Organisations and people working with BAME groups become intermediaries between individuals and their working environment, particularly in cases where a person fails to make a formal complaint in the workplace on account of their insecurity and vulnerability. As these organisations and individuals are trusted, vulnerable workers who are exposed to discrimination can share their experience in confidence with them. In turn, these intermediaries often become the mouthpiece of disadvantaged BAME employees.

To tackle exploitation, particularly in workplaces with a weak trade union presence, workers often stand together as a community, and workers who are more experienced and have better communication skills step forward to support those who are less resilient. For example, one of the members of the Portuguese speaking community told us of her experience whereby groups speaking the same language stand together in the workplace to overcome language barriers:\textsuperscript{217}

Because my English was a bit better than my colleagues, they put me like managing the entire line... Every time something happened, they would come to me, and I would tell the rest of the people working there what they were supposed to do, or not to do. They kind of use the people who speak better than others [to sort out problems].

These strategies help BAME women to cope with the problem in the short term. However, many research participants agreed that bias and discrimination are structural and institutional, and need collective, long-term responses.

\textsuperscript{214} EYST 1 interview
\textsuperscript{215} EMWWAAA, PCS/TUC, MEND interviews.
\textsuperscript{216} EMWWAAA interview
\textsuperscript{217} Portuguese Community rep interview.
5.3. **Lack of language proficiency, professional qualification and experience; difficulty in accessing training and under-utilisation of skills in the labour market**

5.3.1. **Language proficiency**

English language proficiency was mentioned by all the research participants as one of the most common and significant barrier to BAME women who were born and mostly educated outside the UK.

Language proficiency does not only create a barrier in relation to labour market participation, it also becomes a barrier in accessing support programmes and social services, and in navigating the system. For example, many BAME women, particularly migrants, refugees and older aged women, experience difficulties in understanding the benefit system, health services and education in Wales, which mostly makes them dependant on other people and organisations.

The research participants frequently remarked on the difficulties that BAME women experience in accessing social support and welfare benefits, due to their lack of language ability and limited knowledge of intricacies of the system. As the research participant from Women Connect First commented:

> Because of the lack of communication or lack of reading English or communicating in English, when they get these [official] letters, they don't understand... They either throw [them away], or they don't know what to do with it. They have to find someone to read it. Family members are not available all the time; as they grow up, their children have their own families... [Women were dependent on their home] because of social restrictions, they weren't allowed to go out; so the husbands either desert them or separate or divorce. Or the husband is disabled at this age, he needs caring for. So, it is their [women's] job to go out now to answer letters, do payments etc. And this is where they are struggling.

The difficulties that many BAME women experience with the social and welfare systems on account of language barriers are compounded by the increasing complexity of the policies and application procedures, which – as in the case of online applications to universal credit – become increasingly difficult to navigate. 218

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes are the main sources of learning English for BAME individuals. However, access to ESOL classes is not easy for many people. First, while the demand for ESOL classes is increasing, supply has not been able to keep up with demand due to the introduction of austerity measures in 2011, which have had a significant negative impact on ESOL class provision throughout the UK, including Wales. 219 Either the number of ESOL classes has fallen

---

218 EYST 1, Women Connect First, Haayaat Women Trust, SSAP, Refugee Council Wales, Chinese Association in Wales.

219 Austerity measures in English language classes for migrants were taken into agenda during the Coalition Government led by David Cameron. 2011 onwards, Cameron announced sharp cuts in the budget of ESOL classes. (For more information, see “Job anguish for immigrants as English language courses face cuts”
or the providers have restructured the way they deliver the services. Organisations like Cardiff and Vale College have protected funding for ESOL classes, but needed to reform the way the classes are run, reducing outreach services to protect the number of classes provided on site.  

What they did was restructure ESOL. When it was restructured, because obviously the demand was so huge, they decided, to look at more full-time courses, and obviously full-time courses take up a lot more funding. So, funding hasn’t changed, but the nature of the programs that were delivered by the College changed. They pulled away from a lot of the outreach, because that was too expensive, but focused it on bringing the provision in-house. There is still some outreach... But then, what they did was, applied for another project, or establish the Regional Assessment Centre, and work with partners and providers, and also put on classes in the outreach.

However, the removal of outreach services by ESOL providers affects BAME women negatively as these classes are more accessible and effective for BAME women. Organisations working with official ESOL providers such as Women Connect First and Hayaat Women Trust in Cardiff highlight that BAME women, particularly in older ages, learn the language more effectively in alternative learning settings rather than official classes.

Another significant barrier regarding the provision of ESOL classes is the lack of provision in some parts of Wales. Research participants highlighted that South Wales is better resourced in terms of language classes compared to other parts of Wales, presenting a problem for BAME women in other areas who wish to advance their language skills. And yet, even though the South Wales region offers more ESOL classes, there are often waiting lists to access to classes, as the representative from DPIA mentioned:

Depending on where they live and the availability of courses, some of our families, they are receiving only a one or two days course, but whereas other families, they are receiving five days a week full time English; but at the moment all colleges are full. If they want to register, they have to go on the waiting list, and this is the case for Cardiff as well. There is a huge waiting list for ESOL classes, and this obviously delays language acquisition, language development.

Thirdly, ESOL classes sometimes fail to address the learning needs of some groups of BAME women. Older women, for example, have difficulties following formal ESOL classes and progressing in their language skills. Women Connect First explains the reasons why older BAME women have more difficulties overcoming language barriers:

First, when they are with a younger generation, they feel intimidated because they [the younger generation] grasp quickly and they [the older generation] are very slow to learn, they need repetition. The second thing is their attendance. The older women cannot attend 80 or 85% of the sessions because of health issues, mobility issues, doctors’ appointments, so they will have to skip. Sometimes they get ill for one month and they come back later.

Guardian, February 2011; “Cameron says immigrants must integrate, while cutting funding for English classes” Open Democracy, April 2011)

CAVC interview.

Refugee Council Wales, DPIA interviews.
To tackle the issues that elderly BAME women experience in attending the classes, they organise English classes in an informal setting to give women the comfort they need while learning English. The classes that Women Connect First organise also help them develop their social networks:

Our courses give a way to come back. We don't say "no, you have skipped a lot". We do a very repetitious course, and it proves that women are gaining a lot. They feel at ease, there is no pressure on them, and they socialise in the class, they make friends. In the same class you can find 5, 6, 7 different ethnicities.

The experience of organisations providing ESOL classes to BAME women demonstrates that outreach activities of official ESOL providers, such as colleges and universities, are highly valuable for some groups of BAME women.

Last but not least, a lack of provision of additional services such as childcare during the ESOL classes, as well as a lack of alternative language classes for people working atypical hours, generates critical barriers to BAME women in accessing ESOL classes.

Although language proficiency certainly is a problem for many BAME women, the research participants also highlighted that there is a risk of stigmatising this barrier, which would cause more problems for BAME women in employment. For example, one of the research participants pointed out that in some cases, emphasising language proficiency without identifying clear measures to evaluate the language ability of job applicants is itself discriminatory:

I think, in a sense, the concept of a language barrier in itself can become like a barrier. It is not only the language, but I have known people to be looking for work, and then they go to the Jobcentre. The Jobcentre says, “Well, first you need to improve your English.” So, they go to the college, and they do as many hours as are available through there, but still the Jobcentre are saying, “Well, you need to improve your English before you find work.” And they go to employers, and they say, “Well, you need to improve your English.” But sometimes this person might have a relatively good level of understanding and fluency, not perfect grammar, but it’s alright. The perception of their English level is lower than it actually is, and I think I would use – this is like my academic hat on – the concept of Ingrid Piller identifying it as a linguistic discrimination, and to what extent that is actually feeding into the underemployment of the refugee population.

Language proficiency is a critical barrier that BAME women experience when participating in the economy and public life. However, this barrier can be overcome by understanding the learning needs of BAME women, developing programmes and setting up measures in order to avoid subjective evaluations. Tailoring the ESOL classes according to the differentiated needs of BAME women is important for improving access to, and the efficiency of, language classes. Failing to do so risks creating a stigma around language proficiency and further marginalising some groups of BAME women.

---

222 Refugee Council Wales, CACV interviews.
223 Refugee Council Wales interview.
5.3.2. **Access to training and employment support programmes**

BAME women are more likely to experience barriers in accessing training and support programmes, which would affect their opportunities for career development. As mentioned earlier, training and support programmes for BAME women are hugely important not only for continuing their career development but also for tackling barriers and establishing networks.

Access to training and support programmes is critical to BAME women who have less experience in the UK labour market. A research participant from DPIA mentioned that one of the barriers to refugee and asylum seeker women they observed, for example, is the lack of previous work experience and employment history. Some women have not been able to take part in employment before and they are likely to undertake the household responsibilities, such as childcare, while relying on the income of their partners or adult children. However, as the representative from DPIA underlines:

> Some women’s attitude towards employment and career aspirations have been changing, and they have the desire to learn English, attend various training sessions, attend colleges to gain qualifications, for example the healthcare and beauty industry in our experience.

In this regard, setting up accessible training and support programmes for BAME women becomes essential.

Adult education and up/re-skilling are also integral for the career development of BAME women. As one of the research participants commented, BAME women who had the opportunity to learn new skills, or upskilled themselves by learning professional English, new IT skills etc., had the chance to enter into the workplace.

Regrettably, cuts in the number and capacity of these programmes have had a negative impact on BAME women, and many training programmes come with a cost. The cost of some training, career development and career conversion programmes, as well as lack of available funding to take them up, present particular barriers to BAME women. Simply put, if there is no funding, many BAME women cannot afford to take up re/upskilling and career courses, as the research participant cited above suggests.

There is also a concern among some research participants that the BAME women are not fully able to access mainstream support programmes and training opportunities due to a lack of information and awareness about them. The majority of the research participants agree that training and support programmes are not advertised in an accessible way to BAME women. A research participant from EMWWAAA criticised the ways in which the programmes are advertised:

> How many women will go or I can't think of many women who would read a newspaper on a regular basis. They are not searching the Internet; they are not going on the Internet and

---

224 DPIA interview
225 PCS/TUC interview.
226 SSAP, Hayaat Women’s Trust.
227 Race Council Cymru, EMWWAAA, MEND, Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust.
seeing what is available, what are the different women's organisations and what are the courses on offer... It's all there but I think somebody needs to raise awareness of what is available out there.

Another participant also commented:

[BAME women] don't know about programmes out there. Unless somebody did it, they wouldn't know. The leaflets, the posters don't seem to be effective. It's rather the relationship and the word of mouth, I believe the Welsh Assembly and many other institutions are deficient at. We need to use a language that BAME [women] understand and they find accessible.\textsuperscript{228}

Research participants highlighted that even though some programmes are known by the BAME women, some of them fail to attend courses due to other responsibilities they have. A lack of childcare provision in training is, for example, a critical issue for many BAME women as often they cannot organise childcare and attend training at the same time.

I would say the biggest challenge is childcare, and that’s a challenge that is faced not only by refugees and asylum seekers but from all women. It’s like the fact that colleges don’t offer free childcare, universities don’t offer free childcare, it makes it very difficult for people to go and train, especially if they are single parents, or to requalify. So that... and employers not offering childcare. You know, it goes across the board, childcare is really expensive. Obviously in some areas you can get a couple of hours a week but it is not necessarily sufficient.\textsuperscript{229}

Alongside childcare, a lack of transport subsidies and accessible public transport also create a barrier to BAME women in their access to training courses.\textsuperscript{230}

Last but not least, research participants highlighted that, as in the language classes, some BAME women do not feel confident enough to attend formal training and career programmes. However, this does not mean that they do not want to carry on training. Instead, they look for areas in which they can feel confident and comfortable to utilise their skills.\textsuperscript{231} Some mainstream training and career development programmes fail to meet these needs, but some training organised by the organisations working with BAME women are able to fill these gaps. For example, the training courses that Women Connect First organise, such as cookery classes and health and safety training, ease the access of BAME women to training.

\textbf{5.3.3. Access to support to self-employment}

As the statistics show, there is an appetite among BAME women for self-employment. In fact, research participants agree that self-employment of BAME women in Wales is a truly untapped potential.\textsuperscript{232} Many BAME women would like to set up their own businesses, to run not only in the UK

\textsuperscript{228} MEND interview
\textsuperscript{229} Refugee Council Wales.
\textsuperscript{230} WOMEN CONNECT FIRST, Hayaat Women’s Trust, EYST 1, DPiA interviews.
\textsuperscript{231} WOMEN CONNECT FIRST, Hayaat Women Trust, MEND, EYST 1, Refugee Council Wales, Chinese Association in Wales interviews.
\textsuperscript{232} Race Council Cymru, EYST 1, Chinese Association in Wales, NTFW, MEND, Siema Biz, SSAP, Hayaat Women Trust.
market but also internationally. However, there was an agreement among the research participants that there is currently insufficient support for BAME women in self-employment.

A common barrier voiced by self-employed research participants is the complexity of the paperwork, as well as the difficulty of comprehending the rules and regulations, surrounding self-employment:

**Hayaat Women's Trust:** What I didn't know was, there is so much paperwork! For example, you need to register as self-employed, you need do everything online... You have to register your business, you have to open a business account... You got to do that, all of them, by yourself! And people sometimes cannot. It is a grey area to them.

**SSAP:** Because of that [the complicated paper work], many of them do work informally, but are not registered as self-employed. Like plaiting hair, doing nails... many doing it but also they haven't developed enough capital to start registering themselves as self-employed.

In our interview with the Chinese Association in Wales, the representative stressed that many Chinese people have greater potential to set up their own businesses. Chinese people in Wales traditionally run businesses in the catering and food sector; but, with the changing profile of Chinese people in Wales due to increasing numbers of Chinese university graduates, the ability of Chinese people to access to Chinese businesses and global markets, there are many business opportunities emerging in other sectors:

We have overseas graduate students... Or investment coming from overseas to Wales. The economic change in China bring investment and entrepreneurs, and [they] invest in Swansea and open their own business, and some are actually, helping students and creating jobs. And some of these business are quite successful, but some of them are struggling. They also hire Chinese community members and they try to hire local people (...) These business owners also have issues when they start out... The employment issues, contracts, human resources, dealing with tax and all these things, are new... are quite different for the new immigrant. They have money to run the business, but (...) you’ve got to follow the UK’s rule, and, some are different. Some are really struggling to get into rules.

A similar comment was also made by the research participant working with the Polish community in North Wales. She highlighted that people have a fear of the difficulties that they are likely to experience and that they do not have the knowledge to tackle such problems.233

The research participant from DPiA also underlined that there are women refugees willing to set up their own businesses but they have difficulties developing their business plans and accessing support:

To set up a business requires creating a business plan, which is a very complicated piece of work. We have experience of using Business Wales services in Cardiff, in getting people into self-employment, however this service doesn’t provide interpretation services to support women, to articulate their business plan and to get help in completing one. (...) They [refugee women] should be able to go there independently and receive that help. (...) Business Wales require them to go and set up a business plan, or create a cash flow, all the things that they

---

233 Siema Biz Forum interview
need to do before they actually can set up a business. But they are not supported throughout this process. And basically, it is so complicated that they just give up on that idea.  

Another participant also said that “there are loads of support out there but without somebody supporting them to access the support so they can fully understand it, then it’s a huge barrier.”

Organisations like DPIA, Women Connect First and Siema Biz try to help BAME women in setting up their businesses by providing interpretations of the key issues and access to services, but their services have a limited reach.

Having confidence to set up a business is also a critical barrier for many BAME women. The research participant from Siema Biz Forum mentioned that the majority of Polish people are labouring, as they do not believe they can take up other employment opportunities. She underlines that the reason for this is not only the language barrier, which is key and affects the confidence level in all circumstances, but also the lack of self-belief to achieve in other areas. She also mentioned that the individuals who want to set up their own businesses are mostly people who think they can overcome the barriers they experience in employment by becoming self-employed.

Setting up a business is a process that includes different stages. Working on these stages – such as creating a business plan, analysing the market, managing the capital and calculating the risks – are all crucial but difficult to accomplish. Accessing support either from official channels or from businesses and business networks at every stage of the process would make a difference. In fact, business and social networks are seen as important agencies for sustaining a business. However, research participants agree that business networks are not accessible for many BAME women groups and some groups of BAME women do not have social support networks either, which disadvantages them in self-employment.

5.3.4. Underutilisation of skills and difficulty in accessing skill recognition

A lack of professional qualifications, language proficiency issues and limited access to training opportunities were mentioned widely by the research participants as critical barriers to BAME women in participating in the economy. However, the research participants also highlighted that BAME women are often under skilled in the labour market:

**Ethnic Youth Support Team/2:** I can’t tell you how many West African women I know who were teachers or nurses that are just working for care companies. I think there’s a lot of occupational segregation.

**Muslim Engagement and Development:** The job market is very competitive already, let alone competing with your colour, your gender and your faith... It’s a much tougher competition. I really think that they [BAME women] are over qualified for most of the jobs.

---

234 DPIA interview.
235 EYST 1 interview.
236 Siema Biz Forum interview.
237 EYST 1, NTFW interviews.
238 EYST 1, NTFW, MEND interviews.
but they do it anyway because they need to survive. They think of it as a stepping-stone for something big, but definitely, the ceiling is quite high.

**Race Council Cymru:** For us as BAME women, you are dealing with lack of opportunities, the double and triple glazed glass ceilings. Despite your numerous qualifications, you can’t actually get a paid job even. My bosses in the police sector earned double what I earned, but I had to teach them and educate them to do the job. And that is the unfairness of the system in Wales. Many, many, many accomplished, highly qualified and highly skilled black women or Asian or minority ethnic women are doing jobs way below their pay.

**North Wales Association for Multicultural Integration:** Unless they come with a job in hand, it is very difficult to get a job in this country with the same level, no. If anyone does in this country, it’s a miracle. They have to start from the beginning in a very low paid job. Some people are very determined, they’re welcome, and some people lose their faith in it and just give up and then they are working in the low paid (job) for their entire career.

The research participants from the Polish Community and Siema Biz Forum highlighted that many migrants from Poland have a degree or other skills but they do not have a clear pathway to take to utilise these skills in the labour market.

Skills recognition, particularly for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, is a critical arena affecting their participation in the economy. The research participants stressed that the conversion of skills and skills recognition is not straightforward and not working effectively. A research participant from TUC/PCS said that even nurses are struggling to access skills conversion and recognition:

> There are a number of women that I know who have nursing backgrounds, and because of the issue around bursaries and the wider factors around race discrimination, they tend to enter the care sector. It’s easier for them to enter into the care sector, and that’s where a lot of them are.

Another participant from EYST underlined that women have transferrable skills but they do not how to navigate in the system.

> ... There are many of their friends in their community who have skills; some cooking, some dress-making that they brought from their own country. Even book-keeping, some of them are quite qualified; some of them have had their own business. Another one is child carer, so one person wanted to go on a childcare course and to be qualified, so she can then be a childminder for other women in their community so they could go to work. But it’s about navigating all the systems, and the structures and... If your English is not very good, it is a barrier. They [BAME women] say people don’t explain things properly. So, these are the barriers. Because they are not understood it acts as a barrier to even going forward to seek out these opportunities.

In the interviews with Hayaat Women’s Trust, Refugee Council Wales, Displaced People in Action and Cardiff and Vale College, the importance of skills recognition and conversion was also stressed extensively. The research participant from SSAP highlighted the issue as such:

> You come here with different certification, and it doesn’t fit. There is no clear path for them. When the Welsh government decided to integrate the doctors coming, they looked among

---

239 Refugee Council Wales, CAVC, DPIA, PCS/TUC interviews.
the doctors among the refugees and they helped them go through the costs that they need to get a certification and they came into the job market in Wales. But, not so much for the women. Some of the women were successful businesswomen where they were. Some of the women were running shops. Some of them ran schools, some of the women did a lot in the informal sector. But those kind of skills, when you bring them here, they are not transferable into the kind of work we have here. You have to do certification here, or find a job similar to that.

One aspect of the barriers in the skills recognition is the accessibility of new certificates recognising the qualifications that the person already has.

I think one obstacle that clearly stands in the way of BAME’s in accessing training for upskilling is funding. I came with my own qualifications and I get jobs worldwide, but that same job I am not able to do here in the UK, because I need certain qualifications. So, when I look at the certification that is needed, the professional certification that is needed here is something I can’t afford, because it is £2500. And there is no way of getting funding.  

The other critical issue about skills recognition and conversion is the lack of systematic data collection about people’s qualifications. The participant from the Refugee Council Wales highlighted that it is a growing problem particularly within the refugee and asylum seeker communities. Even though there are progressive schemes developed in Wales on this issue, particularly considering Syrian Refugees, there is still a big gap in the process of recognition of the qualification of refugees and asylum seekers. Refugees are registered to job centres, but their access to career and employment advice is limited as the job centres fall short in providing this advice. The research participant from Refugee Council Wales indicated her observations as such:

The majority of people I supported in that last project were people who had that qualification and quite a high level of professionalism, and we should be supporting all. We should be supporting people regardless of skill level, because they are refugees, and claiming asylum is a human right, regardless of what your skill level is. But nevertheless (...) they tended to have really high levels of skill, have their qualifications with them, and to be very, very close to being able to practice here, just needing that extra re-qualifying exam or needing that extra IELTS [International English Language Testing System] score or something. (...) we should also be thinking about perhaps matching those skills, or at least analysing what those skills are, and seeing how they could fit into Wales and into the UK’s economy, and supporting people to progress. I mean that is obvious isn’t it really? Instead of everybody ending up at Amazon.

She highlighted that the main agencies collecting data about the skills of refugees are job centres, which are under-resourced and do not provide professional employment advice:

One of the big issues has been the sense of responsibility. Who is responsible for getting these people into work? At the moment, there doesn’t seem to be any clear guidelines, either from the Home Office, or on a regional level. No one is saying, “Okay, it’s my job.” And in a sense it has not really been written into anyone’s job description. It has just been a kind of guideline from the Home Office that they should be financially independent within so many years, with very little forethought as to how that’s actually done. Are we going to match... assess people’s skills and then match them to local jobs? None of that has

240 SSAP interview.
happened. There hasn’t been that comprehensive data gathering exercise on who is coming or what their skills are and how those can be developed in the UK. And so what you have been getting are usually, all the refugee families being assigned to one single point of contact in the Jobcentre, who has then to take on their cases, as well as all their other cases. But this person has never necessarily supported a refugee family, or a migrant family even. (...) They [job centre staff] don’t have time, necessarily, on top of all their other cases, to really dig down into what the issues are for these people. They have just got to try to help this person get a job, or get off benefits, that’s really their remit. The person has to get themselves a job. But they don’t have time to offer any sort of further support or training.

The Refugee Council Cymru participant also underlined that women are often neglected in this process and are seen as the dependants, with men going to the job centre. She told that she heard from job centre staff and caseworkers indicating about some cultural barriers, such as some men are not happy for their wives to go and access work, which hinders women’s participation in the labour market. However, according to our interviewee, even though this might be the case for some families, the acceptance of this cultural barrier as a condition for all service users solidifies the barriers to women:

I think there are some things in the British integration that we are doing, in terms of our policy of integration that nevertheless solidifies those kinds of [barriers]. So it’s the dad who will be signed on as a job seeker because he is the one who says he wants to be a jobseeker. That is fine, but it means that he will get more attention as to his labour market activity or aspirations. Whereas because the woman is not necessarily in receipt of job seeking benefit, no one will really ask her, “Well what do you want to do in the UK?” Because it is seen that, “Okay, she is a dependent so we are going to focus on the dad.” That is something that I have really been observing in the research. So, when I have been surveying these women, and actually asking, “Well what do you want to do?” They said, “Well I want to go on and train, I want to go to university.” And I’ll say, “Well has anyone asked you that in your time here?” They said “no”, because the focus has been on getting the dads into work, because it is seen as being a patriarchal culture, so he is the breadwinner, so they are going to focus on him. It is like these two things, it’s like the perception of it being a patriarchal culture, which it might be or it might not be. You know it might be, but then what is done is to solidify that while they are here.

Another reason for BAME women being under-skilled in the labour market is related to the unavoidable career break that many women need to take due to their family responsibilities and their lack of social and family network. The negative impact of a career break on career progression is widely reported by women in general, but the impact is more likely to be felt in BAME women’s careers due to the other compounding barriers that they experience in employment. The research participant from the Chinese community explained her observations as such:

When you have a break, sometimes you can catch up but often not. I earned my MBA 12 years ago and I don’t have enough things to show on my CV to get a job because of my career break [due to the childcare]. I don’t feel I’m confident enough to go back to that post when I left. And now, I have been doing freelance work here and there, may be build up my career on different things. I see women struggling looking for a job. They try to change career and look for something else. I have people who have Masters Degrees end up working for a salary, for which you don’t need a degree at all. It is still good though, at least they earn money.
The access to training, career development and support programmes for BAME women should be improved as the barriers around these issues are critical to them in their participation in the economy. Furthermore, the lack of a systematic monitor of the skills pool of BAME women and under-utilisation of their skills are risky barriers not only to BAME women but also to the Welsh economy.

5.4. Limited recourses and access to social networks

Social networks and social capital are key factors for many people in progressing their career. From accessing support and training, to finding a job, BAME women use social networks including family and voluntary sector networks. Lack of access to these networks is a pivotal deficiency for BAME women as they provide the women with the support and resources that they need in their professional and day-to-day life.

Recruitment agencies are mostly used for finding a job in the low-paid occupations, such as caring, cleaning and manufacturing. For the professional jobs especially, social networks play an important role as they also provide the necessary support to succeed.

Social networks are also important for BAME women to navigate the welfare system and other social and public services. As mentioned earlier, many women have limited knowledge about social and public services as well as support programmes due to the lack of sufficient language skills and the complicated procedures involved in accessing these services. Networks, particularly women’s organisations, are helpful and supportive to BAME women experiencing barriers in accessing services as they have knowledge about the nature of the barriers and the ability to communicate with BAME women to help them comprehend the area of need.

The networks and voluntary organisations are important to BAME women in navigating the system not only because of language issues and lack of knowledge about the procedures, but also because for cultural reasons. Even though there are organisations such as Citizens’ Advice providing professional advice to people, our research participants highlighted that for some BAME women, these services are not accessible, particularly in the first instance. Some women experience difficulties explaining their problem and they might need more emotional and confidential support than the professional organisations can provide them with. Women Connect First remarked that, for this reason, some BAME women do not find some professional organisations accessible:

241 Social capital is a complex term but broadly refers to those factors of effectively functioning social groups that include such things as interpersonal relationships, a shared sense of identity, a shared understanding, shared norms, shared values, trust, cooperation, and reciprocity. “The term generally refers to (a) resources, and the value of these resources, both tangible (public spaces, private property) and intangible (‘actors’, ‘human capital’, people), (b) the relationships among these resources, and (c) the impact that these relationships have on the resources involved in each relationship, and on larger groups. It is generally seen as a form of capital that produces public goods for a common good.” (Source: Wikipedia, Access March 2019)

242 Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust, MEND/Muslim Council Wales, EYST interviews.

243 MEND/Muslim Council Wales interview.

244 Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust interviews.

245 Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust interviews.
P: [Women] prefer to come here for one reason. The pressure [about the responsibilities], it causes depression; it is overwhelming… Even those who can express themselves in English, when they are overwhelmed, they are not able to express themselves. They go to Citizens Advice; [but] the advisor has allocated time. Time to take the case, time to search, get approval from the supervisor, and then to give the advice. And she has 20 min time to put her case.

I: It is like a more bureaucratic process but yours is more social and makes it easier for women…

P: yes, it is… I do the advice. Every session, there is emotional support. You get a letter about housing benefits, whatever it is, as I read the letter and we talk, then the women start opening up and you find there are problems behind the problems and more complicated problems. It is difficult for them to open up at the Citizens Advice…

After an initial conversation and understanding of the problem, the advisers in the organisations refer them to more professional help and they accompany them to other service providers if necessary.

A research participant from Hayaat Women’s Trust, running similar services for BAME women in Cardiff, commented that the services provided by organisations like them are differentiated from other support organisations as they are more flexible and tailored, and women feel more comfortable talking with them:

They [other service providers] are not as flexible as ours. They are not targeting particular people. What they do is just a drop in session; sometimes you have to sit there for a long time. Sometimes make an appointment, and you talk about certain things. But over here, it can be anything. Of course, we are not specialised in all these areas, but they will come here, and then without going to different places, we would do the referrals here.246

Access to these social networks are crucial for many BAME women in order to solve their day-to-day problems and gain support. Yet, these networks are mostly based on volunteering and are not always in spatial proximity to everyone. For example, BAME women living in South Wales have better access to these organisations than elsewhere in Wales.

Networks are also important for BAME women to sustain and move forward in their careers. The research participant from NTFW emphasised that networks are empowering and necessary to tackle employment barriers:

…most people have a job, but to have a career relies on people giving you those opportunities to progress. And I think that’s where it’s really important if you don’t have networks to enable you to progress in whatever you want to do, you have to create those networks yourself. (...) My personal opinion is based on the network you have around you to either push you, support you to ensure that you have the right qualifications, and do the best you can so it’s a lot about how you’re nurtured within your social circle within your family circle. Some people have really good networks and some people have poor networks, for whatever reason. And I think it’s really important to have these networks because those

246 Hayaat Women’s Trust interview
barriers that are presented to you become more pronounced when you don’t have a network.

Lack of networks, social capital and support to navigate the system is a particularly critical issue for newly settled BAME women as in many cases they arrive with limited social and family networks. The participant from the Chinese community told us her story when she settled in Wales. After graduating from Cardiff University with an MBA degree, she married her British husband and settled in Wales; but she needed to put a hold on her career development not only because of emerging family responsibilities but also the difficulties that she experienced in navigating in the labour market:

I was a senior manager in the chemistry sector [in China]. But it [my profession] has changed here. If I go back to mainland China, I can get a really good salary, and good post and nice job. But here, because I don’t have the native language, I don’t have the network, I am not familiar with the job market, it is very difficult. Even the CV writing, the way you write, and applications... the online applications of each individual organisation are so different... And, you feel it is really difficult to do all these all by yourself.

Had she got a network supporting and mentoring her, she might not have changed her career. She also pointed out that she didn’t have a chance to experience the way in which the labour market works and how she could develop her career after having her child. The interruption to her career, which had already been placed on hold, turned into an extended career break due to childcare responsibilities.

Lack of social and family networks also affects the burden of childcare for many migrant families, as often, they do not have access to family support, particularly the support of grandparents, in childcare. They rely on official childcare options and childminders, which often do not cover the time needed by the parents and are expensive. Particularly for migrants working in shift patterns and atypical hours, finding available childcare becomes a critical barrier. The research participants from the Portuguese Speaking Community in Wrexham explained the problem with childcare for migrant factory workers as follows:

As soon as we have a child, we are not able to do anything in the next 10 years; because there isn’t any childminders open in the factory times. Even now, we have three Portuguese childminders looking after mainly Portuguese and Polish children. They start picking up children 6am. No one else would do that! They do that because they know how difficult it is for mothers to work if they need to wake up 4 o’clock in the morning and start at work at 6 am.

She experienced this problem herself when she was working in a factory, which costed her job:

I had to give up the factory work, when I fell pregnant here. I did like that job; I was earning £15 an hour at the time, which was 14, nearly 15 years ago; that was a lot of money! (...) I really wanted to go back to work after the maternity leave. But I knew no nursery opened at that time and I didn’t have any family members here. I went and asked my employer if it is

247 Chinese Association in Wales interview.
248 Siema Biz Forum, Portuguese Speaking Community Group interviews.
possible for me to start at 9am and finish at 4pm. No, he said. You have to do what you signed in the contract. I lost my job at the end.

Some migrant families bring their parents over to join them in Wales to help cope with childcare issues, but it is not a viable option for many.

The lack of network support in childcare is also likely to affect women’s access to training and other services such as volunteering, as the current childcare offers do not cover unemployed parents if they are not eligible to the Parents, Childcare and Employment (PaCE) programme offered by the Welsh Government.

The other important networks for BAME women are workplace networks. As discussed earlier, research participants highlighted that due to the lack of diversity in the workforce, workplace networks in Wales do not have a similar influence for BAME individuals as they do in England where the BAME networks are stronger. The rep from the TUC/PCS underlined that even though they have BAME structures in the union, they are not as strong as at the UK level. The under-representation of BAME people in the workforce and in local branches causes the issue of equality and race to fall off the agenda, as people are likely to fail to see the problems with an intersectional lens. This also makes reporting incidents of discrimination and harassment more difficult for BAME people: “Traditionally, and it is still the case, that many of the branch executive committees, the local structures, do tend to still be male, pale and stale”, even though more women and BAME members have come forward in recent years. To overcome this problem, unions plan to take up more equality events in Wales to make sure that their members and activists understand the varying needs of their fellow members.

5.5. Cultural barriers

The roles traditionally affiliated with women, defining a women’s place in public and economic life in some cultures can be explained in the framework of internal cultural barriers. In some cultures, the traditional roles associated with women have a more profound impact on the formation of women’s choices. Women coming from more conservative cultures are more prone to be bound to unpaid housework and have less access to networks and opportunities to develop and utilise skills. The impact of cultural barriers can vary by age, family and social relationships, and the duration of the time lived in the UK.

Cultural barriers are not only derived from the defined role of women in public and family life, but are also about the differentiated understanding of circumstances in different cultures. The representative from EMWWAA told us her experience with regards to how the culture she grew up in affected her way of tackling problems:

I was born and brought up in India and I have come from a culture where you don’t challenge your teacher, you don’t challenge the system; that’s the way... Whereas people here, if they

---

249 PCS/TUC and CAVC interviews.
250 PCS/TUC interview.
do not agree with you they will come up and challenge you. There were many times when I
could have challenged certain issues or certain things which were unfairly done. I should
have challenged but I didn’t. If I was given another chance I would.

One of the risks of defining a barrier in relation to culture, as discussed earlier in relation to the job
centres’ approach to refugee women’s skills, is that of over-generalising a particular understanding
or a cultural perspective, which would lead to stereotyping a group of people, particularly women.
Accepting cultural barriers as norms and forming an approach according to this norm is likely to
become a barrier in turn. Cultural barriers are not measurable and are difficult to define, yet they
affect the perception of society about certain groups of BAME women, which increases bias and
discrimination.

The research participant from DPiA underlines that although there are cultural barriers to BAME
women, they are likely to change as women engage in social life:

In some cultures the role of the woman is strictly defined and there is no expectation for
women to work and provide for the family. However, these perceptions have been shifting,
and more BAME women are utilising their existing skills or developing new skills to get into
employment. Education and volunteering, for example, some are good at cooking and
baking, and they would like to set up their own business to generate income for their family.

Cultural barriers exist but they are not easy to identify. They are inclined to be dealt within the social
networks where women share their experiences and support each other.

The lack of understanding of cultures and the way in which they are practiced can also be indicated
as a form of cultural barrier to BAME women. That is to say, rather than the culture putting barriers
in front of women, the lack of availability to practice the culture becomes a barrier itself. For
example, if a Muslim woman wants to dress in accordance with her culture and religion,
discriminating against her because of her outfit would present a cultural barrier making it difficult for
her to work in certain places. Therefore, when we talk about cultural barriers, it is important to
consider how ‘culture’ is practiced by individuals and how these practices are perceived by the
general public.

5.6. Lack of confidence and role models

5.6.1. Lack of confidence

Lack of confidence is a shared experience by women of all ages and backgrounds in regards to career
development and advancement. Alongside childcare, lack of confidence was one of the most cited
barriers by our research participants, which was also contextualised in relation to the other barriers
experienced by BAME women. Research participants highlighted that language barriers, constant
threat of discrimination, lack of social and professional networks, and failure to achieve in the labour
market have sizable and cumulative impacts on the confidence of BAME women.
Alongside these other barriers, the emotional burden placed on BAME women, including depression and isolation, have a substantial impact on the confidence of women. Especially for middle age and older generation BAME women, who did not have the opportunity to develop or carry on progressing in their careers and are having difficulties in sustaining an independent life, lack of confidence is a serious barrier.  

As one of the research participants from PCS/TUC comments “The problem is that a lot of women don’t have the confidence. They may have the skill set, and I know so many BAME women that are so highly qualified but they just don’t have the confidence.”

Lack of confidence limits the manoeuvring of BAME women into employment opportunities and the utilisation of their skills. Yet, even though they might be confident enough, they might not have done an interview for a long time, or they might not be as well-equipped to complete the application process. Even then, because stereotyping and bias persist, they are likely to feel in a disadvantaged position even though they have secured an interview. In turn, this affects the resilience of women in challenging the barriers they experience. This pattern can create a vicious cycle ending, converging back on the core problem of lacking confidence.

The confidence barrier also appears in accessing support and engaging in networks and activities. As an example, the participant from EMWWAA told us that even though they know many successful BAME women, they are often hesitant to put their names forward:

Many of these women don’t even apply (...) when they are invited for nomination they do not put themselves forward mainly because of the lack of confidence. (...) First is the lack of confidence, second is, we give these awards by interview, and they may feel, “okay, I may be very good in what I’m doing but I may not interview well and that could be an embarrassment”.

The participant from Race Council Cymru highlights that one of the reasons for the lack of confidence is the lack of role models and celebration of achievements of BAME women:

We also need to celebrate our success stories. We don’t often tell us these stories. (...) And what’s more, sadly, they [the potential role models] don’t actually care. Because they feel sometimes they’re so disempowered, they are so demoralised and demotivated that they fear that they cannot find in themselves a sense of self worthiness to stand. The right to self-determine is something that every woman should have. And that ability and belief in yourself, that you’re good enough to go for that job.

5.6.2 Lack of role models and underrepresentation of BAME women

Underrepresentation of BAME women in the workforce, public life and politics, as well as a lack of role models, is a barrier to BAME women, which particularly affects their confidence levels in tackling other problems and progressing their careers. Research participants agree that tackling these barriers is not easy, but rather exhausting and demotivating. Support from other women and

---

251 EYST 1, Women Connect First and Refugee Council Wales interviews.
252 PCS/TUC interview.
networks, and having role models will help BAME women to be resilient as the participant from Race Council Cymru states:

I do believe that unless we invest in each other, and invest in younger women coming up, they will never want to rise to leadership. (...) They [people in senior positions] feel that you shouldn’t head up a department, for instance, because you won’t fit. Your face doesn’t fit, you are not white, you are not one of us, and our organisation does not want anyone who looks unusual amongst us, who cannot be trusted to be loyal and faithful. So, everything that I have found, that I have achieved I’ve had to battle for. And it’s exhausting for people.

Role models and visibility of BAME women’s career achievement is important for empowering BAME women. The limited opportunities for career progression for many BAME individuals, lack of career advice and role models to inspire their career aspirations affect BAME women’s participation in the economy. The research participant from the Sub Sahara Advisory Panel highlights the impact of the lack of role models on the young generation’s career development:

I think for the younger generation, boys or girls, it really puts them off to see people who have graduated and are unemployed or going for a taxi job or doing other lower paid jobs. (...) for some reason BAME don’t seem to secure jobs in higher management. You can be a supervisor but in a cleaning company, because that’s the service sector. (...) You look around and you see ‘oohhh uncle who did a PhD is a taxi driver!’ The most successful person you have seen is the supervisor of a cleaning team, cleaning by night and daytime they do taxi. Career aspirations are determined by where they see BAMEs. And they are not seeing them in other technical and engineering industries. When they have to go into those industries, our young BAME find that they have to go to other towns. If they go to London, they actually see people.253

Some of the research participants also highlighted that there are a number of BAME people working hard and achieving in Wales but most of the time, they are not visible. Sometimes, as the research participants from TUC/PCS and NFTW mentioned, it is more likely that you would see the same people of BAME backgrounds around tables in different boards:

People talk about public appointments and they’ll say, “Oh we do better on diversity now.” Yeah, but it’s the same person, they move here, here and there. (...) they will move from one board to another board, or they will be on all the boards for every organisation. (...) And the fact of the matter is, that our population is growing, and there are so many talented people who now are living in Wales, who live in different parts of the country, doing amazing work, but nobody makes any space for them. There is nothing wrong with giving something up for somebody else that looks like you or somebody else from a different protected characteristic.254

BAME women are underrepresented in the Welsh political arena, public bodies and boards. Even if they achieve a senior role, they might still experience bias and even discrimination.255 The achievements of BAME women are not celebrated enough and they are not widely seen and known which compounds the lack of role models.

253 SSAP interview.
254 PCS/TUC interview.
255 Race Council Cymru, PCS/TUC interviews.
5.7. **Gaps in the policies and their implementation**

Equality and diversity policies are endorsed as progressive and necessary; yet, they are not considered as being implemented effectively in practice. According to our participants, policies have been improved and they are “looking good on paper”. However, they are not fully put into practice and they are not enough to eliminate the subtle discrimination against BAME people:

*by means of the seven protected characteristics* There is slight improvement because people cannot discriminate people on the basis of the protection, because now there are some rules and laws in place actually, so they are careful about it. But having said that still there is subtle discrimination and, you know, it does not leave any evidence. 256

One of the reasons for the impracticality of equality and diversity policies is the lack of communication and consultation with the people who would be their beneficiaries in their preparation. As the participants confirmed, policies are good but if they do not give enough space for people to voice their needs in practice, then, they are unlikely to be effective to achieve equality. To illustrate, the participant from MEND mentioned that “It’s very difficult to get a prayer room sometimes, it’s very difficult to explain sometimes, in Ramadan, we fast this number of hours” which are essential religious practices for Muslim people. However, if these practices have a chance of being communicated constructively, then it is more likely that arrangements can be made in workplaces according to individuals’ needs. As the participant from CACV remarked, it is often more difficult to ask for a praying area than to allocate a space for praying.

Research participants who think that Wales need to take a more serious approach to tackling race inequality, shared the view that the evidence exists and that there is ample research carried out in Wales, but that the recommendations coming from this research are not sufficiently reflected in the existing policy frameworks. 257 Some research participants, for example, mentioned that as a regulatory body, the Equality and Human Rights Commission should step up and deal firmly with discrimination cases alongside their reports:

**Race Council Cymru**: I think that the Equality and Human Rights Commission needs to step up its game. It’s a regulator and its core role is to robustly challenge organisations that are not working in accordance with the Equality Act of 2010, across the protected characteristics. But I have not heard them declare an investigation into serious inequality and racism in schools in Wales.

**Cardiff and Vale College**: The biggest thing that the [third sector] organisations can do is to inform the Equality and Human Rights Commission in their action plans [to show their commitment to equality and diversity] to focus on aspects and work with them on the equality duty. And any other pieces of work that they care to progress, because, they have that overarching remit. Nobody else does. They have a legal duty that they can work with the Public Sector Equality duty. And that’s quite a powerful tool. Nobody else has that tool.

Yet, the participants agree that cuts in the resources of institutions like EHRC make it difficult to undertake such initiatives.

---

256 EMWWAAA Interview.
257 PCS/TUC, Race Council Cymru interviews, and Chwarae Teg’s State of the Nation panel discussion.
Participants also indicated that Wales should use its devolved power to better tackle these problems. The participant from TUC/PCS highlights, “In Wales, we are very unique in that we do have devolved powers, we do have our own assembly and we do have opportunities to make some real, credible changes.” However, she also indicated that sometimes race has fallen off the agenda in Wales: “Part of me sometimes wonders whether it is because it’s quite complicated, and because of the intersectionality factor. Maybe people either don’t know how to deal with things, or whether we need something bigger.”
6. The changes BAME women want to see

Barriers that are shared by women generally as well as by BAME women were voiced extensively in our research, but with the emphasis that BAME women experience such barriers more intensively. In this section, we will discuss some actions voiced by our research participants to tackle the barriers discussed in the previous section.

To start with, the participants stressed the need for an intersectional approach to gender inequality to tackle the barriers commonly voiced by women in general. For example, if an intersectional lens is missing in dealing with the barriers regarding childcare, then, childcare persists as a barrier to many BAME women.

Alongside this general issue, there are some key recommendations that are shared by the research participants and summarised neatly by the participant from MEND:

1. Community consultation is key. They [policy makers and businesses] have to consult the community and their Muslim [BAME] workers about what is needed exactly.
2. They have to create a safe space for the BAME individuals to express their concerns without being bullied, without facing the fear of losing their job.
3. Having a [proper] progression, a support mechanism that is not a matter of having a BAME person in the board, or the institution, just to show how colourful we are.
4. Having an inner support mechanism, so maybe Muslim support mechanism, Hindu support mechanism, of BAME, if there aren’t many people of colour or of faith you can just put all under one umbrella.
5. Having a mentoring scheme.
6. Training for the staff. How many of our institutions whether the Welsh assemblies or others, trained their own staff around Islamophobia, homophobia, antisemitism, and all of this. We have to train our staff about prejudices and stereotypes out there. That’s it!

In this part, we will address these and other recommendations in detail. Although we try to bring to these recommendations a Welsh policy focus, the recommendations inevitably address broader issues.

6.1. Tackling bias, discrimination and racism

Research participants emphasised that interaction with people from different backgrounds and celebrating diversity are keys to challenging and eliminating stereotyping in every aspect of life. By creating opportunities to bring people from different backgrounds to interact together, it is possible to overturn the ideas of stereotyping.258 Promoting the advantages of a diverse workforce and

258 MEND/Muslim Council Wales, WOMEN CONNECT FIRST interviews
celebrating diversity is also an important way of challenging stereotypes. As an example to the advantages of diversity, the participant from CAVC indicated the potential benefits of having different languages in a workplace, which could be utilised in many ways in businesses.

Tackling bias and discrimination during recruitment processes is fundamental to achieving equality for BAME women. A common recommendation by the research participants regarding this issue is to make the blind CV application mandatory to avoid any bias and discrimination happening in the recruitment processes. Applications should be anonymised in order to protect the identity of applicants.

Achieving diversity in recruitment panels is also among the commonly voiced recommendations. Research participants agreed that recruitment panels should be diverse in protective characteristics. Another suggestion regarding recruitment panels is to have an independent panel member to monitor and observe the process.²⁵⁹

Unconscious bias, equality and diversity training provided by experts, and awareness raising about bias, discrimination and hate crimes are key actions to be taken to tackle with discrimination and racism. The research participants agree that the training should be mandatory for all staff members including at senior levels.

Incidents of discrimination, harassment and hate crimes can happen anytime, anywhere, which put BAME women into a vulnerable situation in their everyday lives. As discussed earlier, BAME women are less likely to come out and make a complaint about these incidents. Under these circumstances, a clear understanding of how to report a case of discrimination and hate crime and provide support for women becomes vital. Research participants emphasised that reporting mechanisms should be visible and accessible, and victims should be supported.

The participant from MEND also underlined that police forces should have more training in addressing hate crimes in Wales.²⁶⁰ She also underlined that the lack of clarity in the definition of hate crimes and lack of recognition of the definition of Islamophobia is a problem to be solved to fight against hate incidents of hate crime effectively.

A key area needing improvement is the Legal Aid provided by the UK government. Cuts in the funding of legal aid have caused a reduction in service providers operating in Wales, which makes it difficult to access providers.²⁶¹ Research participants working with communities in Wrexham suggested that legal aid provision should be enhanced.

She also suggested a novel way of dealing with the offenders; if a person engages in offensive behaviour, uses abusive, discriminatory and racist language repeatedly, as with the speed awareness courses for people who have been charged with a speeding offence, the culpable person should be offered a race and diversity course to prevent further occurrences.²⁶²

²⁵⁹ CAVC interview, Chwarae Teg State of the Nation roundtable discussions.
²⁶⁰ MEND interview.
²⁶¹ Portuguese speaking community rep.
²⁶² Ibid.
To tackle incidents of discrimination and hate in the workplace in particular, the majority of research participants emphasised that policies should be prepared with staff members and the actions on policies should be formed in conjunction with the public. Policies should be designed and communicated in a way that proactively inhibits bullying, harassment and discrimination. Research participants highlighted that policies should facilitate taking proactive measures to avoid any discriminatory actions occurring. The research participants agreed that if the policies and commitment to equality and diversity are communicated transparently and proactively in the workplace, the risk of discriminatory incidents happening would be reduced.

Yet, subtle and insidious discrimination persists in businesses and is difficult to report. Agreeing with the other research participants on the subtness of racial discrimination, one of the research participants captured the importance of raising awareness about making complaints and reporting incidents of racial discrimination:

The law says if you feel that somebody is discriminating against you then that means that most probably they are. So then it's about how you're able to prove that. So I think a lot of the time, in terms of people who are employed, I think part of the induction should be about where to go, I know they do this formal thing of you can raise a complaint, you can write a grievance, things like that, but you know, being able to challenge a system is again a skill that a lot of people don't have. It's almost as if sometimes in terms of BAME women it will take a lot before they actually come out and challenge a system for whatever reason.

Businesses should provide their employees with clear and confidential reporting mechanisms to report incidents of discrimination, abuse and harassment. However, reporting might be troublesome in some cases. PCS/TUC representative indicated that availability and use of agents such as trade unions, which can give legal advice, is important:

I would be lying if I said that every BAME member is confident in coming forward. There is also the factor that we find, within a number of government departments, local authorities, there tends to be staff networks, and there will be black members’ networks within those. And sometimes people are given this false impression that they can seek advice from the staff networks. But the fact of the matter is that the staff networks can't provide them with any legal advice. (...) there is a lack of understanding of what a union is, and the fact that the union is completely independent of your employer. Your employer does not need to know that you are a member of a union, it is completely a private matter, and also the union can be there to provide legal advice and support should you need it, or just be a listening ear, and it's completely confidential.

It is important to encourage BAME women to sign up to unions and access their training and support networks to become more aware of their employment rights and relevant workplace policies. However, as the research participant highlighted, achieving diversity in trade union structures and providing them with necessary training is also critical to attaining more inclusive representation of BAME individuals. To have dedicated/professional equality officers in workplaces who would deal

---

263 NTFW, CAVC, Race Council Cymru interview.
264 Focus Group meeting 15.05.2019
265 Focus group meeting 15.05.2019
266 NTFW interview
with equality issues and monitor their implementation was also suggested by research participants.\footnote{Chwarae Teg, State of the Nation Roundtable discussion. 28.01.2019.}

One of the research participants also highlighted that any incident should be brought to the attention of the responsible department and acknowledge not only the incident itself but also the potential of further incidents:

> There was one particular case I had to deal with... What I did was I sent an email to their human resources. They were horrified so somebody rang me up straight away, and they were like how can we work with you, how can we improve this, we must speak to the person etc. etc. Everything was sorted in the end. I just needed to raise awareness that this was happening on the ground. (...) it's the employers as well that need education.\footnote{EYST 1 interview}

Employers’ awareness of what happens in the workplace and how they can act on these issues is an important part of tackling discrimination, harassment and racism. As one of the research participants highlighted, if an employer claims that they are an equal opportunity employer, then they need to not only be educated and understand that policy but also show evidence that they have been implementing and monitoring policies as well.

In these terms, leadership plays a key role in achieving and implementing policies for a more inclusive and diverse workplace. Leaders should develop communication, show their dedication to equality policies, and take proactive actions to achieve equality.

**Community Cohesion Team, Cardiff and Vale College:** Six years ago, Cardiff and Vale College moved their main college to the heart of Cardiff, close to the most diverse areas of the city, Grange Town and Bute Town. Thanks to the community focus of the Chief Executive and the senior management team, they first established the role of Community Liaison and Development Manager. The manager explained her role as such:

> my interactions have always been with communities, many of the third sector, organisations in the locality working on specific needs which have been identified locally... and those are the people you need to engage with, because they are working at the grass roots’ level, and really bearing down on the issues which are there in that locality.

With the recommendations coming from the community, the college also established a Somali Development Group (the dominant ethnic group in the area) to help them better engage with the college and the development around the college. Thanks to these efforts, the college established strong links and partnerships with the communities and community organisations, becoming a faith friendly workplace and a service provider to the communities.

Last but not least, a supportive working environment is crucial to overcoming discrimination, bias and racism in the workplace. BAME women should be supported and encouraged to come out about bias, discrimination and racism.\footnote{CACV, Portuguese speaking community rep, NTFW, PCS/TUC interviews, Focus group meeting on 15.05.2019.} Giving them the opportunity to talk about what they experience
and how they feel in a supportive work environment would avoid bullying and harassment in the workplace.

6.2. Improving access to training and employment support programmes

6.2.1. Improving provision of language courses

As underlined throughout this report, language proficiency is one of the critical barriers to a large number of BAME women, yet not all of them have the opportunity to overcome this barrier. ESOL classes are crucial; however, as the research participants highlighted, these are often not easy to access for BAME women. Outreach services of official ESOL providers have been suggested as very helpful for BAME women as they offer alternative learning settings and meet the needs of women more effectively.\(^\text{270}\)

As an area of improvement, the research participants from the Polish community and Siema Biz forum suggested increasing and improving the online courses aligned with the ESOL classes particularly for the individuals who have limited access to regular classes due to their work patterns or other responsibilities.\(^\text{271}\)

**ESOL provision, by CAVC:** Cardiff and Vale College is the main ESOL provider in Cardiff. They prepared ESOL class materials in partnership with organisations such as National Museum Wales and South Wales Police, which allowed these organisations to engage with the BAME community. The partnerships also helped to raise funds for language classes. These kinds of initiatives can be developed and improved to provide more bespoke and engaging activities for BAME women.

---

\(^{270}\) Women Connect First, Hayaat Women Trust interviews.

\(^{271}\) Siema Biz Forum interview.
Interpretation services that would assist BAME women to navigate the social security and welfare systems would also help BAME women to deal with language barriers. Currently, these sorts of services are provided by third sector organisations in their organisational capacity. As these services have proven accessible and effective, recognising their contribution and supporting them to sustain these services would be a cost effective solution to overcoming the difficulties that BAME women experience due to language barriers. The participant from Hayaat Women’s Trust underlines capacity for supporting language skills development within their organisation, which is a key source for overcoming language barriers for some BAME women:
We already have the support workers, people who have multiple languages. So, they are able to get translators among the volunteers of Hayaat. Between us, we have 10 of the languages common in the local community.

6.2.2. **Improving access to training**

The majority of the research participants agree that training and support programmes should be structured in a more accessible way for BAME women, and provided with some critical services such as childcare and transport.

Being unaware of the programmes is a barrier to BAME women, which can be overcome by developing more effective means of advertising and promoting training and support programmes. The participant from EMWWAA recommends that it is sometimes worthwhile to take a direct approach and knock on the doors of women:

...it has to be done on a one-to-one basis. Somebody will go to their house and say, “look, have you considered coming to this course, this is a very good course, so and so is going to be attending, it will be good if you can come as well.”

Community engagement is crucial when advertising and or trying to access BAME communities and many organisations and businesses fail to do so. Government programmes and businesses aiming to increase diversity in the workforce could develop schemes and community engagement programmes. The Welsh Government apprenticeship scheme is seen as a good practice example as it was directly communicated with the targeted groups, such as BAME individuals, to encourage them to apply and benefit from the scheme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apprenticeship Scheme, by Welsh Government and National Training Federation Wales (NTFW):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to increase the diversity in the take-up of apprenticeships, Welsh Government started working with National Training Federation Wales to identify the barriers and increase the diversity in their apprenticeship schemes. NTFW works with businesses from different sectors, having potential cohorts for apprenticeship schemes, to “increase the diversity of apprenticeships, in particular to increase the amount of people with disabilities and from black and minority ethnic communities into apprenticeships, and address the negative stereotyping, gender stereotyping in certain sectors in apprenticeships”. They identify barriers to different communities in accessing apprenticeships with the employers, and develop strategies to tackle these barriers:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What I'm doing in particular now is working really closely with the providers, on the monitoring and the evaluation systems, to ensure that we have systems that demonstrate how providers are applying their equality and diversity knowledge and activities to increase the diversity of the apprenticeships. That involves identifying relevant training programmes and sessions for providers, means working closely with the sector organisations and the disability and diverse practitioners. They have awareness raising sessions on a regular basis in my equality and diversity meetings, they have regular... |

---

272 EMWWAAA interview.
273 SSAP, Hayaat Women’s Trust, NTFW interviews.
274 NTFW interview.
meetings every two months whereby we look at the challenges across the sector, we look at regional challenges, we look at practical solutions we look at how we can look to actually improve that.

Furthermore, they engaged with the community by getting well-connected people within the community on board to promote their work, give information and run taster sessions. These efforts have increased the take-up of apprenticeship schemes.\textsuperscript{275}

Bringing the training courses to the community is also an important engagement tool that can be utilised to improve the reach of programmes. As the research participant from Hayaat Women’s Trust commented, this would increase the access: “Those courses; bring them into the community. Run it at the community centres. They will be attended and people will find out more.”

\textbf{Gypsy Traveller Education Service, Pembrokeshire, Monkton:} Traditionally, due to the barriers that the Gypsy traveller community experience, the education level in the community has been low. To tackle the barriers that the community experience in education, Pembrokeshire Council set up a programme called ‘Gypsy Traveller Education Service’ bringing the education into the heart of the community. The programme supported children, young people and families with their educational needs and was based in Monkton, where the second biggest traveller community in Wales is living. The Gypsy Traveller Education Service responds to any specific cultural needs or issues that may exist for children, young people and families in order to raise academic achievement, and to improve outcomes and life chances.\textsuperscript{276} The council also developed a project called the Unity Project for the members of the community who would like to engage in education again. These classes take place in Monkton as well, and it is also supported by the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. The University’s administrative office explains the success of the programme in going out to the communities themselves for twilight sessions and on weekends: “We come out to them, to their domain, in their own time, because nobody can afford to give up work today but they want to learn as well. They don’t feel intimidated”.\textsuperscript{277} If they are successful, many of them are employed by the schools, hence, a knock-on effect is created.

Training could be costly for many BAME women, which would create a barrier. To make them more accessible, scholarship opportunities, subsidised courses and funding should be available to BAME women. Highlighting the importance of training to women for their career progression as well as increasing their confidence, a research participant from PCS/TUC indicated the success of Welsh Government funded training provided by their union:

> We used to get some funding from Welsh government, which allowed us to run courses and one of the courses that we used to run which was really successful in terms of the number of participants was called ‘Women into Management’. As a result of that course running, and we ran it a few times, there were a number of women who came forward from a range of different backgrounds, including BAME backgrounds. Some of them were just say admin level or maybe sort of worked in the cleaning and catering part of the civil service, who then

\textsuperscript{275} NTFW, EYST 2 interviews.  
\textsuperscript{276} For more information, see Gypsy Traveller Education, Pembrokeshire Council; UWTSD Press Release.  
\textsuperscript{277} For more information, see Gypsy women breaking education barriers with uni degrees; BBC News, 03.09.2017.
went on to progress elsewhere. Some of them progressed within the existing organisations that they worked for; others ended up moving to other parts of the public sector and others actually left the civil service and set up their own businesses.

The research participants also stressed that training and employment support programmes should have well-monitored diversity targets.\(^\text{278}\) Although there are tools that can be utilised in monitoring the activities, many organisations do not make use of them. One of the research participants from EYST told us:

> The programmes need to be monitored properly. Are people of multiple ethnicities benefitting, for example? I did ask this of a department: “do you do equal opportunities monitoring for ethnicity and race?” and they said “no we don't at the moment. We used to, but we don't at the moment just because the numbers are just so low they're almost non-existent.” Well, that's why you need to monitor it! We really need to monitor to get a sense of what the picture is, what's happening with this support?\(^\text{279}\)

Diversity targets should be set contextually and be manageable to allow the monitoring of all the processes taken in the course of a training or employment support programme. Furthermore, monitoring will detect the impact of the programme and the outcomes of programmes in terms of creating opportunities:

> With projects like the employability programmes, any programme to support people into entrepreneurship you need to monitor the outcomes, not only who's participating in the programme but also the outcomes.

### 6.2.3. Skills conversion and recognition

Skills conversion and recognition for those who trained outside the UK in professional occupations is a critical area in need of improvement. Research participants underlined that the complicated procedure to achieve skills conversion and recognition make it difficult for migrants and refugees to participate in the labour market through their professional occupations.\(^\text{280}\) Providing these professionals with language courses and supporting them to attain additional certificates would allow them to participate in the labour market and utilise their skills. This would also contribute to the Welsh economy and act on the skills gap existing in Wales.

Demonstrating and communicating the relevant skills conversion and development pathways is critical in certain cases. Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers are not likely to utilise their proficiencies if they do not have access to skills conversion opportunities, upskilling and language programmes. In such cases, providing support and guidance become crucial actions.

---

**WARD Project, by Displaced People in Action (DPiA):** Since 2002, DPiA has been carrying out the project called ‘Wales Asylum seeker and Refugee Doctors’ (WARD) funded by Wales Deanery. The project addresses the education and training needs of refugee/asylum seeker medical doctors in Wales, and to help such doctors to meet the standards required to pass both the IELTS

\(^{278}\) EYST 2, CACV, NFTW interviews and the Focus Group Discussion 15.05.2019.

\(^{279}\) EYST 2 interview.

\(^{280}\) CAVC, Refugee Council Wales and DPiA interviews.
Skills recognition can be through some official agencies, but it can also be within a workplace. The research participant from NTFW told us a story that she experienced in her role:

One [apprenticeship] provider shared the story with me about somebody, a female worker, working with a very big organisation, and she experienced racism on an almost daily basis. A person took this worker to report this racism to their line manager. The lady in question was so clear in her presentation in terms of what she was saying and very articulate that the manager was struck with how articulate this woman was; because this woman was a cleaner. So asked her about her background and asked where she came from... (...), she told her what she did when she was in her country. And the manager gave her the opportunity to do accountancy, and she did an apprenticeship.

6.2.4. Access to self-employment

BAME women need additional support in accessing support programmes and services regarding self-employment. There are programmes supporting women in self-employment but they are not necessarily accessible to BAME women. There is a need to bring an intersectional lens to the support programmes for women in self-employment.

The self-employment of BAME women is a source of untapped potential for the Welsh economy. As the research participants from Chinese, African and European communities stated, there is a big potential in supporting BAME women into self-employment as they have the tangible resources, such as transferrable and soft skills, and they can often perform in a multicultural and global market place.

Most of the African women are industrious; most of us have mid-small industries... We just need a little bit of a push. This might be training, the support system, regular support systems... Regular but also informal. So that they don't have to attend, they may attend brief classes about women and entrepreneurship but then after that there is a need for ongoing support about filling forms, microfinance, book keeping.

There are support programmes for women in self-employment and Welsh Government and Business Wales are keen to improve these programmes. While improving these programmes, it is crucial to comprehend the issues with an intersectional lens and develop tailored programmes for BAME women. Interpretation of the support programmes, simplification of access to them and reaching

---

281 DPIA interview.
282 Chinese Association in Wales, EYST1, Race Council Cymru interviews.
283 SSAP interview
out to the community organisations to use their resources to access the communities are among the recommendations from the research participants.285

Siema Biz Polish Business Forum: The forum is based in Wales and offers business support to the Polish community across the UK through bespoke sessions and group workshops. It works in collaboration with Business Wales and creates a link between the Polish community and Business Wales. The forum interprets the programmes of Business Wales to the (potential) self-employed Polish individuals, supports and mentors Polish businesses. Business Wales support mentors from the Polish speaking community to engage with the community in their own language and spread information about the support programmes.

The huge amount of work that we do through Siema Biz forum is in conjunction with Business Wales. We make sure that they reach these people who are not confident in understanding English. I translate these sessions so they know that it’s transparent. It’s easy once they know what they want to do. We’re trying to put as much information on social media as possible in both Polish and English, just so our English-speaking friends know what we’re posting about, as well as that we’re posting in Polish, so Polish people can identify the difference in English and Polish and they can learn English as well as finding the information for themselves.286

In less than a year, since the forum started, 12 women and 3 men aged between 25-40 from the Polish community in North Wales have signed up for the business support programmes.287

World Café, by Women Connect First: Women Connect First run cooking sessions and classes to give women the opportunity to experience a professional kitchen. They set up the “World Café” almost 2 years ago, which brings women from different cultures together to cook. World Café caters for events and the profit retained from the catering is used by the women working in the kitchen to improve the business. Women trained as cooks in Women Connect First’s setting gain the qualities to work in professional kitchens. Women trained in the kitchen have also developed the ambition to have their own businesses.

6.3. Supporting BAME women

The barriers that BAME women face have a big impact on women’s lives and experience. These barriers do not only affect their career development and progression but also their confidence, self-esteem and well-being. Many women do not have the confidence and the resilience to tackle the barriers they experience on a day-to-day basis. Supporting BAME women through personal and professional networks is critical to empowering women to overcome these barriers.

From the experiences of the research participants, we understand that BAME women look for opportunities to develop their careers and gain support from organisations to give them these

285 Siema Biz Forum, MEND, Hayaat Women’s Trust, Women Connect First, SSAP, EYST 1 interviews.
286 Siema Biz Forum interview
287 Siema Biz forum interview.
opportunities. The research participant representing MEND told us that a lot of events held by the organisations she works with are attended predominantly by women:

> If you see the number of [women] attendees, it seems to be that women are keener to seize the opportunities to learn and develop more, more than men. I don’t know really the reason behind it but I think there is the appreciation of the struggle and that we have to be one who excels, we have to be more than others, so there are a lot of women who try to invest in themselves.

An important factor that is likely to increase the number of women attending the workshops is the creation of a welcoming and safe place for women in which they feel comfortable. The participant from MEND tells us that her position as the director of the organisation has had a positive impact on the engagement of women in their activities:

> It could be the reason; they see me, the manager of MEND, and that’s why more women are coming forward. We have a working group of volunteers across the country and the chair and the vice-chair of this working group are elected. In South Wales, interestingly, you have women being elected. In England, more men are elected. (...) I just think that women see the organisation as more accessible because they saw me at the front of it.

The TUC/PCS rep also told us that when women are given the chance to actively take part in union activities, they quickly become a voice in the workplace and actively join the union. Both examples suggest that when the activities are designed according to the needs of women and in an accessible and welcoming way, BAME women engage quickly, becoming part of and being active in the network.

### 6.3.1. Networks

Social and professional networks are important for BAME women to progress in their careers. These networks can help BAME women into employment. Social networks and knowing people working in the industry is sometimes critical in getting the right advice and overturning the potential barriers that can appear during the recruitment process. Nearly all participants emphasised the importance of these social and professional networks for BAME women. Developing and sustaining these networks and making them accessible to more women is crucial to overcoming the barriers that BAME women experience.

Tailored support programmes and engagement with BAME individuals is also important to overcome the disenfranchisement and alienation of BAME individuals. Research participants underlined that, particularly young BAME individuals feel frustrated, alienated and disenfranchised due to the lack of career opportunities and discrimination they experience in their professional and day-to-day life.

This area needs urgent attention and serious intervention by the Government, other organisations and businesses; it should not be the sole responsibility of third sector organisations. However, third sector organisations are key players in setting up support networks and creating a public space for BAME communities, government agencies and also for businesses. For example, MEND works on the

---

288 MEND/Muslim Council Wales interviews.
289 MEND and Muslim Council Wales, CAVC, Race Council Cymru, SSAP, Hayaat Women Trust Interviews.
engagement of Muslim people into mainstream politics to take constructive action and find the right political tools to voice their anger and frustration in the political realm:

It’s OK to be angry about the foreign policy, (...) but there are ways to challenge that. How about you engage with your local MP, how about you lobby him, how about... So, they know that the civil resistance in terms of petition, writing letters, meeting their MPs and they feel empowered in the process, they are part of the system. So, that’s the politics. We do politics masters classes to improve the political literacy of Muslims. They don’t know (...) the critical difference [such as] what does the Welsh Assembly do, how much power does it have, you know, what are the devolved powers, how can you engage with your MP... We teach them about this nitty and gritty stuff in the workshop in a visual interactive way.

Workshops and classes of this sort organised by third sector organisations both educate and train women on various topics, and also create an important public space and network for BAME women, which helps boost their confidence.

The participants also highlighted the importance of volunteering opportunities for BAME women in these networks to develop skills and improve language proficiency.290 Volunteering is a particularly important medium for asylum seekers, as they do not have the right to work until they receive refugee status, and for women who do not have previous professional experience. With volunteering, they have a chance to improve their participation in the labour market, develop skills and engage in a social network. However, volunteering is an area in need of improvement as there are still barriers to women in taking up volunteering. The lack of some critical services such as childcare and transport subsidies affects women’s participation in volunteering activities.

The research participants from organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers underlines that there is a need for improving the support programmes and volunteering opportunities for these groups who are in need of additional support:

Providing more opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees to use their existing skills, as well as helping them to gain additional skills that are relevant to the labour market and relevant to their ambitions and aspirations, finding out what they want to achieve, and enabling them to get into employment or education, where they could actually provide a better outcome for their families, for their children, and they feel part of the community they live in [are important areas of action]. I think more resources need to be deployed to achieve this. At the moment, we haven't got these resources needed to up-skill refugees and asylum seekers, so they will be job-ready when asylum seekers are able to work.291

While the research participants emphasised the importance of voluntary work for asylum seekers, their call to the UK government is to give asylum seekers the right to work to sustain their lives.292

**Asylum Rights Programme:** The Programme is a partnership project led by Welsh Refugee Council, with EYST, BAWSO, Tros Gynnal Plant, Asylum Justice, DPIA and City of Sanctuary UK as delivery partners, and is funded by Welsh Government’s Equality and Inclusion Programme 2017-2020. Through the advocacy forums taking place in this project, asylum seekers and refugees are

290 WOMEN CONNECT FIRST, DPIA, Refugee Council Wales, NTFW interviews.
291 DPIA interview.
292 DPIA, Refugee Council Wales
enabled to have their say on issues like housing, employment, education and training, what works and does not work for them. The Asylum Rights Programme also enables asylum seekers to get into volunteering.  

Another support activity that should be firmly stressed is the support of women’s organisations to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged BAME women. Some BAME women have difficulty in accessing public services and support, and they have limited knowledge of how to find out what is available and what might work for them. Organisations such as Women Connect First and Hayaat Women Trust try to tackle the isolation, health issues and the other problems occurring in their personal and family life. Once they find out the nature of the problem, they inform women about the available options and the ways that they can access them. Their efforts show that in some cases, providing support in informal settings and helping women feel comfortable enough to express themselves is necessary to overcome the problems they face. It is also highlighted that women coming to the centre communicate better with a person that can resonate with their cultural understanding.

When you come to Hayaat, when the person come, you realise that this is the tip of the iceberg. As they go on speaking, you realise now, there are underlying issues. And Hayaat will give them the time. We support them in a culturally appropriate way to make them feel valued, to make them feel that they are not just a statistic, we are not just filling boxes.

Supporting BAME women with job seeking and CV writing, by Women Connect First: Women Connect First supports BAME women of all ages with online job seeking, job applications and computer literacy. Older women who are not computer literate benefit particularly from the services of Women Connect First.

Supporting BAME women with career advice, Hayaat Women Trust: Hayaat Women Trust, work particularly with the Somali community in Cardiff and provides career advice to BAME women, and help them with the job application process. They also organise career advice activities with both parents and children by reaching out to the following schools: Cathays, Willows and Fitzalan. This allows parents to learn about the academic choices available to their children, and gain information regarding the education system. It also encourages them to take an active role in their children’s education. These sessions include information about the education system, available career opportunities, mentoring and seminars.

ILead, by Muslim Council Wales: The ILead (Islamic Leadership, Education and Development) is a project run by the Muslim Council of Wales to support young Muslims, particularly women, into leadership and personal development. The project aims to train young Muslims in transferable skills, inspired by Islamic tradition. The project aims to teach modern leadership skills infused with Islamic thought and custom to make it more relatable to their faith.

---

293 DPIA interview.
294 Hayaat Women’s Trust
Golden years project, by Women Connect First: The project aims to find ways of addressing the economic and social issues faced by BAME women aged over 50. The project offers activities to BAME women aged 50+ to enable them to feel more independent, empowered and equipped with life skills to help them lead a better, more sustainable life. The project includes ESOL classes, ICT and internet classes, general advice, advocacy and counselling service, seminars on issues affecting older people, and various social events.

Polish Integration Support Centre, Wrexham: The centre in Wrexham was established in 2018 as a community interest company. The centre aims to support Polish residents in their journey in Wales and help them with adapting to life in Wales, language learning, career development including the route to self-employment. It is an important network of residents of North Wales with Polish heritage, which also aims to bring together the older generation and migrants who are fairly new to the country.295

The problem of lacking knowledge regarding public services in the UK is poignant in the cases of refugees and asylum seekers. Upon their arrival, these groups need assistance about anything that would help them to settle, including housing, schooling and access to the labour market. Organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers assist them with basic needs and issues but some of these services might not be able to reach all refugees and asylum seekers in need. The research participant from Hayaat Women’s Trust listed how they approach the needs of refugees and asylum seekers as such:

The new ones who have been just given their refugee status, or have just arrived to join the spouse... [The advice] will be about all the necessary things. You will start from applying for a child benefit, for example. Because they are not aware of any of any entitlements. You will start from scratch. Any housing benefit they may be entitled to? They may be... There is some kind of physical or mental health problems, it is about health. Maybe they may have problems of, for example, they have been referred to a specialist, they have been waiting for so long, they do not have the language skills to talk through what’s happening or the system. Or their children, social services were informed about their children and they don’t know what to do. They don’t understand the system and how it works. And they don’t like these people interfering. It is like a culture; you have to make them understand “it is not something against you, it is for you”. And we have to encourage them to work with the authority.296

The research participant from DPIA stressed the impact of basic guidance to newly arrived migrants, refugees and asylum seekers for improving their lives:

When they first arrive, obviously they are trying to make sense of where they are, what type of community it is. They don’t know much about the area they are living in. We give all this information when they first arrive. First we take them out and about, how to do shopping, showing all the supermarkets, post office. How to use the post office service, how to use supermarkets, how to take a bus, how to get a ticket when they step on the bus, how to take a train journey from their area to Cardiff. We teach all those things, and that gradually increases their confidence.

295 Siema-Biz interview.
296 Hayaat Women’s Trust interview
Vulnerable People relocation Scheme, by DPIA: In collaboration with Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Blaenau-Gwent and Caerphilly council, DPIA delivers “orientation and support” programmes to Afghan and Syrian refugees. The project aims to prepare the basic resources, such as homes, schooling and access to health services, available for the refugees on their arrival, and to guide them through the available services to them.

Syrian Resettlement Programme Orientation Support Schemes, by EYST: EYST provides orientation support to Syrian Refugee families resettled in Swansea, Powys and Carmarthenshire under the Home Office Syrian Resettlement Programme. This includes support for families to access key services including housing, health, education, and community safety services, as well as English classes and moving into volunteering, training and employment. Volunteering is one of the key issues that the EYST project focuses on. As the participant stated in the research, volunteering and establishing social networks for refugees is crucial, not only to give them the opportunity of work experience, but also to deal with the psychological damage that women carry with them. 297

Although organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers actively work on meeting the basic needs of these groups, there is a need for a more comprehensive, inclusive and unifying policy framework, as well as support for these organisations by government agencies, to make the orientation and integration of refugees and asylum seekers more effective.

Supporting women to tackle some cultural barriers, some of which limit the career development and advancement of BAME women, would also help them. Cultural barriers, such as the strict understanding of roles affiliated to men and women in a family setting, cannot be overcome with a top-down approach, or with policies. Yet, the issues emerging as part of a culture can be revisited in the community and solved through social networks at the personal level. Research participants gave several examples of community action regarding this; such as talking with the elderly members of the family for the education of young women. 298 Communicating about cultural barriers and providing support within personal and community networks is an effective way of dealing with them.

Some research participants also highlighted that cultural barriers should not be seen as a stigma by people outside of that community. Stigmas developed around cultural barriers might cause an exclusive approach, as stereotypes are likely to emerge as a result. Officers, particularly in public services, should think beyond those stereotypes to develop an inclusive approach. 299

In addition, nobody should feel excluded because of their cultural practices. As one of the participants remarked, to promote diversity there is a need for a cultural shift: “Rather than saying that you are not fitting in this culture, people should say our culture should be diverse and you are welcome!” 300

---

297 EYST 2 interview.
298 Interview with EMWWAAA.
299 Refugee Council Wales
300 CAVC interview
6.3.2. **Mentoring**

A strong recommendation from research participants is to improve existing mentoring schemes and create more for BAME women. The research participant from Race Council Cymru passionately supports the belief that BAME women should invest in each other:

> We have a mandate, we have an impetus, we have an imperative to share what we’ve learnt with other women who are genuinely seeking to improve themselves.

The participant from MEND who worked in the NHS prior to her role told us her experience about how women can support each other:

> Because a lot of people know my science background, there are a lot of people who come to me for advice and I literally tell them what to type in when you look at the NHS job website, you know the kind of things, because sometimes the jobs are there but they don't know how to search for it. I think a lot of [the advice] comes from friends, and people who are already in the industry, because they can bring the insight to them. It’s very important to have BAME in the work places, and not only that, in high positions, within their institutions, because they can help others. This is exactly how I did, my line manager in the NHS was a Muslim woman. She is the one who helped me to get me the job.

Mentoring provides BAME women with the support to develop their career pathways, overcome the barriers that they face and access networks. The majority of the research participants told us that they also mentor women from different backgrounds as well as organising mentoring schemes for BAME women.301

---

**Reverse mentoring scheme by Women Connect First:** The project aims to match BAME women with women in public appointments in Wales, including AMs. In this project, the mentees share their experiences and problems with their mentors to raise awareness about the barriers they face in their professional and day-to-day lives.

---

Third sector organisations working with communities are critical agencies in terms of gaining access to communities and providing them support. They do not only help BAME women in many different areas, but also provide an invaluable, cost-efficient service in many instances. They are a bridge between the public and private sectors and communities. However, these organisations are mostly reliant on public funding and voluntary work, and often do not have sufficient resources to sustain their services. The lack of core funding in many of these organisations creates a problem when trying to sustain the progress of projects when their funding ends.

The issues around the resources and funding of third sector organisations were commonly shared by research participants. One of the research participants highlighted the situation as such:

> We are a small organisation, a community grassroots association. We struggle to survive. In a way, we’re overwhelmed by all the requests from all different organisations. Yes, they’re always saying we are the bridge; we can help them to access the whole community, that’s true! But, they use us for free. That it is like you’re always there. We can’t be always there

301 MEND, Race Council Cymru, Women Connect First interviews.
and free. Such organisations like ours don’t have the budget. I don’t have the budget to pay for you to do your promotion. I don’t mind doing it, but I don’t have the budget. I really want to meet all the requests, but it just couldn’t happen. I would really like it if they want us to promote their service, promote their job vacancies, why don’t they have a little bit of funding for us? Yes, we are a voluntary organisation but we are also a business. 302

There is a strong call from the research participants to Welsh Government, funding organisations and employers to recognise the value of the work these organisations provide and support them with funding in order to carry on providing services that help individuals and communities gain access to the labour market.

6.4. Representation of BAME Women and role models

Increasing the representation of BAME women in the economy and public life is one of the key areas that research participants are keen to address when tackling the barriers faced by BAME women. As a solution to increase the representation of BAME women, research participants suggested bringing in quotas. Quotas might be a step along the way to equality, especially at senior management levels.

As a starting point, research participants call for the implementation of quotas for public appointments and civil services:

**Ethnic Youth Support Team/2**: Certainly we would like to see the public sector implementing quotas.

**Ethnic Minority Welsh Women Achievement Association**: They [Welsh Government, employers] have to have places earmarked for BAME women and that will only be given to BAME women. So, this will in fact encourage BAME women to apply for positions.

The lack of confidence is a factor affecting BAME women’s representation at senior levels and visibility in economic and public life. In many cases, BAME women’s achievements and talents are underestimated. The research participants from EMWWAA, who became a successful name in her profession, said that she didn’t have the confidence to challenge people who underestimate her, and she kept quiet about her achievements. But she suggests that women should not be quiet about their achievements, and organisations should work together to celebrate BAME women:

I should have challenged but I did not and if I was given another chance I would. So that’s the change in me; and I’m sure this is the change we are going through in other women as well, that don’t keep quiet! If you keep quiet, nobody will know what should be done for BAME women, come up, say something. You know, even if you are not heard keep on, keep on at it... Also, we need to work together. I think this solidarity is another aspect because when you are representing a minority population you are not going to be heard that easily but it’s a joint thing, if it’s reinforced... So that’s why we need to work in a group actually and we have to lead from the same hymn book.

---

302 Chinese Association in Wales interview.
**EMWWAA (Ethnic Minority Welsh Women Achievement Association) Awards:** The association aims to promote the empowerment of BAME women and girls in Wales through recognition of their contributions, identifying role models for the communities and facilitating community cohesion and integration within mainstream systems. EMWWAA has coordinated a bi-annual awards ceremony since 2010 to recognise women and girls of ethnic minority origin. EMWWAA profiles the achievements of women who face multiple disadvantages—not only are they women, but they are also ethnic minority women who have faced barriers of language, culture, appearance and religion. EMWWAA seeks to make visible how these women have made significant contributions to Wales and to Welsh life and how they have used their talent to help and inspire others.

Role models are among the key actors to overcoming the barriers to BAME women. In this research, we interviewed representatives from organisations working with and supporting BAME women, most of whom had become role models themselves. They all emphasised that they have received support from individuals and organisations throughout their careers and they strongly support the view that it is important to have role models visible in the public realm. Furthermore, they also strongly advocate that role models should be hands-on, working in the community with women to support their development.

**Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND) work for better representation of Muslims in politics and media to fight against Islamophobia. They organise shadowing schemes for young Muslims with their MPs and AMs to help them engage in mainstream politics and organise politics master classes. They also organise media master classes and workshops to encourage them to tell other about their own experience publicly. The director of MEND states that**

> Many of the stories made about women in the media and Muslim women specifically are not told by them. You always see the Muslim women voices completely missed in the media, like, you know, they wouldn't talk about, talk to women who wears the hijab when it comes to hijab issues, or niqab issues or you know, job and employment and all of that, completely missed.

Having received a lot of support herself to be a spokesperson, she strongly emphasises the importance of empowering BAME women in public life. The media workshops aim to boost the confidence of Muslim women and encourage them to engage with the media and talk about their own problems, experiences and opinions publicly, become a representative of their communities, and tackle the discrimination by the mainstream media by making efficient complaints about negative stories.

### 6.5. Developing and improving communication

The research participants acknowledge that most of the barriers that BAME participants experience can be overcome or tackled with communication. Developing the means for effective communication is one of the key recommendations of research participants. For example, in many cases, the requests of the employees from different BAME groups, such as praying areas or breaks in
periods of different religious celebration, or flexible working, are not difficult to achieve. Yet, in most of the cases, either these requests are ignored or overlooked, or approached with prejudice. In order to overcome this problem and create a comfortable workplace for BAME women, developing communication and understanding their needs are crucial to start with.

On this issue, managers and employers have a duty to create and improve communication with their employees from different backgrounds. Understanding their cultures and taking off the pressure of the fear of exclusion and alienation from the shoulders of BAME people will initiate a dynamic and productive working environment for BAME women. As one of the participants said:

> If they [employers] are not aware of their [BAME women’s] culture, those barriers will always remain. They [employers] have got to make a special effort to learn about their culture.

Being in the community and interacting with them is a key element of tackling the barriers. Events organised in the heart of the communities will help employers, policy makers and other organisations proactively access BAME individuals as well as give them the real picture of what needs to be done to overcome the barriers. Engagement with communities and working with linking organisations are a way to overcome the barriers in accessing employment and support for BAME women. The reasons indicated by businesses and organisations about difficulty in accessing the BAME communities are seen as irrelevant:

> I think it's a poor excuse in 2018 to say that we don't know how to engage with BAME communities or with people with disabilities. There are so many equality and diversity practitioners who want to engage with employers to do better, there are so many engagement programmes on work in to Wales programme, work in health programmes, work in choice programmes, all these different programmes to help people source employment.

As the research participant from NTFW indicated, engagement with communities can be as easy as being present in the community and talking with them:

> I remember; when I was first employed with XXXX as operational manager, they very kindly put forward a meeting with all the strategic managers of the different departments in the council. They all sat there in the council chamber, waiting for my words of wisdom(!), and then one of them said to me “What engagement method are you going to use to speak to the communities to get them involved in the programme?” I said “I'm going to talk to them!”

### Community Job Compact, by Citizens Cymru:

With the community job compact project, Citizens Wales aims to bring together members of the community from Butetown, Grangetown and Riverside with major employers in Cardiff Bay. The project brings local people and employers together to tackle poverty, unemployment and under-representation in the workforce. The Compact will encourage employers in the area to commit to best practice in relation to pay, equal opportunities, job security and development.

---

303 CACV, MEND, Focus group meeting on 15.05.2019.
304 EMWWAAA interview.
305 NTFW interview.
6.6. Promoting diversity and improving policy frameworks

The research participants shared the idea that policies should be prepared in consultation with the community. In particular, the equality and diversity policies need the participation of people in order to make them work in practice. The policies should address the barriers that BAME individuals from different background encounter in their professional and personal lives.

The participants to the research believe that people comprehend diversity better if they interact with other people from different backgrounds. Some research participants told us that they embraced the real meaning of diversity by meeting and interacting with people from different backgrounds, which made them think about their work on equality and diversity from different perspectives.

The research participants suggest that it is better to discuss how to put the equality and diversity policies into practice with people in order to tailor the actions needed in the workplace. The underlying issue is that the policies should not estimate the needs of a person, but the needs should be clearly communicated in the course of developing the policies and putting them into practice. Policy practices in particular should be considered with people, openly communicated and tailored with a bottom up approach. As the research participant from NTFW stressed:

If you’ve got a policy and if you’ve got things that are going to make a difference, don’t only shout it to the policy makers and the funders, let the target community know you are doing it. You know, sometimes you have to click to three times to find that what people’s policy are, if you’re a person, "we welcome opportunities to work with BAME community", that should be on front page, that should be on all your pamphlets, that should be, people shouldn’t have to work to find that, because if they are anything like me, you know, if people, if you can’t find people I always say then let people find you.

---

Faith friendly workplace, NHS: The NHS was given as a good practice example by one of our research participants as they communicate with staff members about their needs, particularly related to their faith.

In Ramadan, the NHS, and also my manager - a Muslim - gave me flexible hours. I didn’t have to start at 9 o’clock, because you know Ramadan in the summer, we have to stay up till the morning prayer and the praying is exhausting. They told me, "you can start working at 11 o’clock and finish at 7pm. So still 8 hours but I start late. It was a very good gesture because I’ve done all the work, there was no impact on the productivity, at the same time, I felt welcomed.

---

306 MEND, Women Connect First , PCS/TUC interviews.
307 MEND interview.
308 MEND interview.
Policies can make people feel welcomed and safe. Communicating the policies and shaping them with the needs of the people in mind, create a welcoming and safe workplace in which ethnic minority people can feel comfortable. As one of the research participants says,

It’s not about having policy papers somewhere, or talks about diversity, but putting it into action. It’s just about feeling welcome, and it’s the same thing with the Hindu people, or black people, it’s about helping these diverse groups according to their needs, and it’s how you welcome them.\textsuperscript{309}

Another participant also said:

I think it’s really important for employers or public sector employers in particular, to be visible about the diversity and equality policies and practices achievements in their workforce, in particular for women. Because if they are anything like me I choose very carefully, where I work.\textsuperscript{310}

In terms of Welsh Government policies and actions, the power of the Fair Work Commission and its potential impact on the public procurement requirements are seen as an opportunity for Wales to tackle the barriers that BAME women experience in work.\textsuperscript{311} For example, if certain requirements are added to the public procurement procedures, such as elimination of zero-hour contracts, equality and diversity policies, opportunity of outcome for all employees, trade union recognition and collective bargaining purposes, this will improve the working conditions of women. The research participant from TUC/PCS underlines that:

If we have fair work legislation embedded here in Wales, and it becomes a reality, workers’ terms and conditions, regardless of whether you work in the public sector or private sector will mean something and people will be properly protected, and employers will be regulated.

Another important suggestion in terms of policies is to make an ‘equality impact assessment’ (EqIA) at the beginning of all policy documents.\textsuperscript{312} An equality impact assessment is a process designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate against any disadvantaged or vulnerable people and considers the potential impact on people. EqIA is applicable to businesses as well as any government agencies and some organisations carry out these assessments, however there is a concern that it is not taken seriously and can be seen as a tick-box activity.\textsuperscript{313} If assessments are carried out comprehensively for each policy and scheme, this will not only improve the potential impact of the policies but it will also provide a monitoring tool for the implementation of the policies.

Policies alone are not sufficient to achieve equality and diversity. The majority of research participants underlined that there should be measurable monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of policies. The research participant from NTFW indicated the importance of monitoring as such:

\textsuperscript{309} MEND interview.
\textsuperscript{310} NTFW interview.
\textsuperscript{311} PCS/TUC interview.
\textsuperscript{312} PCS/TUC interview, Fazia Shaheen (Director of Class Think-tank), Keynote speech at State of the Nation, Chwarae Teg, 28.01.2019.
\textsuperscript{313} PCS/TUC interview
[Many organisation] would say "well we are trying" but trying is the fact that nobody is actually monitoring what it is that they are trying to do. They say "no why, we are doing this and nothing is working" well how do you know, what is working and what is not working if you’re not monitoring anything at all, what are you, are you monitoring the impact that you have, are you monitoring you know, you know, are you going to different places, what are you doing?

Setting targets and monitoring the available policies are critical actions for both public bodies and businesses to achieve effective implementation of policies. Diversity targets should be auditable by auditing organisations like ESTYN.

While targets are being set, positive actions should be considered.\textsuperscript{314} Employers and organisations can address any imbalance of opportunity or disadvantage that an individual with a protected characteristic could face as a positive action while setting the diversity targets. Positive actions, in fact should be embedded in policymaking.

\textsuperscript{314} Round table discussion 15.05.2019.
7. Conclusion and recommendations

This chapter summarises the findings of our report and expands on and supports the calls to action made directly by participants in the previous chapter. It also includes some of our own recommendations based on quantitative and qualitative data, the literature review in the substantive report and our previous work. We have divided these recommendations into key actors and decision makers so they are able to take the action necessary to improve BAME women’s access to and experience within the Welsh economy.

This research reveals the extent of discrimination and inequality experienced by BAME women, who face barriers to the labour market shaped not only by gender, but also racial inequality and ethnic segregation. The significant impact that this has on BAME women’s representation in the Welsh economy is stark, and there are challenges to overcome to ensure BAME women in Wales can achieve their potential. We need action across business, government and Trade Unions and other civil society organisations to tackle the barriers BAME women face, with the voices of BAME women at the centre of progress in order to prevent the inequality and discrimination they experience.

BAME women experience greater disadvantage in the Welsh economy than is experienced by White women or BAME men, as a result they are often in more precarious work, or unemployed and at a greater risk of poverty. Self-employment rates are higher among BAME women, often as a result of difficulty entering the labour market or to avoid discrimination; it is also important to recognise that BAME women face additional barriers in setting up or accessing support for their own businesses too.

This low level of success in finding good quality jobs in Wales is causing a ‘brain drain’ as young BAME people leave Wales in order to find work. This is not only due to the lack of job opportunities, but also the experiences of discrimination in the workplace.

The lack of specific training and support for BAME women which is tailored to their needs and circumstances is also a significant barrier. Cuts to the number and capacity of programmes supporting BAME women accessing and progressing in employment have had a substantial negative impact and need to be rectified.

Additional challenges include language barriers, a lack of social and professional networks, the minority of visible BAME role models and the implementation gap within some policies designed to support BAME women. All of these factors compound and result in BAME women being further away from the Welsh labour market, and unable to fulfil their potential.

Difficulties also remain in gaining a full and accurate assessment of the experiences of BAME women due to the substantial gap in disaggregated and regularly monitored data. This research has attempted to correct some of these gaps in knowledge with qualitative data and evidence from BAME women and the organisations that are working to support them. Data also does not often reflect the barriers experienced in a Welsh specific context, which is crucial in our understanding of these issues and how to tackle them in the Welsh economy.
Bias, discrimination and racism form some of the most significant barriers experienced by BAME women. These issues are particularly pertinent within the current political climate where heightened tensions and divisions have led to an increase in incidents of hate crime and discrimination in recent years. There was a clear call from participants that in order to address and counter this damaging narrative, we need a strong collective message across the public sector, private sector and civil society about the benefits of diversity, and a zero tolerance approach to racism and hate crime.

Throughout our research there was a clear message that the onus should be on those in positions of power to reach out to BAME women and ensure that they are represented, able to fully participate in the economy and public life, and that their contributions are recognised and valued. There is no such thing as ‘hard to reach’ communities, and we all need to be ready to change our approach to ensure that services and policies are accessible to and delivering for everyone in our communities. Coordinated action is needed from decision-makers across Wales to address the significant challenges that BAME women face, and ensure that all women are able to fully participate in the Welsh economy and public life.

**Recommendations from the research:**

**For UK Government:**

1. Improve provision of Legal Aid and access to free, professional legal services
2. Skills conversion and recognition procedures should be improved and simplified. Government should work with universities to do this, and ensure that support agencies like Job Centre Plus are able to advise about professional pathways correctly.
3. Job Centres should be adequately resourced and provided with ongoing training and professional development, particularly around unconscious bias and intersectionality.
4. Legislation regulating the status of asylum seekers should be revisited, and changes in their right to work should be considered.
5. Reporting of hate crime should be simplified, victim support should be provided throughout the process and charges for offenders should be reconsidered. Online abuse and harassment should not be tolerated. Awareness raising and training about hate crime and hate incidents should be carried out in all departments of the state institutions.

**For Welsh Government:**

6. Lead by example and prioritise improving diversity within its workforce and public representatives.
7. Commit to evidence-based policy-making through an intersectional, gender lens. Engagement and consultation with diverse communities should be prioritised to strengthen the evidence-base and plug gaps in quantitative data.
8. Recognise the value of voluntary organisations providing informal support to BAME women and the significant impact they have. These services should receive sustainable funding.
9. Review the eligibility criteria for the new childcare offer to ensure it will deliver for BAME women who want to access and progress in work.
10. Increase the number and capacity of ESOL classes available across Wales particularly in high demand areas. These classes should be prioritised in community locations, accessible by
public transport and where possible have childcare facilities so BAME women are able to attend.

11. Extend and reinforce its commitment to equality and diversity through procurement and other spending powers, placing requirements on businesses who are recipients of Welsh Government funding and purchases. Suppliers of Welsh Government services should have an equality accreditation.

12. Ensure that support for business, both directly and through Business Wales and Development Bank of Wales, is accessible to BAME women, and provided in a way that meets their needs. As the outreach services of Business Wales have proven successful, we recommend developing more community engagement to achieve accessible support programmes to BAME women.

13. Welsh Government should put in place a strategy for tackling poverty that recognises the way gender and ethnicity shapes risks and experiences of poverty. This strategy should include clear measures against which progress can be measured.

14. To overcome the data deficiency, Welsh Government’s Statistics and Research department might consider different means of collecting data including improving regional and geographically focused data collection and more qualitative research.

15. Welsh Government should consider how to integrate equality and diversity into its auditing, inspection and regulation roles, promoting the adoption of effective policies and the need to evidence how they have contributed to improved outcomes.

16. Welsh Government should adopt the recommendations in the upcoming Gender Equality Review Phase 2 to ensure that models of policy-making work to advance equality and support all women.

For Businesses:

17. Set diversity targets, across a range of levels, alongside a clear action plan. This should include regular monitoring and reporting on progress.

18. Equality & Diversity and Unconscious Bias training should be delivered widely to employees across the private sector, and this should be mandatory for those in public facing and senior roles, particularly those involved in recruitment.

19. Job advertisements and recruitment processes should be reviewed in order to become more attractive to diverse candidates; businesses should make explicitly clear their commitment to equality and diversity and blind shortlisting should take place as standard practice.

20. Work with organisations supporting BAME communities to ensure roles are fairly advertised and ensure visibility within BAME communities.

21. Take steps to ensure diverse recruitment panels, and consider independent or external panel members where needed.

22. Develop clear equality and diversity policies, in conjunction with employees, which are keenly and consistently communicated in the workplace.

23. Clear and confidential reporting mechanisms should be developed to report incidents of discrimination, harassment and abuse. Businesses should collaborate with trade unions and organisations tackling hate crime and incidents to set up clear reporting mechanisms.

24. Mentoring and professional networks should consider how they can be more accessible to BAME women, and ensure opportunities are being promoted widely.
For third sector, trade unions and other organisations:

25. Trade unions should diversify their membership and ensure that BAME women are fairly included and represented.
26. Trade Union representatives should receive unconscious bias training and ensure that all reported incidents which are related to racial bias or discrimination are taken seriously.
27. Organisations promoting and delivering support programmes such as mentoring, training and career development schemes should ensure they are widely advertised in the communities accessible to BAME women.
Appendix 1

Chapter 2

The McGregor-Smith review - Call for action to business

The McGregor Smith Review\textsuperscript{315} identifies six actions for businesses to overcome barriers to BAME people in employment and create an inclusive workplace:

1- Gathering Data
Organisations must gather and monitor the data by:
- Setting, then publishing aspirational targets;
- Publishing data to show how they are progressing;
- Doing more to encourage employees to disclose their ethnicity.

2- Taking Accountability
Senior executives must take accountability by
- Ensuring executive sponsorship for key targets;
- Embedding diversity as a Key Performance Indicator;
- Participating in reverse mentoring schemes to share experience and improve opportunities;
- Being open about how they have achieved success, in particular Chairs, CEOs and CFOs in their annual reports.

3- Raise Awareness
All employers must raise awareness of diversity issues by:
- Ensuring unconscious bias training is undertaken by all employees;
- Tailoring unconscious bias training to reflect roles – e.g. workshops for executives;
- Establishing inclusive networks;
- Providing mentoring and sponsorship.

4- Examine recruitment
HR directors must critically examine recruitment processes by:
- Rejecting non-diverse shortlists;
- Challenging educational selection bias;
- Drafting job specification in a more inclusive way and using relevant and appropriate language in job specifications;
- Introducing diversity to interview panels;
- Creating work experience opportunities for everyone, not just the chosen few.

5- Change Processes
Responsible teams must change processes to encourage greater diversity by:
- Being transparent and fair in reward and recognition;
- Improving the diversity in supply chains;
- Being open about how the career pathway works.

6- Government Support
Employers should be supported in making these changes by Government. Specifically, Government should:
- Legislate to make publishing data mandatory;
- Create a free, online unconscious bias training resource;
- Develop a guide to talking about race at work;

\textsuperscript{315} Race in the Workplace, McGregor-Smith review. \textit{Op cit.} p. 4-5
• Work with Business in the Community and others to develop an online portal of best practice;
• Seek out ways to celebrate success – such as a top 100 BME employers list.
Write to all institutional funds who have holdings in FTSE companies and ask them for their policies on diversity and inclusion and how they ensure that the representation of BME individuals is considered across the employee base of the companies where they hold investments.

Chapter 3

Ethnic group categories used in the Census 2011

A: White
- British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish or Welsh
- Irish
- Gypsy or Irish traveller
- Any other white background

B: Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Asian
- Any other mixed or multiple ethnic background

C: Asian or Asian British
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

D: Black, African, Caribbean or black British
- Caribbean
- African
- Any other black British, African or Caribbean background, please specify

E: Other ethnic group
- Arab
- Any other ethnic group, please specify

316 The list is composed from the ONS Census website.
Some examples of ‘any other’ categories are:
• ‘Any Other White’ - Polish and Greek,
• ‘Any Other Mixed’ - Black British and White Asian and White and Black African,
• ‘Any Other Asian’ – Korean and Japanese,
• ‘Any Other Black’ - Black American and Black European,
• ‘Any Other ethnic group’- Polynesian and Melanesian,
The open access Annual population Survey (APS) data only demonstrates the general categories of ethnic groups, i.e. White, Mixed ethnic group, Asian or Asian British, Black or Black British, Other Ethnic Group. By request, APS provides figures with more sub-categories included.
### Appendix 2

**Interview list**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Interviewee’s Role</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Women Connect First</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td>28.09.2018</td>
<td>01:06:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Muslim Engagement and Development/ Muslim Council Wales</td>
<td>Assistant General Secretary/Member</td>
<td>15.10.2018</td>
<td>01:09:43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 National Training Federation Wales (NTFW)</td>
<td>Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead</td>
<td>22.10.2018</td>
<td>01:32:47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Public and Commercial Services Union/ Trade Union Congress (PCS/TUC)</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>07.11.2018</td>
<td>02:09:43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Hayaat Women Trust</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>07.11.2018</td>
<td>01:44:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel</td>
<td>Programme Officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Race Equality First</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>15.11.2018</td>
<td>01:12:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 EYST (Ethnic Youth Support Team)</td>
<td>Programme Manager</td>
<td>22.11.2018</td>
<td>01:27:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Chinese Association in Wales</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>23.11.2018</td>
<td>01:13:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Race Council Cymru</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>23.11.2018</td>
<td>01:06:08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 EYST (Ethnic Youth Support Team)</td>
<td>Research Director</td>
<td>26.11.2018</td>
<td>01:11:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Refugee Council Wales</td>
<td>Education and Employment Coordinator, Researcher</td>
<td>27.11.2018</td>
<td>01:03:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Displaces People In Action</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>29.11.2018</td>
<td>01:07:33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Ethnic Minority Welsh Women Achievement Association (EMWWAA)</td>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>18.12.2018</td>
<td>00:58:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Siema Biz Forum/Business Wales (North Wales)</td>
<td>Polish Business Community Rep</td>
<td>17.12.2018</td>
<td>01:00:33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 North Wales Association for Multicultural Integration (NWAMI)</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>21.12.2018</td>
<td>00:51:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC)</td>
<td>Equality Diversity and Community Development Manager</td>
<td>08.02.2019</td>
<td>01:06:52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total duration** 21:23:54
### Round Table Discussion Participants

**15.05.2019, Cardiff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Participant’s Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslim Engagement and Development/ Muslim Council Wales</td>
<td>Assistant General Secretary/Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC)</td>
<td>Equality Diversity and Community Development Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC)</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mymuna Mohamood</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>