**3.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter, my literature review illustrates critical race theory in the background theory and focal theory to argue the hypothesis, *that Afrophobia marginalises people of African descent from access to universal human rights in neoliberal western democracies*. I advocate the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** to “integrate (universal) human rights into national priorities where inadequacies exist in policy interventions,” (UNGA, 2016, p.11). Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can enable an inclusive, dynamic, and holistic human rights approach to social, economic, and environmental development of marginalised African diaspora communities. Notably, SDG 10 of the 2030 Agenda aims to reduce inequality within and between countries, on the grounds of race or ethnicity, and other protected characteristics. My thesis therefore advocates state parties implement SDG Target 10.3, “to ensure equal opportunity (…) by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions”. This can facilitate interventions that specifically address Afrophobia, such as the **International Decade for People of African Descent (IDPAD) 2015 -2024**.

People of African descent amount to approximately 8 million in Europe (Farkas, 2017); but are disproportionately marginalised in access to universal human rights. I therefore argue strategic interventions to combat Afrophobia, are required of signatories to the **International Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) 1965**. For the purposes of this thesis, the phrase ‘people of African descent’ is used interchangeably with Black people, African diaspora, and Africans. This includes African immigrants and the descendants of African immigrants, including Africans enslaved during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and similar historical contexts.

In that regard, I self-identify as a member of the African diaspora, being of Nigerian and Jamaican parentage. My thesis is therefore auto-ethnographic due to my shared ethnicity and common experiences of institutionalised, structural and systemic racism with other people of African heritage globally. My research design and methodology include strategies and tactics for data collection and analysis in ensuing chapters. For example, I summarize case studies on policy interventions that address Afrophobia, and an interpretive policy analysis of the **European Union’s Council Directive 2000/43/EC**, otherwise known as Race Equality Directive.

**3.2 Rationale**

My central research question queries, *can people of African descent better fulfil universal human rights, where state parties implement the 2030 Agenda to achieve IDPAD’s thematic objectives of recognition, justice, and development*? With this in mind, my research design and methodology detail what the research is about, the methodology used and why, as well as how the methodology and methods link to conduct of research. The substantive aim of this research is to empower African diaspora communities to better fulfil universal human rights, by critically analysing and evaluating implementation of anti-racism norms and policies. My methodological aim is to interpret and create new and original knowledge for understanding and critical evaluation, of European public bodies’ impact in reducing Afrophobia, within the normative framework of the 2030 Agenda.

**3.3 Ontology and Epistemology**

**3.3.1** **Ontology**, of which the two branches are objectivism and constructionism,may be defined as assumptions about the nature of reality. Objectivism “takes as given, an objective world of determinant qualities, where each object exists independently of any relationship to any particular observer, and thus is identical in principle to all observers,” (Hazelrigg, 1986, p. S2). In contrast, constructionism insists, “consciousness is integral to the world of lived experience” and “produces the structures of our perceptual world,” (Hazelrigg, 1986, p. S3). Constructionism is appropriate to defend my thesis, because structures and processes discussed in narratives employed, reflect values, beliefs and perception that are generally not identical. Culturally specific research topics such as race are appropriately theorised by constructionist ontology, which assumes human beings view the world in differing ways and portray it accordingly for their various purposes. Moreover, constructionists assert “the World is produced and reinforced by humans through action and interaction” (Goldkuhl, 2012, p.138). In that regard, my ontology challenges notions of racism being individualistic aberrations in the rule of law, asserted by traditional legal theorists, through the lens of Critical Race Theory. Critical Race Theory (CRT) argues racism is systemic in nature and effects, which facilitates knowledge creation for impact on institutions, structures and systems.

**3.3.2** My thesis defines **epistemology** as justified true belief or knowledge about reality, that is relevant to the study of a discipline. The three branches of epistemology are positivism, realism, and interpretivism. Positivism and realism employ scientific approaches inappropriate for this research, because empiricist interpretation of data alone is better suited to objectivist ontologies. CRT employs cognitive elements, i.e. meanings, interpretations, and beliefs that rely on constructionism, and are pivotal to interpretivism. For example, my thesis advocates SDG Target 10.3 and SDG Target 16.b, to promote non-discriminatory laws, and facilitate inclusive holistic achievement of the 2030 Agenda. ***This demonstrates interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study***, by creating knowledge for understanding that critically analyses norm implementation, through the lens of critical race theory.

Goldkuhl (2012, p.142) distinguishes between interpretivist and pragmatic epistemologies, whilst summarizing fusion of their common ontological assumptions as symbolic interactionism, i.e. “meaningful action based in evolutionary social interaction.” In that regard, my thesis demonstrates pragmatism goes beyond interpretivism, by employing CRT to create knowledge for understanding that is also useful for action. Pragmatism includes features of realism, that acknowledges “knowledge is viewed as both constructed, and based on the reality of the world we experience and live in” (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.29). With this in mind, CRT facilitates researching race as a social construct through differing lenses of realism and interpretivism, to generate data theory, through action, intervention and creation of constructive knowledge. This validates and justifies pragmatic study to address Afrophobia.

Robson and McCartan (2016, p.28) state the central idea of pragmatism “is that the meaning of a concept consists of its practical implications (…) using whatever philosophical or methodological approach works best for the particular research problem at issue.” Notably, CRT argues the combination of poor social policies and programs, unfair economic arrangements, and bad policies amount to systemic racism. My research design and methodology therefore demonstrate pragmatism by relying on various stakeholders’ perspectives, beliefs and understanding of anti-racism norms, for policy interventions. For example, I advocate implementation of SDG Target 10.3 and SDG Target 16.b, to combat Afrophobia, in accordance with ICERD 1965 and RED 2000. This requires knowledge generation “through action and experience as well as theory and praxis, that emphasizes democratic participation of all stakeholders (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). As a result, the researcher and the researched democratically share, experience, and interpret the uniqueness of individual knowledge as well as social knowledge.

Functional pragmatism illustrates a response to transdisciplinary debates between social constructionists and realists, on ontological and epistemological approaches to researching race. My research design is primarily concerned with construction of new and original knowledge, that empowers people of African descent to fulfil universal human rights equally, generally and globally. Functional pragmatism is adopted to highlight useful policy interventions for local and general practice, that demonstrate the utility of or purpose for pursuing the research project, (Goldkuhl, 2012, p.141). For example, equality data collection in the USA and UK provides empirical evidence that people of African descent suffer disproportionately higher rates of hypertension than other ethnicities. Collaborative research also indicates our communities are marginalised from healthcare, by our “invisibility” in European countries where statistical data on racial or ethnic origin is not collected.

My thesis therefore advocates fully disaggregated equality data collection, i.e. SDG Target 17.18, to address racial disparities in the implementation of universal human rights. This illustrates methodological pragmatism: by emphasizing the role of the researcher in creating data and theories; reflected by my close observation of my own and others’ research actions, (Goldkuhl, 2012, p.141). For example, my research design and methodology reflect CRT which radically challenges traditional legal theorists discourses on racism, by employing narratives from “othered” communities.

**3.4 Research Methodology**

This innovative and dynamic research methodology: relies on cognitive elements to critically analyse the impact of the 2030 Agenda in combatting Afrophobia; and demonstrates “pragmatism goes beyond mere scientific quantification of data when positing realities to achieve equality and social justice, by proposing truth as relative to time, place and purpose”, (Allan, 2005). I locate my thesis as transdisciplinary: demonstrating the paradigm of Afrocentrism by adopting Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR); within a normative theoretical framework of universal human rights. BEAR with its historical roots in the Chicago School of Sociology, is complementary to researching race as a sociological construct from a pragmatic perspective, in the fields of African Studies as well as in Politics and International Relations..

BEAR facilitates employing CRT as a theoretical approach to conduct of African centred research, participatory research and action research, through *interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study*. CRT exemplifies interpretivist and pragmatic epistemologies that are strategic to interpreting participatory research and action research paradigms and illustrate shared beliefs between different research groups (Madill and Gough, 2008). For example, the dichotomy between cosmopolitan and relativist theories illustrates opposing research paradigms in the field of Politics and International Relations, which are asserted through practice, (Madill and Gough, 2008). My research methodology builds on cosmopolitan interpretations of normative theory that consider paradigms to be all-encompassing perspectives, beliefs, ways of experiencing and thinking. I do this from an Afrocentric perspective that illustrates democratic participation of various policy actors, including narratives from different interpretive communities for policy analysis.

With this in mind, my methodology demonstrates BEAR’s key elements which are action research, participatory research and African centred research. Kurt Lewin’s widely accepted theory of **action research** was developed in the 1940s, which combines “systematic study with a social problem and the endeavours to solve it” (Herr and Anderson, 2015). Pragmatic action research adopts an empiricist approach in finding solutions to identifiable social problems, best achieved where the logic of action guides knowledge generation (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). My action plan therefore illustrates research actions for impact that empowers African diaspora communities, such as academic presentations to make claims for universal human rights, equality, and social justice. Moreover, these actions include desk research on the implementation of anti-racist norms and policies, e.g. ICERD 1965 and RED 2000, as well as field research. In that regard, action research enables critical analysis of IDPAD’s Programme of Action, which recommends “states should take all necessary action to give (…) quality public education without discrimination”, (UN, 2015a).

**Participatory research** at multilevel multi-stakeholder meetings enabled advocating IDPAD and the 2030 Agenda to combat Afrophobia. For example, I participated in roundtable meetings between the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI) of the European Parliament and civil society that discussed policy interventions to address Afrophobia. Participatory research observation in these events enabled data collection of narratives for use in interpretive policy analysis. This facilitates knowledge production to change local and general practice which illustrates functional pragmatism. Notably, participation in drafting an EU Resolution to empower people of African descent, led to further consultation between international civil society with UN OHCHR and UNESCO relating to the research project.

**African centred research** facilitates the BEAR methodological approach to *interpretivism that is instrumental for a pragmatic study*. Historical and contemporary academic sources from the African diaspora are strategically cited in relation to normative theory, organisational reports, and legal policies in this research project. This “emphasises endogenous knowledge production and promotion of indigenous culture fundamental to the African renaissance,” (Olurontobo, 2015, p.20). For example, BEAR is argued to be appropriate to conduct this research, because the identifiable problem is Afrophobia. African diaspora communities are not included as national minorities in many EU countries, some of whom do not collect data on ethnic minorities”. The [EU] legal framework (…) favours national minorities and is resilient to (…) the accommodation of new groups” (Farkas, 2017, p.8). My field research therefore includes civic engagement and community-led education with our communities, to advocate IDPAD’s thematic objectives, and the 2030 Agenda.

**3.4.1 BEAR as an appropriate methodological approach to conduct this study**

Akom (2011) is cited as “a model for Youth Participatory Action Research (…) named Black Emancipatory Action Research (BEAR) to focus on the implications of ‘‘racing research and researching race,’’ (Tintiangco-Cubales, 2015). BEAR facilitates empowerment of both the researcher and the researched through knowledge exchange. Moreover, in common with pragmatic action research, BEAR enables research actions to plan, develop, act with, and observe, e.g. collaborations for achievement of the 2030 Agenda and IDPAD’s thematic objectives. BEAR can therefore illustrate good practice in promoting systemic justice and equality through *interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study*, by creating new and original knowledge for understanding with impact, and knowledge for critical evaluation.

BEAR enables an emancipatory approach to critically analyse dichotomies between policy and practice. My thesis employs narratives from the Afrocentric paradigm to strategically address Afrophobia as a specific form of structural and systemic racism, and critically evaluates generalised approaches to implementation of anti-racism norms and policies. In that regard,

“Afrocentrism is nothing more than a legitimate demand, that Afrikan scholars, study their society from inside and cease to be purveyors of an alienated intellectual discourse (…) If we are adequately Afrocentric the international implications, will not be lost on the others” (Oloruntoba, 2015, p.17)

BEAR is therefore employed to pursuine interpretivism from an Afrocentric perspective, acknowledging cognitive elements, such as our values, perception and beliefs through the lens of CRT. BEAR “is rooted in Ethnic Studies, which develops critical consciousness through questioning objectivity and re-examining the researched–researcher relationship, while emphasizing principles of self-determination, social justice, equity, healing, and love” (Tintiangco-Cubales, 2015).

This research methodology illustrates transdisciplinary research because BEAR was primarily employed to demonstrate critical understanding of the current state of knowledge in the field of Politics and International Relations, and subsequently in African Studies. My objective is to strategically ensure attainment of SDGs improves the African diaspora’s access to, fulfilment of, and realisation of universal human rights. I maintain focus on our perspectives, understanding, and experience of anti-discrimination norms, policies and legislation, in relation to the central research question. This illustrates *interpretivism* by highlighting the importance of our human agency, in constructing perceptions of the World through action and interaction. For example, democratic participation of the researcher and the researched to achieve the three pillars of sustainability, i.e. social, economic and environmental development. Consequently, this can create new and original knowledge for understanding and critical evaluation of normative theory.

Furthermore, BEAR facilitates innovative, dynamic, and explicit auto-ethnography through multilevel multi-stakeholder collaboration to validate and address current knowledge of Afrophobia. This “repositions Black people as researchers, rather than the researched, and inspires collective empowerment, deepening of community knowledge, and movement towards racial and other forms of social justice” (Akom, 2011). Our “communities overwhelmingly are amongst the most disadvantaged (…) with very visible gaps in most social inclusion indicators” (Nwabuzo, 2015). For example, we are disproportionately detained in prisons, mental health institutions and immigration centres; and have poor access to adequate housing, health, and employment. Afrocentric critical evaluation of norm implementation is therefore demonstrably imperative in this research project, because the identifiable problem is Afrophobia. I argue narratives of unequal abusive development illustrate gaps in the implementation of anti-racist norms, that necessitate policy interventions to improve our access to universal human rights.

To conclude, Afrophobia with its foundations in colonial administrations’ ideologies of race as a social construct, dehumanises and denies us our universal human rights, (Nwabuzo, 2015). I therefore argue inclusive achievement of the 2030 Agenda requires our social, economic and environmental development, through strategic community empowerment. Democratic community participation in decision-making asserted by SDG 16, is imperative and fundamental, as illustrated by use of narratives in my methodology. Fully disaggregated equality data collection asserted by SDG Target 17.18, illustrates an empirical scientific epistemological element of realism, that is also imperative. BEAR therefore demonstrates *interpretivism instrumental to a pragmatic study* in my thesis, by going beyond creating new and original knowledge for understanding, for impact through social change.

**3.4.2 Strengths and Limitations of adopting the BEAR methodological approach**

Social constructionist qualitative research emphasizes the lived experience, where “the task of the researcher is to understand multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge” (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.25). My thesis therefore focuses on policymakers’ experiences, perceptions and understanding of Afrophobia, to illustrate gaps and interventions in norm implementation. This recognises “racial or ethnic identity may not correspond to that perceived or assumed by a third party. Identity is fluid (…) does not necessarily impact on how that person is perceived” (Farkas, 2017, p.37). In that regard, contemporary perceptions of people of African descent as inferior persist in “plantocracies” i.e. (neo) colonial structures and systems, in spite of anti-racism norms. BEAR facilitates policy interventions. For example, my thesis reiterates calls for a regional framework of national strategies to address Afrophobia, advocated in the Resolution on the Fundamental Rights of people of African Descent and Afro-Europeans, 2019.

BEAR enables an Afrocentric approach to combat Afrophobia, engaging CRT with qualitative research tactics such as African centred research, participatory research and action research. My methodology employs these research tactics for iterative theory building, to address gaps between policy and practice. For example, narratives in my research indicate Afro-Europeans national identity (e.g. French or British citizenship) demonstrably differs from cultural identity (e.g. self-identifying as African or Black). This accords us with differing rights and responsibilities which we can address through collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Political concepts of citizenship and identity also differ throughout Europe, which impacts on social cohesion, law enforcement and border controls. For example, BREXIT limits democratic community participation in decision-making to address Afrophobia within the EU, despite resilience of organisations and individuals who continue to collaborate. Another major limitation is that of nationalist policies and fiscal austerity; e.g. narratives gathered in this research claim populism has resulted in “watered down” national policies to address racism.

**3.4.3 Research Methods**

In 2015, I commenced BEAR at UWE Bristol by designing an action plan including both desk research and field research for data collection and analysis; “**action** is defined as the intentional modification of a given reality,” (Oquist, 1978, p.144). Strategic research actions were initiated by applying to conduct qualitative research in accordance with the university’s Health and Safety standards and research ethics. Securing UREC approval subsequently enabled further research actions to raise awareness of my thesis locally and internationally. For example, I made an academic presentation to the ENAR General Assembly in 2015 that enabled capacity building of my research sample. I also designed and distributed Participant Consent Forms and Interview Schedules to potential participants who were assured anonymity and confidentiality. Dates were mutually agreed for audio-recoded semi-structured interviews, using Skype or a recorder in face-to-face interviews with the multilevel multistakeholder sample, and backup notes taken in case the recording equipment failed.

Oquist (1978, p.144) defines “**research**” as knowledge production, illustrated by actionable data and knowledge that informs policy development to monitor and address Afrophobia. For example, my academic presentations and other actionable data outputs raise awareness of links between achievement of the 2030 Agenda and IDPAD’s thematic objectives. Moreover, BEAR methodological strategies for community involvement, including the use of experiential and critical research questions in the Interview Schedule, facilitate knowledge creation. Experiential research questions prioritise narratives of interviewees’ perspectives, understanding and experience of Afrophobia and anti-racism policies; whereas critical research questions enable representation, construction and deconstruction of these policies. My research actions include collaboration, which enables “comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action” (Lewin, 1946, pp.202-203). This implies the need for ongoing cooperation between the researcher and the researched; I therefore continue collaborative research with ENAR and other stakeholders working to combat Afrophobia.

“**Policy** consists of the needs and interests, values and norms, ends and objectives, plans and programs, operations and evaluations, and resources related to a given action or potential action” (Oquist, 1978, pp.144-145). In that regard, Chapter 5 of my thesis demonstrates interpretive policy analysis of the Race Equality Directive (RED) 2000, which EU state parties transpose into their national legislation. Communities of meaning otherwise known as interpretive communities such as public bodies and civil society play a role in the interpretation of artefacts, which are language, objects and acts.

In the context of Afrophobia, artefacts such as the RED 2000 represent significant carriers of meaning that illustrate differences in values, beliefs, and feelings held by interpretive communities. For example, public bodies may argue the language of RED 2000 is sufficiently inclusive, whereas narratives from civil society in my qualitative research study contend it does not give sufficient agency to our communities. In that regard, the ENAR Shadow Report on Afrophobia in Europe 2016 illustrates an object which provides quantitative and qualitative evidence, warranting claims of Afrophobia made in my qualitative research study’s narratives. Communities’ discourses i.e. the specific meanings communicated by communities of meaning, are important in knowledge production, because they identify points of conflict and their conceptual sources. Notably, the *Resolution on the Fundamental Rights of Afro-Europeans and People of African Descent in Europe 2019*, illustrates an act of intervention for mediation to bridge differences between European public bodies and the researched. This artefact acknowledges intergenerational effects of slavery and colonialism contribute to the failure of the RED 2000 to adequately combat Afrophobia.

Lastly, **“practice”** may be defined as “policy and action in the context of determinate structures and processes, both of those being acted upon and those that condition the outcomes of actions,” (Oquist, 1978, p.145). My thesis contends Afrophobia illustrates structural and systemic racism, and therefore critically analyses gaps in norm implementation, to facilitate policy interventions. “An action research study for a dissertation must consider how the knowledge generated can be utilized by those in the setting, as well as by those beyond the setting” (Herr and Anderson, 2015). In that regard I have contributed to policy interventions, e.g. by participating in UN OHCHR & UNESCO Regional Experts on Racism Consultations. Application of BEAR methods therefore facilitates “the production of knowledge that guides practice, with the modification of a given reality occurring independent of, and generally subsequent to, the research process” (Oquist, 1978, p.145).

**3.5 Qualitative Research Projects**

The conceptual framework of my thesis aims to generate new and original knowledge in the field of Politics and International Relations, that is transdisciplinary by adopting emancipatory praxis of normative theory, to Afrocentrism which places the African diaspora as its focus. In that regard, the historical foundation of BEAR lies in African centred research, including scholarly works by renowned Pan African theorists such as Marcus Garvey, W.E. B. Du Bois, and Frantz Fanon. Fanon (2008) alludes to negative psychological effects caused by the stereotyping of people of African descent. Stereotyping is the practice of folk generalization, i.e. assumptions that people of a certain racial group or ethnicity are more likely to have undesirable traits, (Kitcher, 2016, pp.145-166). For example, qualitative research projects conducted in this thesis demonstrate stereotyping continues in contemporary neoliberal western economies. Empirical evidence shows it is a form of Afrophobia that contributes to the African diaspora in Europe’s marginalisation from universal human rights, e.g. to health, education, employment, and access to justice. In that regard, critical race theorists such as Bell (1995) and Crenshaw (1990) demonstrate African centred research as an Afrocentric lens appropriate as a theoretical approach to conduct BEAR.

**3.5.1 The Research Design**

My qualitative research design includes narratives, case studies and an interpretive policy analysis to defend my thesis. Firstly, semi-structured interviews and participatory research observation are employed to collect **narratives** from multilevel multi-stakeholder policymakers working with African diaspora communities to combat Afrophobia. Narratives illustrate storytelling, enabling an Afrocentric lens of CRT to be strategically applied that critically analyses implementation of anti-racism norms and policies. For example, conducting semi-structured interviews with people of African descent, enables strategically harvesting narratives to highlight gaps in anti-racism norm implementation, and address Afrophobia. Secondly, narratives are critically analysed in **case studies** of Bristol which was European Green Capital 2015 when I commenced research; and a sample of Western European countries where it is argued Afrophobia illustrates structural and systemic racism. The case studies theorise empirical findings of my research, and create new and original knowledge for understanding, of links between achieving IDPAD’s thematic objectives and SDGs. For example, I argue IDPAD’s thematic objective of justice is also sought by SDG 16. In addition, I employ narratives from semi-structured interviews and from participatory research observation, for interpretive policy analysis of European anti-racism norms and policies. In that regard, I aim to highlight normative interventions that strategically address Afrophobia, where anti-racism norm implementation fails to reduce socioeconomic marginalisation of our communities.

With this in mind, I successfully applied for approval from UWE Bristol’s Research and Ethics Committee to proceed with postgraduate qualitative research study in 2016, with which I have since complied. BEAR enables methodological pragmatism through strategic sampling, data collection, data analysis, data management and integration. Recruitment of the research sample took place at events generally pertaining to race (in)equality, or specifically to Afrophobia, e.g. the launch of ENAR’s Shadow Reports on Afro-phobia in Spring 2016. The sample includes representatives of public bodies, academia and civil society engaged in reparative work with African diaspora communities. The majority of respondents are people of African descent, reflecting my thesis’ BEAR orientation. Twenty-five interviewees participated, of which four represented United Nations associations, eight worked for organisations within the EU, and one in the USA. The remainder were based in the UK. Of the four interviewees representing public bodies, three were women. Two academic and non-academic staff from UWE Bristol participated with a gender balance. The remainder of the sample represent civil society at various levels of policymaking.

Narratives from the research sample were collected employing a Participant Consent Form and an Interview Schedule, which I designed to conduct semi-structured interviews. These narratives enable critical analysis of policy makers’ perspectives, beliefs and understanding of Afrophobia and anti-racism norms. Audio-recordings typed transcripts and materials used to conduct the semi-structured interviews are anonymously and securely stored on OneDrive.

Empirical findings based on critical analysis of the narratives from my research sample, highlight Afrophobia persists in European countries despite existing anti-racist norms and policies. In that regard, conceptual reform of unresolved empirical issues requires understanding structural racialisation as the “interaction of multiple institutions in an ongoing process of producing cumulative, durable, racialized outcomes” (Akom, 2011, p.114). This ideology illustrates critical race theory, which is reflected in my qualitative research projects to demonstrate *interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study*. Data collected through field and desk research is securely stored, for later use in interpretive policy analysis, to create new knowledge for understanding that makes impact through social change.

**3.5.2 Bristol 2015 and its legacy – the One City Approach**

My methodology adopts functional pragmatism utilizing BEAR, to demonstrate the utility of purpose for pursuing this research project, and includes policy interventions to local practice in Bristol, which can guide general practice in Europe and globally. For example, I engage in participatory research in Bristol’s SDG Alliance to promote social justice for local African diaspora communities, by advocating the 2030 Agenda and IDPAD’s thematic objectives. This facilitates local communities’ understanding of SDGs as opportunities for action with impact, e.g. to implement inclusive policies such as Bristol’s One City Plan and One Bristol Curriculum.

In my thesis, participatory research observation facilitates critical evaluation of the implementation of SDG Target 10.2 to reduce inequality in relation to IDPAD’s thematic objectives; e.g. data collection and analysis through desk research facilitates **recognition**. Local African diaspora communities account for approximately 6% of Bristol’s population, but disproportionately “experience greater disadvantage than in England and Wales as a whole” in education and employment, (CODE, 2017, p.1). For example, narratives from participatory research observation in local events and semi-structured interviews, assert disproportionate student attainment gaps at all stages of education. “School to prison pipelines (exist) where Afrikan children are identified as troublemakers as soon as they begin schooling”, according to Bristolians in a statement to the UN Special Rapporteur on Racism, in May 2018. Narratives collected in semi-structured interviews also claim inequality in employment of African diaspora staff in education. In 2019 there were “less than 30 Black teachers in Bristol’s schools despite there BAME students representing 30% of the student population.

The One Bristol Curriculum illustrates a local policy intervention, which addresses disproportionately poor educational outcomes for our communities, through achievement of SDG 4 i.e. equitable quality education for all, and IDPAD’s thematic objective of **development**. In that regard, BEAR facilitates action with impact, through social, economic and environmental development. For example, BEAR enables functional pragmatism through citywide cross-sectoral collaborations that empower Bristol’s African diaspora communities. Collaboration between academia, local policymakers, and community representatives contributes to development of the One Bristol Curriculum for schools, as well as review of structures and processes in local higher education institutions.

Moreover, Bristol’s One City Approach to implementing the 2030 Agenda entails review of local structures and processes. In that regard, community involvement illustrates a principle of BEAR, as well as implementation of SDG Target 16.7, for peace, justice and good governance. I therefore advocate community participation for community empowerment to highlight and address Afrophobia. In addition, I advocate implementing SDG Target 16.b, to promote non-discriminatory policies, and achieve IDPAD’s thematic objective of **justice**. Functional pragmatism in my methodology therefore advocates local policy interventions to address Afrophobia globally. For example, in November 2019 I produced and distributed a conference paper at the IDPAD Mid-Decade Summit held at Howard University, which discussed Bristol’s One City Plan. I argue inclusive implementation of SDG 16.7 through community involvement, facilitates achievement of IDPAD’s thematic objectives. In that regard, my interpretive policy analysis of anti-racist policies in Chapter 5, will highlight exemplar policy interventions that successfully implement the 2030 Agenda.

**3.5.3 A Qualitative Research Study of Afrophobia in the European Union**

In addition to creating new and original knowledge for understanding and critical evaluation through functional pragmatism, my research actions demonstrate methodological pragmatism that emphasize my role as the researcher in creating data and theories. Methodological pragmatism is demonstrated in my thesis, as the foundation for research collaborations that make impact through policy interventions for social change. In that regard, participative democracy is an essential component of realism within the field of Politics and International Relations, that facilitates stakeholders’ equal contribution to knowledge generation and policy development. Notably, the emergence of civil society as a major stakeholder in the development of international human rights norms following the Vienna Conference 1993, is illustrated as a vital link between social action and knowledge generation. With this in mind, my pragmatic research study employs narratives from members of civil society from various European states, as well as representatives of international and regional public bodies.

“From a pragmatic perspective, the overall judgement can only be made along the lines envisaged by the ideal of deliberation among well informed, mutually engaged representatives of diverse points of view” (Kitcher, 2012, pp.145-166). Collaborations enable participatory research to intervene where policies and practices contribute to inequality and illustrate emancipatory praxis by working with marginalised groups (Herr and Anderson, 2015). For example, European law enforcement officers and border controls demonstrate Afrophobia by racial profiling and stereotyping people of African descent. Knowledge exchange through sharing my actionable data outputs with collaborative research partners such as ENAR, UNOCHR and UNESCO facilitates advocacy actions and policy interventions. Democratic collaborative participatory research therefore represents an ideal method of decision-making for policy interventions, through methodological pragmatism.

My participation in successfully drafting the *Resolution on the Fundamental Rights of People of African Descent and Black Europeans in Europe 2019*, as a member of ENAR Steering Group on Afrophobia between 2016 and 2019, also illustrates methodological pragmatism. The European Parliament adopted this Resolution in March 2019, following successful collaboration between ENAR, the ARDI, the European Commission, and other stakeholders. Subsequently I made proposals to the WGEPAD for inclusion in the *UN Framework Declaration on the promotion and full respect of human rights for people of African descent*, and in their consultations with international civil society on *the Modalities, Format, and Substantive and Procedural Aspects of the Permanent Forum on people of African descent*. I propose to critically evaluate the impact of these policy interventions through interpretive policy analysis in Chapter 5. My research design and methodology therefore demonstrate interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study, including examples of functional pragmatism and methodological pragmatism, to defend my thesis.

**3.5.3 Interpretive Policy Analysis – Field and Desk Research**

My thesis critically analyses and evaluates implementation of the EU Race Equality Directive (RED) 2000 as anti-racism policy to address Afrophobia, by creating knowledge for understanding, on points of conflict between differing interpretive communities. This enables recommendations for intervention/action. I chose the RED 2000 for interpretive policy analysis because most EU states represented in my research sample (with the exception of Ireland) transpose it into their national legislation. My interpretive policy analysis critically analyses implementation of the RED 2000 as domestic jurisprudence for promoting and protecting universal human rights, social justice and equality. I contend that although the RED 2000 should have impact in addressing Afrophobia because it is legally binding, empirical findings of my research study highlight this is not the case. Subsequent interventions therefore include the *Resolution on the Fundamental Rights of Afro-Europeans and people of African descent in Europe 2019*.

My interpretive policy analysis relies on data collection of multilevel multistakeholder narratives from semi-structured interviews and participatory research observation, as well as desk research. Narratives enable identification of similarities and difference, in African diaspora communities’ perspectives, understanding, and experiences of Afrophobia. Moreover, narratives from participatory research observation at UN and EU events reinforce as well as offer additional perspectives, understanding and experiences, to those harvested from semi-structured interviews. My interpretive policy analysis therefore demonstrates the relevance of *interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study*, to create new and original knowledge for understanding with impact as social change.

Moreover, as well as advocating the 2030 Agenda and IDPAD’s thematic objectives to raise awareness and empowerment of African diaspora communities, I create new and original knowledge for critical evaluation of policy interventions. My interpretive policy analysis critically analyses, synthesizes, and summarises empirical evidence of Afrophobia, by focusing on past and present human rights violations in neoliberal western economies. In that regard, the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action (DDPA) 2001 states,

“we recognise that colonialism has led to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, (…) we acknowledge the suffering caused by colonialism and (…) further regret lasting social and economic inequalities in many parts of the World today” (UN, 2001, p.5).

The EU *Resolution on the fundamental rights of Afro-Europeans and people of African descent in Europe 2019* acknowledges historical and contemporary manifestations of Afrophobia. This concurs with the DDPA 2001 which asserts, “any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false (…) and must be rejected along with theories which attempt to determine the existence of separate human races” (UN, 2001, p.5). Nonetheless, less than a handful of European countries implement anti-racism policies that specifically address structural manifestations of Afrophobia. It is argued this is sufficiently covered by anti-discrimination norms which address systemic racism more generally, such as the RED 2000. My interpretive policy analysis makes convincing claims with sufficiently warranted assumptions, to argue the transdisciplinary relevance of anti-racist norms and policies, that specifically combat Afrophobia.

**3.6 Research Bias and Ethics**

The quest for systemic justice, social change and equality through policy interventions that eliminate Afrophobia, inspires employing critical race theory as the lens with which to defend my thesis from an Afrocentric perspective. I first became involved in combatting systemic, structural and institutionalised racism on joining Anti-Apartheid organisations in the early 1980s. Subsequently in the 1990s, my awareness of institutionalised and structural discrimination, and politicized efforts to address this, increased through participation as a trade union representative. Recent experiences of working with African diaspora communities in the UK and Europe have also increased my awareness of gaps between normative theory and praxis of anti-racism norms and policies.

People of African descent are marginalised from access to universal human rights globally. With this in mind, I chose to pursue collaborative research with ENAR on beginning doctoral research in 2015, following my involvement with the network, as an Executive Trustee and Chair of Wiltshire Racial Equality Council between 2011-2013. I subsequently participated in ENAR meetings and events as a member of ENAR’s Steering Group on Afrophobia. Despite the challenges of BREXIT and the COVID-19 pandemic, I continue collaborative research with the network as a Friend of ENAR through knowledge exchange. I also participate in knowledge exchange with UN OHCHR, UNESCO and other stakeholders on the subject of Afrophobia. Actionable data outputs I create illustrate training, research, and intervention as important components of BEAR for social change.

My academic qualifications include a Master of Arts in Human Rights, gained from UWE Bristol in 2014. My dissertation argued structural barriers are instrumental in marginalising people of African descent from universal human rights and was awarded a Distinction. My previous qualifications include: Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies awarded by Thames Valley University in 1994: and a Graduate Certificate in Contemporary London Studies with Merit, awarded by the University of London, in 2009.

**3.7 Conclusion**

To conclude, pragmatism is an appropriate epistemological approach to adopt in my research design and methodology, because it includes fundamental elements of both realism and constructionism. In that regard, BEAR demonstrates a complementary theoretical and methodological orientation to defend my thesis, employing tactics of critical race theory, African centred research, participatory research and action research.

Functional pragmatism is illustrated in my methodology by collaborations to achieve social change through policy interventions. For example, participatory research in drafting an EU resolution and UN declaration to address Afrophobia include diverse points of view, facilitated by democratic multilevel multi-stakeholder collaboration. In that regard, my research design and methodology highlights community participation and empowerment as key elements of BEAR. This also illustrates the importance of SDG Target 10.3 and SDG Target 16.7 for inclusive achievement of the 2030 Agenda and IDPAD’s thematic objectives.

BEAR also demonstrates methodological pragmatism in my research, e.g. action research and participatory research facilitated networking and the subsequent development of an appropriate research sample. My multilevel multi-stakeholder research sample represents differing communities of meaning relevant to conducting interpretive policy analysis later in this thesis. Moreover, methodological pragmatism is demonstrated in my thesis, by transdisciplinary research which articulates Afrocentrism and normative theory through the lens of critical race theory. BEAR therefore demonstrates an appropriate theoretical and methodological orientation, for *interpretivism that is instrumental to a pragmatic study*, through critical evaluation of policy interventions to combat Afrophobia.

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