



# Exploring Black women's identity and depression



Common mental disorders (CMD), which include depression and anxiety, are a major global mental health concern. In Britain, women are disproportionately affected by CMD (19% women versus 12% men), and ethnicity adds a layer of disadvantage, with Black/Black British women experiencing higher rates of CMD relative to White British women (29.3% versus 20.9%). Despite this increased prevalence, Black/Black British women are less likely to seek and receive treatment and more likely to experience poor outcomes (e.g., maladaptive coping and detention under the Mental Health Act). Understanding and addressing these mental health inequalities are imperative to ensuring that all members of society can access and obtain the support needed to fare well.

## What are we doing?

Drawing on the framework of intersectionality in general and the Strong Black woman schema, this project investigates how and why gender and race might work together to shape the experience, treatment and outcomes associated with depression among Black women in the UK.

Through interview analysis, survey and focus groups, we will explore whether beliefs and expectations related to identifying as Black and a woman shape the experience of depression and whether this in turn, influences treatment and outcomes.

## How will it help?

Findings will provide important insights into the lived experiences of Black women and help identify barriers to treatment and predictors of poor outcomes. I am working with two organisations - Black Thrive Lambeth and Catalyst 4 Change - about how we might implement results in a community setting, and how to share these with policy makers.



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