‘Miss are you a Muslim?’

An exploration of identity and image of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

U ASIF

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION 2021

‘Miss are you a Muslim?’
An exploration of identity and image of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

Uzma Asif

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Manchester Metropolitan University for the degree of Doctor of Education

Faculty of Education

Manchester Metropolitan University

2021

Abstract

The stereotypes around Muslim women include the perception that Muslim women are oppressed. While not all Muslim women project the same image and Muslim women practise their religion in different ways, the homogenisation of the category 'Muslim women' has implications for female Muslim teachers (FMTs) in education. At times this label is constructed widely in society and at times narrowly with individuals – in each case it usually works as a disadvantage to women. The negative impact of this is sometimes exemplified in educational contexts. Research is needed to understand the stereotypes and disadvantages faced by FMTs and Muslim women more generally. There is a need to unpack homogenisation to explore the impact of the prejudices and stereotypes against Muslim women. In this research, I explore implications for the image and identity of FMTs through investigating contemporary stereotypes of FMTs and Muslim women more generally. I use feminist methodology and apply multiple methods: semi-structured interviews and autoethnographic data in the form of ***Scenarios***, used as prompts during the interviews; I apply thematic analysis to the semi-structured interview data. I explore the feminist praxis for Muslim women in a British educational context and whether this contemporary western discourse empowers them to regain and claim the rights already present in the religion, lost historically and traditionally to men. My data shows how FMTs navigate stereotypes and competing norms to generate self-regard and more complicated understandings of being Muslim and British. Therefore, the study contributes to a culturally sensitive version of British Muslim feminism in education. In addition, I use the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) to demonstrate surveillance culture in education and to conceptualise the scrutiny faced by FMTs. I conclude that some FMTs actively pursue teaching to challenge negative stereotypes around Muslims and that FMTs face pressure to adapt to their settings from both students and staff. I conclude that FMTs have a potentially transformational role in challenging the stereotypes of Muslims with Britain's multicultural youth. The study will be of interest to the education sector as it complicates education both as a tool for liberation and oppression.

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Abbreviations:

FMTs	Female Muslim teachers
FMT	Female Muslim Teacher
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
RQT	Recently Qualified Teacher
RS	Religious Studies
RE	Religious Education

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The background to this study

As a British Muslim, born to immigrant parents, my experience of schools in the 1980s/90s as a student has shaped the practitioner I am today. During a successful teaching career of fourteen years, I have developed my knowledge of education to conduct an investigation utilising the knowledge gained, to produce constructive research with importance and value. The Doctorate in Education programme is ideal for this purpose as it focuses on practitioner-based research. The autoethnographic data presented in the study is a snapshot of the lived experience I have had as a practitioner. I have used this autoethnographic data to develop the narrative by interviewing female Muslim teachers (FMTs). As a female Muslim teacher (FMT), I built rapport with participant teachers through shared relations including gender, religion, ethnicity and profession. This privileged connection has been helpful in allowing me to access and explore complex and rich data which has informed my research.

This study stems from questions I raised as a child at primary school when I felt compelled to question my identity. As a youngster I was hyper aware of the word 'multicultural' used to describe my school and the city where I grew up. I remember it being used with positive connotations; it was a word which had an inclusive and integrative feel about it. At the time I did not know 'multiculturalism' was a government policy with a trajectory dating back to 1945 (Ashcroft and Bevir 2018:18) and the influx of migrants after the Second World War. The reminders of difference and being between the worlds of home and school were exacerbated in the school setting for me as a pupil. This represented a space or battleground of identity, which served to shape me as an individual beyond the educational purposes. I have carried this inquiry of belonging and identity with me throughout my own education, as a practitioner and now as a social researcher looking back. As a primary school pupil (1980s) and in my teaching experience, racism has been prevalent. The term 'Paki' was aimed at anyone with brown skin.

A shift took place post 9/11 and the term 'terrorist' took the place of 'Paki'. This shift took place because of acts by terrorists who claim to have an affiliation with Islam, which helped to entrench the idea that Muslims are to be feared. Sheth (2009) elaborates on a change in judgement from alien to non-compliant, which reinforces the idea of a shift in perceived differences that are more threatening. She explains how certain traits have been ascribed to Muslims post 9/11, that represent a powerful indictment of Muslims as an 'unruly' (Sheth, 2009:90) threat to the Western world. The strangeness of the foreign culture in combination with certain misrepresentations elevates the status of the group to extremely threatening so that it becomes depicted as a new pariah group – an evil and less rational race. Zine (2009) examines how Muslims have become positioned as 'subaltern citizens in the West' (Zine 2009:148) and how this positioning is 'institutionally reinforced through xenophobic state policies' (2009:148). According to Zine (2009), these policies have taken effect since 9/11 and are rooted in the US led 'war on terror'; they are designed to regulate immigration in parts of Europe, for example the German citizen test and Dutch immigration videos.

To locate myself in this study I draw on examples in my life where I have found myself in a predicament questioning my own identity including in an educational context as a teacher-researcher. These experiences led me to the understanding that my identity was and is, racialised. My ethnicity was a divisive force in my separation from people around me who truly claimed and 'owned' national identity. Holding nationality by birth was not enough to assume Britishness. I learnt at a young age that my personal battle was fuelled by the need for acceptance by majority society through acquiring traits of conformity and upholding the cultural Pakistani and religious Islamic values that were being instilled in me by my parents. To achieve a sense of belonging in dominant society I performed cultural conformity to gain national capital (Hage, 2000). This cultural balancing act was only possible if it adhered to the strict parameters outlined by my parents. I never really 'belonged' to either side, but I grew in confidence with time to question and adjust these parameters to find my own way of existing between worlds, especially as a

Muslim woman. We need to be better at drawing connections between the experiences of women and wider social and political structures as explained by Hanisch in *The personal is the political*, (2000). As a first-generation Muslim woman my experience is different to my mothers who is immigrant from Pakistan; my daughter's experience is different to mine as she has a British mother. Each of us, as British Muslim women, have different and nuanced understandings of life, religion and nationality.

Ashcroft and Bevir (2018) examine the empirical and theoretical links between decolonisation and multiculturalism. They state how the presence of a minority group presents a challenge to the 'norms' of a dominant group. An issue considered to be multicultural therefore involves a tolerance of behaviours that deviate from widely accepted norms. I would add to the idea of tolerance by extending it to acceptance, for instance as a primary school student I remember the festivals of Eid and Diwali being celebrated in school to represent the communities the school served, a practice that still happens dependent on the demographic in schools. Sheth (2009) discusses how policies of 'multicultural tolerance' have been justified ironically by the age-old idea of cultural difference with roots in colonial exploitation. The irony is in the notion that the culture from which one speaks is the benchmark for all other cultures to be compared to. I think this is where I sometimes felt a sense of embarrassment and discontent as a youngster when certain cultural differences were celebrated in my school, as I felt they were highlighting differences and almost creating an unhelpful cultural comparison, which was naturally divergent. It almost felt as though the culture I 'represented' was not good enough to measure up to the dominant culture. Sheth (2009:97) alludes to this heterogeneity as 'cultural difference' and as qualitative not quantitative difference with the former representing a greater threat. Sheth (2009:96) uses examples of Muslims treated with harassment and hostility because 'they transgressed a prevailing cultural and political regime'. The inter-cultural 'difference' then becomes a 'strangeness' exhibited by a foreigner. When these practices (such as the wearing of the hijab) are combined with misrepresentations

(such as all Muslims are terrorists) then the cultural difference becomes an unruly threat.

As a teacher I observe Muslim pupils in educational settings, many who wear the hijab, who do not burden themselves with this idea of being an ambassador of Islam. As hijab wearing pupils are hyper visible as Muslims, their conduct is naturally subject to more scrutiny by some, especially when they display so-called non-Muslim behaviour or manners. I go back to the nuanced representation of Muslim women, which I believe is even more applicable to second and third generation British Muslims who seem to have carved out an identity that works for them whilst maintaining the visibility aspect of being a Muslim.

While beginning to be documented in the US (Mir 2009), Canada (Zine 2008) and Australia (Clyne 1998), this study contributes to a much-needed body of research and knowledge about the experiences of FMTs in the UK. Taking an explicit account of difference is crucial to the cultivation of a more open society, according to Martineau (2012), where cross-cultural dialogue between self and others can be positive. Around 90% of teachers and 97% of headteachers are white, representing a clear under-representation of black and ethnic minorities in the teaching workforce and school leadership according to the 2011 UK Census (UK Government, 2021a). Therefore, it is important to study how ethnic and religious minorities are being marginalised but equally how they resist and challenge the marginalisation by the majority in society, for example, by politicising aspects of everyday life. Countering stereotypes is a difficult task for a minority group especially when the stereotypes exist and emerge through unequal power relations.

This dissertation was conceived and formed before the Covid pandemic and as I was writing the final drafts of the thesis the UK government released a report commissioned by the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson in 2020. Recommendations

from *The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities* (UK Government, 2021b) notes the influence of individual action in closing disparity gaps through their own agency to help their communities as an unexplored approach. The report says that 'communities could help themselves' in an 'era of participation' (UK Government, 2021a:8). I explore intra-community and gender dynamics among British Muslims from different backgrounds in my study and refer to this report at various points during the thesis. Whilst fully analysing the report is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is worth noting that the study attempts to shed light on the causes of inequality in the UK. The report concluded by contending that racism and racial injustice do exist; however, family influence, socioeconomic background, geography, family history, culture and religion have a greater impact on life chances. The report provoked widespread controversy and disagreement and was seen as a missed opportunity for systemic change as it does not acknowledge institutional racism.

1.2 The purpose of this study

The stereotypes around Muslim women are diverse and widely held and include the perception that Muslim women are oppressed. Common misperceptions are that Muslim women are powerless and repressed individuals who are culturally strange or different. Abu-Lughod points to the importance of learning from the experiences of the homogenised sub-category of 'the Muslim woman' (Abu-Lughod, 2013:15). She notes that scholars have written about gender issues in all nations where Muslim women live and the diversity represented by this sub-category of women. These differences include marital rights, education and freedom and these stereotypes are often reinforced by various forms of media, which I discuss in the literature review (Chapter 2). The homogenisation of the category 'Muslim women' has implications in education, since in reality not all Muslim women project the same image and Muslim women practise their religion in different ways.

'Miss are you a Muslim?' is a question I have been asked many times in my career and have always responded with 'why do you ask?'. For me, this raises fundamental questions about Muslim women and how they are perceived by young people and this represents a major contributory factor in writing the thesis. As a Muslim woman and an educator, I was well positioned to work with FMT participants to investigate the impact of the prejudices and stereotypes against Muslim women. Tallbear (2014) notes, ethical research with marginalised communities should be with and not on participants. Subedi and Daza (2008) explain how it is not uncommon for the perceived identity of postcolonial subjects in schools and academia to be questioned. They describe further challenges faced by this group in their authority and authenticity of their work, for example. Subedi and Daza (2008) note how colonised subjects may contradict dominant discourses. Through the study I examine how FMTs negotiate perceived identity, but also practise agency as experts of our own experiences.

My experiences in education combined with the privileged position as a researcher have catalysed the need to pursue this study and have compelled me to question the mobilisation of Muslim identity and political agency. My initial focus was on belonging in educational contexts, however as the study progressed, the scope became wider and the implications more societal and the outcomes transformational. In conversation with other Muslim teachers, I learned there is scope and a need for exploring the stereotypes that pupils and colleagues engage with in UK schooling context. How and whether these stereotypes are tackled can have variable implications for both Muslim and non-Muslim agents.

1.3 Aim and objectives

In this research, I explore implications for the image and identity of FMTs through conversations around contemporary stereotypes of Muslim women. I interview FMTs, using autoethnographic data as a prompt during in-depth semi-structured interviews to develop an understanding of how their image and identity as FMTs

had an impact on the relationships they form with pupils and colleagues. I use Islamic feminism within a critical faith centred framework and a Foucauldian perspective to analyse the data. I use thematic analysis to examine the autoethnographic data and the interview responses. I then use the experiences of the participants to suggest approaches that can act to bridge any differences and create an inclusive atmosphere and a culture in which perceptions are more nuanced as a reflection of the real world. In this way, the study contributes new knowledge about the transformative role FMTs, as subject agents, play in Britain's multicultural educational landscape.

The aim of the study:

To explore the role of image and identity on the agency of FMTs and the implications of this in educational contexts.

I have divided the aim into two broad themes that are the main threads in my study and have divided the discussion section (Chapter 7) accordingly as follows:

Theme 1: Agency is constructed through relation.

Theme 2: FMTs have a potentially transformational role in challenging the stereotypes of Muslims with Britain's multicultural youth.

Objectives:

Objective 1: To investigate how female Muslim teachers (FMTs) manage the challenges of homogenisation and stereotyping in an educational context.

Objective 2: To demonstrate how the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) helps to conceptualise the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education.

Objective 3: To identify the significant transactions for FMTs in educational contexts that have implications for teaching practice.

1.4 Theoretical approach

In broad terms, my study is developed within a critical research paradigm. From an epistemological viewpoint, the realities of my participants are likely to be socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society. It lends itself to social justice and achieving social change, especially that which improves the lives of women and girls. I critically explore the wider cultural, political, social and educational discourses that frame identity and belonging with regards to Muslim practitioners in education. My approach in discussing literature is via critical problem awareness which identifies the nature of the problem, outlining its parameters and establishing the contextual relevance for researching it. This approach allows for the exploration of wide-ranging views around Muslim identities and belonging with a focus on the politicisation of these factors. The theoretical framework is described in Chapter 3 (Methodology), section 3.2., where I elaborate on the relevance of a critical faith based (Islamic feminism) and Foucauldian perspective to my study. I discuss how these frameworks allow for a specific reading of my data.

1.5 Overview of the thesis

Following this introduction, **Chapter 2**, (literature review) has two parts: which have been summarised at the start of the chapter. In **Chapter 3** (methodology) I discuss how the theoretical framework shapes the study, research process and analysis. I discuss the use of autoethnographic data and semi-structured interviews as two methods in the study. The autoethnographic dataset consists of snapshot conversations presented as dialogues in various contexts during my years as a practitioner (2007-2021). This dataset is called '***Scenarios***' and is a contextual biography, explained in more detail in section 3.3. I discuss the process of participant selection and the semi-structured interview process followed by post interview reflection. I outline the process of data transcription and how this helped to generate broad themes which then allowed for further reflections on the data and a refinement of themes. Finally, I discuss limitations of the research and ethics. In **Chapter 4** (analysis of Objective 1: To investigate how female Muslim teachers

(FMTs) manage the challenges of stereotyping in an educational context), I look at identity, belonging in education; how FMTs respond to stereotypes; how FMTs deal with stereotypes in the classroom; and the normalisation and increasing diversity of Muslim women's experience. In **Chapter 5** (analysis of Objective 2: Demonstrate how the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) conceptualises the scrutiny faced by Muslim women in education), I discuss the implication of surveillance culture in education and policy; the role of schools in challenging cultural expectations and stereotypes; school ethos and inclusivity and whether Muslim teachers are under pressure to explain/defend or blend in; and how pupils respond to Muslim teachers. In **Chapter 6** (analysis of Objective 3: To identify the significant transactions for FMTs in educational contexts that have implications for teaching practice), I examine issues around disclosure and responsibility for FMTs in the classroom; whether FMTs are responsible for the socialisation/cultural understanding of pupils; religious views and teaching practice; and responses towards theological discussions and the spaces for dialogue. **Chapter 7** is a discussion of the two main threads in the thesis and is divided in two sections:

Section 1: Agency is constructed through relation.

Section 2: FMTs have a transformational role with Britain's multicultural youth.

Chapter 8 is the conclusion to the study where I discuss recommendations and contributions to knowledge/practice, implications for further research, limitations of the research and an overall summary of the findings.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the literature review chapter

This study explores the feminist praxis for Muslim women in a British educational context; the literature review is divided into two parts to reflect this. **Part One** is a review of perspectives concerning the applicability of the feminist register to Muslim women. I look at feminist position and agency and specifically Islamic feminism and its compatibility to a British context whilst exploring the borders of feminism related to orientalism. I then focus on the compatibility of Islam and feminism and the possibility of convergence and plural identities. I discuss the status of women and the veil and the position of the modern Muslim woman. I look at the idea of homogenisation and access to the feminist register for the Muslim diaspora and explore whether a context-driven approach is required. In section 2.2.10 I arrive at a position after reviewing the literature around Islamic feminism. In **Part Two** I examine literature around the present stereotypes associated with Muslim women as it is important to understand the history behind the formation of the Western ideal. This is relevant to my study as I explore implications for the image and identity of FMTs through conversations around contemporary stereotypes of Muslim women. I focus on British South Asians and migration history to the UK and how this has contributed to ethnic diversity in the UK. I then examine literature around race categories as social signifiers of identity; the difficulties with defining categories of ethnic identities and the implications of this in the British context. State security interventions such as the Prevent agenda (a strand of the PVE agenda, discussed in more detail on page 52) place an importance on schools to act as a regulatory body through surveillance (PREVENT 2011). I review the key shifts in racialised discourse in contemporary Britain and explore Islamophobia and its emergence as a form of racism (Lauwers 2019), and the debates around terminology. I discuss the PVE agenda and intersection of gendered violence with axes of difference such as race. I use the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) (Foucault and Sheridan 1991), and it's application to conceptualise the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education. I conclude the chapter by highlighting the gaps in literature and how this study offers a contribution to this area.

2.2 Part One

2.2.1 The feminist register and Muslim women

Lépinard (2020:1) writes that 'feminism is in trouble' and that the feminist project must reinvent itself. This is despite the rise of feminist voices in attempting to dismantle hegemonic whiteness and islamophobia, as an example of discrimination in the West. Feminist voices are legitimate voices and can help to shape the policies of power holders such as governments in European contexts, however the association of gender equality with secularism and anti-Islamic policies has meant that feminism has lost its critical edge (Lépinard, 2020). This raises questions around the extent to which debates around Islamic practices such as veiling are troubling feminism and empirically transforming feminist subjectivities. There are questions around 'true' emancipation and who or what is a feminist subject and the meaning of agency and autonomy. The veiling debate as a modern political project of emancipation (Mahmood, 2011), casts a larger shadow over feminism than previous debates around the differences within feminism. Mahmood (2011) explains how issues of integrating historical and cultural specificity inform the feminist project and highlights differences such as sex, race, class and nationality. Questions around religious difference 'remain relatively unexplored' (2011:33). The relationship between feminism and religion is demonstrated in discussions around Islam. This is in part to due to the contentious nature of Islam with the 'West' but also due to the challenges posed by contemporary Islamist movements to secular-liberal politics where feminism is intrinsic, according to Mahmood (2011).

This highlights a nuanced and specifically Islamic challenge to feminism around identity and the compatibility of religious piety and agency. Mahmood (2011) presents an understanding of agency which may provide a more inclusive agenda for feminism, according to Lépinard (2020:8), where we should all be open to a type of transformation of our 'political and analytical certainties'. Lépinard (2020:8) asks the question 'what is the alternative?' for those unhappy with liberal feminism and

its attachments shaped by 'race, whiteness, class, sexuality and history' (2020:234). Lepinard (2020) argues for a centrality for religious Muslim women in feminist discourses. The debates around Islamic feminism are therefore useful to review as they offer a version of feminism that looks at concerns that particularly affect Muslim women and described by Seedat (2013a:26) as 'resisting the hegemony of the European intellectual heritage'. Islamic feminism offers an alternative model of feminism which has emerged against the lack of concern for diversity in perspectives in Western feminism. The connection with my study lies in the emergence of feminist voices, post de-colonisation and their positioning as marginalised women from within the societies or communities that may foster illusions about the oppression of women.

2.2.2 Islamic Feminism: background and perspectives

Islamic feminism draws on post-colonial criticism and examines how the trope of saving Muslim women is produced by the colonial nature of power (Abu-Lughod 2013). Islamic feminists develop an ethical reading of Islamic texts, such as the Quran and the Sunna, to support the feminist viewpoint. Their interpretations are aimed at socio-political and economic equality with men. Islamic feminism engages deeply with the sources of authentic Muslim tradition, for example Islamic scriptures, and demonstrates possibilities for Islam as a religion and feminism as an ideology to intersect; they have been long considered incoherent or inconsistent with each other.

There is no clear definition of and consensus on the existence of Islamic feminism; writers in this field present their own understandings of Islamic feminisms. Texts in disagreement with each other add to the richness of the debate, especially when seen as part of a 'multifaceted dialogue' as argued by McDonald (2008:348), who has her own standpoint from within Islamic feminism. Islamic Feminism and Muslim feminist are not necessarily mutually exclusive terms, for example Zine (2006) considers herself a Muslim feminist (signifying a wider set of social and cultural

commitments of Muslims) and has grounded her work in relation to this within Islamic knowledge frames, signifying roots in the broad philosophical traditions of Islam. With regards to defining Islamic feminism Salem (2013), comments that the act of defining exercises a power that labels women's experiences as patriarchal or emancipatory; in defining the contours of feminism processes of homogenisation and essentialisation take place, instead of exclusionary processes the option of multiple feminisms should be explored. The texts written around Islamic feminism often have radically diverging outlooks with a range of opinions on how Islam and feminism interact and intersect (McDonald 2008). For example, Moghissi's (1999) critical approach questions the compatibility of Islam and feminism where as Wadud (2006) argues that feminism emanates from the core of Islam. Salem (2013) offers intersectionality as a solution to overcome the limiting effects of the terminology, I explore this below and look at whether intersectionality is sufficient as an approach to define the experiences of Muslim women.

Kimberlé Crenshaw's (1989) concept of 'intersectionality' recognises gender, race and class. Lutz et al (2011:2) comment that intersectionality is beneficial in that it addresses concerns within feminist scholarship such as, the legacy of its exclusions of women who do not represent 'white middle-class women's experiences of oppression' and are representative of marginalised perspectives. This measure of feminist politics as 'white' feminism led to the development of intersectional approaches that advocated for integration of other categories of social difference and more specifically differences between women. However, Nyhagen (2021), comments that intersectionality theory has been largely silent on religion with only a few scholars using the perspective of intersectionality to approach the study of religion and gender. This suggests an alternate approach is required that can create an understanding around how religion and feminism can intersect. The thinkers in Islamic feminism write about gender studies at the intersection of Islam, for example, Fatima Seedat states how in the 1990s women started to analyse gender and sex equality within Islam (Seedat 2013a:404), using feminist inquiry. This shift became theorised as 'Islamic feminism' and reveals the multiple meanings in what

she describes as the convergence of two 'intellectual paradigms' (Seedat 2013a:404), Islam and feminism and how this impacts the lives of Muslim women. She maintains that a critical distance between the two intellectual traditions and a space for 'differences to endure' even in their convergence is potentially beneficial to Muslim women's struggle for equality.

In addition to this, Badran (2011:78), examines how the 'changing meanings' of 'the secular' and ' the religious' intersect the different modes of feminism, she looks at the trajectory from secular feminism to Islamic feminism to what she describes as 'Muslim holistic feminism', which draws upon Islamic discourses amongst others. Unlike secular feminisms, Badran (2011:78), argues that Muslim holistic feminism is communally based by and for Muslims and speaks to the 'communalisation of women's rights', moving social activism from the global to national space and local terrain. Badran (2011) contrasts this to the pioneering-nation based Egyptian feminist movement, which accessed the world of international feminism on its own terms. National feminist movements were organised by women of different religions whereas the emerging communal based Muslim holistic feminism privileges Muslim womens' rights and organises activism from the global arena to national spaces. In this way it is a 'potentially divisive force that threatens national cohesion' according to Badran (2011:79). Furthermore, Badran (2011), writes that Muslim holistic feminism has been 'jump-started' by well-connected, savvy, well-earning professional Muslim women. This is an important point which suggests that Muslim women are not a homogenous category and that types of feminism are accessed by different groups of Muslim women. I discuss contextual access to the feminist register further in this review.

2.2.3 The borders of feminism and Orientalism

'The borders of feminism' a term described by McDonald (2008), is used to describe how the multiplicity of feminisms is constantly evolving and being redefined but still united by the welfare, agency and choice of women. McDonald (2008:347) argues

that 'Islamic feminism' is at the heart of this debate and highlights Orientalist notions and the borders of feminism, which historically stem from the feminist academy's inability to 'divorce itself from racist Orientalism'. According to Said (2014), Orientalism is defined as seeing the Arab culture as exotic, uncivilised, backward and dangerous. What is intriguing about the durability of Orientalism is how Orientalist notions influenced the Orientals as they learned about their own country through Western academic disciplines. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Muslim rulers were inspired by exposure to new Western ideas and accepted the European diagnosis and cure to modernise their countries. Veiling, polygamy and seclusion were the most important problems identified by the coloniser (Ahmed, 1992). The devalued position of Oriental Muslim women offered an explanation for women's position as a barrier to the advancement of Oriental nations (Bullock, 2007). The condemnation of Islam as anti-feminist according to McDonald (2008), is confused by a need in Muslim societies to challenge patriarchy and the detrimental legacy of Orientalism and the exoticised stereotypes of Muslim women, however, McDonald (2008), describes how the multiplicity of feminisms are united in their 'feminisms' (2008:347) in the pursuit of choice and agency of women in all societies. Islamic feminism is embedded in the heart of this debate according to McDonald (2008), it presents a paradox for some with the historic 'polemic delineation' of feminism and Islam and for others it is a standpoint representing the transformative power of feminism in bringing about positive change for all.

Furthermore, McDonald (2008), draws on Azza Karam's (1998) contemporary study on Egyptian feminisms. Karam (1998) defines three separate feminist forms based on womens' activisms: secular, Muslim and Islamist. These are specific to the-ideological wars in the Egyptian context that impact the lives of women. These three separate feminist forms (secular, Muslim and Islamist), described by Karam (1998), echo the standpoints of the texts written by Moghissi (1999), Wadud (2006) and Afshar (1998), respectively. For example, secular feminists such as Moghissi (1999) position themselves more in alignment with a secular perspective familiar to

the Western academy. Muslim feminists such as Wadud (2006), promote the application of Islam to a feminist frame through a reinterpretation of Islamic texts through a Muslim and female lens. Islamist feminists, involved in overt political campaign such as Afshar (1998), believe the correct application of Shariah (Islamic) law in society would negate the need for feminism and that Islam raises the status of women in society. McDonald (2008), explains that the debates on Islamic feminism are varied, fluid, context specific and the questions that stem from the debates generate Islamic feminism rather than threaten the existence of it. She alludes to the theoretical nature of the debate and relates this to Karam's (1998), hopes around theory extending to activism. In line with this I explore the compatibility of this type of feminism with Islam in the next section.

2.2.4 The compatibility of Islam and feminism

Haideh Moghissi (1999) has a critical approach around the core compatibility of Islam and feminism. She locates her standpoint as a feminist and as an insider Iranian activist against fundamentalist regimes. Moghissi (1999) argues that Islamic teachings are rooted in a sexist discourse therefore there is an incompatibility with Islamic feminism; as a secular feminist she rejects any form of epistemological reform for this reason. This is an important hinge point in the debates around Islamic feminism and is highlighted by scholars such as Moghissi, who exemplify 'insider' (Seedat 2103a:) feminist discourse; as a Muslim woman who engages with the Islamic tradition (taken for granted) and uses feminism as a method for analysis of lived experience. Moghissi is critical about the lack of a coherent definition of Islamic feminism and its status as an 'outsider' concept reinforced by academics belonging to the Muslim Diaspora.

Linked to this criticism of Islamic feminism is the argument made by Mcdonald (2008), that in Muslim societies there is a lack of ownership of Islamic feminism, as it lends itself to appropriation. As a secular feminist Moghissi (1999:134) concludes that Islamic feminism 'may be an oxymoron' and remains contextually specific,

limited and precariously balanced between 'a brand of feminism' and 'a brand of Islamism'. This idea of a contextual limitation to Islamic feminism is important (I discuss this in the final section of Part One of this review). Seedat (2013a) describes Moghissi's view that Islamic and feminist concepts of equality are incompatible. Moghissi contributes to Fatima Mernissi's position; Mernissi (1985) drew attention to feminist struggles in the Muslim world in her seminal works where she located the religion of Islam as a source of patriarchy and problematic. In *The Veil and the Male Elite*: *A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam* (1987; 1991), Mernissi accuses Muslims who westernise liberation as ignorant of tradition and their past, furthermore, Afshari (1994), and Mojab (2001), argue for what Seedat (2013a:415), describes as the 'intractably patriarchal nature of Islam'. They contribute to the critique of the convergence of Islam and feminism and their exclusivity as concepts. For Zeenath Kauser (1995, cited in Seedat, 2013a) the Islamic approach is opposed to feminism as well as 'ethnocultural traditionalism' (Seedat 2013a:415) and she uses these as oppositional frameworks of analysis.

Amina Wadud (2006, cited in McDonald, 2008), argues that feminism emanates from the very core of Islam. Wadud (2006, cited in McDonald, 2008:349) utilises reflective essays and examples of activism in minority and majority Muslim societies to explain her standpoint as a 'pro-faith, pro-feminist Muslim woman'. She distances herself from feminist hegemonies and the political project of feminism and resists designating herself not only as a feminist but also a Muslim feminist (Seedat 2013a). Wadud's (2006, cited in McDonald, 2008) viewpoint recognises the plurality and range of meanings given to Islam which may or may not encompass atriarchy. Furthermore, Asma Barlas (2007, cited in Seedat, 2013a), a theologist takes a textual and hermeneutical approach, offering a feminist reading of the Quran. She acknowledges the more prevalent patriarchal readings can result in the oppression of women. She points to the polysemic nature of the text and that gender difference is something that is not pathologized in the Quran. Barlas (2007, cited in Seedat, 2013a), theorises her opposition to feminism as explained by Seedat (2013a); she subsumes and assimilates conversations around equality and

the implication of feminist discourse on Muslim women is a further othering. Barlas (2007, cited in Seedat, 2013a), actively resists the feminist label given to her work by scholars such as Margot Badran (2002), and remains committed to dialogue against labelling her work as Islamic feminist. Badran (2002) concludes that the debates around the terminology of Islamic feminism and who may speak or analyse it is a distraction from her stance that Islamic feminism has emerged; she moves away from her earlier cautious approach around the term. Individual scholars approach or dismiss the label of Islamic feminism, each justified through their individualism and unique experience as a Muslim woman. However, important in this discussion is the lack of unity and consensus amongst scholars in the debates around Islamic feminism. In the next section I explore whether it is necessary to adopt an Islamic feminist identity and whether there is a space for plural identities through convergence.

2.2.5 The use of Islamic feminism and convergence of plural identities

Scholars who refer to themselves as feminists and take 'Islam for granted' (Seedat 2013a:414) do not necessarily use Islamic feminism as a label. An example of this is when, Badran (2002), writes about the contribution of Mernissi, to the Islamic feminist discourse, articulated within an Islamic paradigm without taking on an Islamic feminist identity. Convergence of Islam and feminism is resisted by scholars such as Kauser (1995)and Moghissi (1999), (Kauser, 1995 and Moghissi, 1999 as cited in Seedat 2013a), even though they are diametrically opposed in their interests. Scholars such as Wadud (2006) and Barlas (2002), challenge the representation of the convergence of Islam and feminism and resist the application of the feminist label as they do not take their feminism as distinct from the religion. The two distinct positions intersect, for example Wadud and Barlas resist the Islamic feminism label but use feminist methods as the consciousness of a gender struggle has always existed in Muslim society. After first speculating, Badran (1999, cited in Seedat, 2013a), formulates a specific feminism for Muslim women. Badran (1994:141-142) writes about a kind of feminism involving public activism but does

not give it a name; the representatives of this approach resist the feminism label which has 'western associations' and is confining for pro-feminist women. This is a further example of the fluid nature of the term and the difficulties around achieving a coherent definition that provides a consensus viewpoint. She offers pragmatic reasons for the protagonists of gender activism to choose and decide for themselves how they conduct themselves in society and whether they are feminists, pro-feminist or Islamist they represent a convergence that transcends the politics and ideological boundaries of the paradigms Islam and feminism. As these boundaries blur, Badran (1999, cited in Seedat, 2013a), describes the conundrum faced by Muslim women in what to call their gender activism. She leans toward a prediction of Islamic feminism as a radical type of feminism that is inclusive of diaspora societies and transcends historical conception from the Egyptian women's movement. It is important to highlight the originating context as Egypt when considering the conception of this term and whether it operates in an inclusive way for the Muslim diaspora. Badran (1999) describes a middle space 'between secular feminism and masculinist Islamism' (Badran, 1999, as cited in Seedat, 2013a:411), where plural identities exist. This is a useful notion and may offer a way to overcome the obstacles associated with the terminology and taking on the identity label of Islamic feminism.

2.2.6 Status of women and the veil

Lila Abu-Lughod (2002) historicises the origins of Islam and writes about the attitudes to women in the time before the revelation of the Quran (a text that is the foundation for Muslim belief) around 1400 years ago and how this revelation became a source for change for women. She describes the relationship between the status of women and the origins of Islam as complicated and nuanced. These nuances are relevant to discussions around Islam and feminism in the present day. There is resistance to the term 'feminism' in many Muslim contexts for multiple reasons, conversely, Western critiques of Islam often point to the veil as

contradictory to feminism, however Islam is not necessarily contradictory to feminism, Islamic feminism attempts to chart a path between them.

Bullock (2007) discusses the negative stereotype associated with the word veil and the problematic simplification 'the veil' entails when applied to its various manifestations. Islamically, it pertains to the 'niqab', a cloth used to cover the face (An interviewee, Aminah, used the word niqab during her interview). The word 'hijab', as Bullock explains, is a complex notion combining the action to conceal (from the Quran) and an apparel to cover the head (headscarf) and/or face. The Quranic term can be applied to a gesture such as lowering one's gaze and is applicable to men as well as women. In my study I refer to mostly the hijab as a concept that refers to covering the head, but through various texts I have quoted the hijab (Laborde 2006; Ali 2005; Liederman 2000; Mahmood 2001; Jouili 2009; Bullock 2007) headscarf (BBC News 2019 and Pauha 2015), burkha (Pickering 2001 and BBC News 2018) and veil (Franks 2000; Killian 2019; Liederman 2000; Bilge 2010) are interchangeable with veil pertaining to the additional covering of the face.

Killian (2019) discusses how the veil became a symbol for national identity and opposition to the West as a direct result of Muslim women being required to remove the veil in France. This idea can be related to how the Western gaze operates ironically by constructing the notion that Muslim minority women need liberating (Rosenbaum 2013); however, this may lead to resistance through increased religious observance which may manifest through wearing a hijab, as a signal of pride in their identity. The changing attitude of women to religion is important; Ali (2005) argues that hijab wearing is taken up now by young, second-generation immigrant women in the United States due to salient shifts that point to new Muslim identities. This can be seen with young Asian women who wear the hijab, as their 'ethnic origin' is not always as visible as their Muslim identity and, in this way, they have agency by constructing their own identity; this aligns with the

view that how social relations, rules and norms interact, can motivate or enable agency (Porpora 2015). However, as Nyhagen (2021) points out, scholars should not lose sight of the constraining effects of power embedded in patriarchal structures that may idealise agency. The veil or hijab has become a homogenous symbol standing for religious fundamentalism, human rights violation and even terrorism (Liederman, 2000). Muslim women in the West have worn, and continue to wear, the veil for many reasons, some being political and cultural. Narratives of Islamophobia may suggest the modification of behaviour Muslim women experience because of negative experiences. I comment later in this chapter on how Muslims may self-police to modulate behaviour because of surveillance.

The oppressed Muslim woman is subjected to dominance by Muslim male patriarchy and is therefore weak, backward, helpless, and isolated (Said 2014, Salem 2013, Shaker et al 2022, Abu Lughod 2002, Mernissi 1991) and in stereotyping her, majority society weakens her further; this has provoked Muslim women to try and change the dominant perception. At the start of the new century, stereotypical images of oppressed Muslim women, began to play an important role in debates about their integration and during the last decade, representations of Muslim women in the media has become more diverse; however, the stereotypical representations of the Muslim women have remained. This is pointed out by scholars such as Mahmood (2001), whose research on the hijab is mostly discussed in terms of 'liberating' or saving Muslim women from oppression, usually by Muslim men. The wearing of the hijab is seen as a 'strange' (Goffman 2009:10), and irrational cultural practice that is in contempt of a rational and reasonable liberal Western culture. Another negative connotation associated with the veil is that the wearer appears to have something to hide (Franks, 2000), and becomes troublingly conspicuous. Aesthetically and politically the veil or hijab bypasses the western style of dressing and is seen as an affront to liberalism and progress. Laborde (2006) explains how the hijab is seen as regressive to the cause of feminists in the 1970s who fought for women's rights over their bodies. Laborde points to the hijab specifically, as being theologically inclined to '...repress feminine sexuality as such,

and to its historical association with deeply patriarchal societies' (2006:355). Rawls (1999) has an interesting take on the public communication that can ensue because of wearing the veil. He offers the idea that citizens who subscribe to differing doctrines are reassured by the public declaration of faith as it shows that we each endorse a reasonable political conception.

Important in this is the idea that liberal citizenship can serve to strengthen the ties of civil friendship and mutual understanding. According to Isin and Turner (2002) liberal citizens are left to their own devices to maximise individual liberty and decide for themselves how to use their constitutionally secured freedom and thus decide what kind of citizen to be. Peucker (2018:553) questions whether Islam is compatible with liberal democratic principles and suggests that the lived religiosity of most Muslims is 'not an obstacle to civic engagement in non-Muslim majority countries'. Peucker's (2018) study gives insight to how active involvement in mosques enhances the civic engagement of Muslims in non-Muslim majority countries. The presence of Islamic citizenship within liberal democracies intersects the philosophical, ethical and social debates, taking into consideration that Muslim communities constitute cultural, racial and linguistic minority groups according to March (2009). Muslim minorities may benefit from secular liberal democracies and the religious neutrality they offer but on the other hand they may not benefit from desirable rights and protections, the example given by March (2009), is that of protection from offensive speech. March (2009) questions the possibility of an overlapping consensus between political liberalism and religious doctrine and whether this is necessary for conditions of stability.

2.2.7 Islamic feminism and the position of the modern Muslim woman

Many Muslims reject the compatibility of Islam and feminism as 'colonial manipulation in the name of feminism' and a 'Western' concept with the added threat of women's activism (McDonald, 2008:348). Contemporary research in Islam is complicated by the '...intensity of public contestation over competing

representations of Muslims, both in Britain and elsewhere.' (Hopkins, 2009:1). The question of whether Islam is compatible with the West has been the preoccupation of many Western European commentators. For example Huntington (1996), argued in his 'clash of civilisations' thesis (1996), that future wars would be fought between cultures not countries and religious identities as the primary source of conflict (Huntington 1993). Contractor (2012:156) comments on how Muslim women position themselves as 'potential bridges' between the clashing civilisations of Islam and the West (Huntington 1993). Radical political Islam is a target for many countries both in the East and the West but 'for many Muslims the 'War on Terror' is perceived as a war on Islam' (Abbas 2005:4). This raises questions about the allegiances of Muslims in diaspora, the sensationalism surrounding this in the media is described by Hopkins (2009). The negative treatment and representation of the Muslim other legitimises 'existing systems of domination and subordination' according to Abbas (2005:11).

Azam (2018) describes the anti-Muslim sentiments faced by Muslim men and women in the US and discusses the stereotypes associated with Muslim men as misogynistic and violent; she argues that Muslim women carry a different burden than Muslim men and those women who identify as Islamic feminists carry a heavier burden than those who do not. Azam (2018) uses the example of the hostility and challenges faced by hijab-wearing Muslim women, she explains how dominant society sees Muslim women as complicit in their oppression by religion and show non-gratitude towards liberatory efforts. The challenge for feminists who work within the framework of Islam is to effectively critique 'gendered aspects of the Islamic tradition' (Azam 2018:124) without adding gravitas to the anti-Muslim campaign. Islamic feminist scholars and activists work against a backdrop of criticism of Islam as incompatible with modernity and Islamophobic rhetoric and activity. To address the topics of Islam and women in Islamophobic times, Islamic feminists consider factors such as Islamic history, religious discourse and contemporary society. Azam (2018:125) explains that the risk is in the critique exposing a vulnerability and a 'proof' of sorts that Islamic doctrine is 'detrimental to

women'. Azam (2018) describes how the discourse of Islamic feminism in the US can fuel right wing ideologies to further target Muslim communities to drive political motivations.

Katherine Bullock (2005, as cited in McDonald 2008) creates a space for activist voices in the US with women living Islamic feminism. Bullock's standpoint tackles orientalist stereotypes and presents an international relevance of the subject through examples of activist Muslims who believe 'Islam is feminist' (Bullock, 2005, as cited in McDonald, 2008:353). Her standpoint challenges the behaviour and beliefs of people rather the faith itself. This is supported by Cooke's view (Cooke, 1997, cited in Azam, 2018) when Islam is practised authentically it sufficiently allows justice to women. Cooke's (1997, cited in Azam, 2018) analysis aligns Islamic feminism with Arab Muslim women's discourses on modernity and illustrates the breadth of activism. In addition, she suggests that Islamic feminism may be applied more generally to many aspects of modern Muslim women's gender work. This is exemplified by Azam (2018), who applies Cooke's insights pertaining to Arab and Muslim women and to the experiences of Muslim women in the US and their positioning with the contextual US culture war against Islam. Azam (2018) considers Muslim women and their compatibility with belonging and citizenship and draws upon the example of hijab wearing Muslim women and the challenges they face in the US. Azam (2018) writes about the positioning of Muslim women in the US as Islamic feminists as challenging as these women must contest and critique the gendered aspects of Islamic tradition. For example, the view that dominant society sees Muslim women as complicit in their oppression.

2.2.8 Homogenisation of Islamic feminism

The above exemplifies that developing a unity amongst Muslim feminists is a challenge, especially when there is no cohesive framework. Moreover, there is an incorrect assumption in postcolonial theorizing that all women belonging to a certain ethno-cultural group share a similar experience of oppression. O'Mahony

and Donnelly (2010:444) state that this assumption is a kind of essentialism that 'tends to ignore diversity and individuality in women's groups and varying degrees of agency'. This relates to Nyhagen's discussion of women's agency and how this 'can be expressed in submission and religious piety as well as in overt oppositional practices that contend men's power and gender inequalities' Nyhagen (2017:497).

Nyhagen (2021) explains that studies of religion and gender should account for specificity of context as both secularism and religion can be used to undermine or support gender equality. Nyhagen, critically discusses 'structural deterministic perspectives', (where religions are patriarchal systems that oppress women) and moves to 'agency-focused approaches' (where women with religious faith are recognised as competent subjects) (2021:53), to challenge the oppression versus liberation dichotomy. An example of this dichotomous view can be seen with the views of Jeffreys (2012) around the subordination of women through religion (patriarchal); with practices such as the veiling of Muslim women seen as harmful to women's rights. Nyhagen (2021) points out that there is much research demonstrating the fact that Muslim wear the veil for many reasons (Bilge 2010) and this practice does not deprive Muslim women of individual agency. Furthermore, Nyhagen (2021), states that religion and culture are examples of multiple intersections that may contribute to gender inequality and that lived and religious experience for some women may be oppressive whilst for others it may be liberating and a source of protection. This highlights the importance of context-specific studies to better understand the dynamics of the relationship between gender and religion and how male-dominated authority interacts in everyday life for individuals and groups.

An example of this 'agency' is demonstrated by Wadud (2006:3) as an insider and her efforts to 'reconstruct the tradition' with a hermeneutical approach to challenging inequalities in Islamic tradition. As an Islamic scholar she demonstrates a 'female sensitive approach to interpreting Islamic texts' (Wadud, 2006 as cited in

McDonald 2008) as a continued development of Islamic feminism and in this way adopts feminist methodology. Wadud's (2006) distance from feminist discourse allows her to maintain and prioritise her Muslim identity, whilst exhibiting agency through her modality of resistance (Burke 2012). This aligns with Nyhagen's (2021) discussion that both secular and religious women can exercise agency. Seedat (2013a) explains Wadud's (2006, as cited in Seedat 2013a) position through understanding the heavy burdens of colonial and empire-based feminisms on Muslim societies and the prejudicial effect of hegemonic discourses based on the intellectual tradition of Europe's enlightenment. Therefore, her pro-feminist stance allows her to find her place in feminism according to Seedat (2013), this relates to the idea of the multiplicity of feminisms. Haleh Afshar (1998) poses questions around feminist boundaries and in contrast to Wadud (2006) offers a discussion around changing the position of women in society by working within the orthodoxy rather than transforming the frame of Islam (Afshar, 1998 and Wadud, 2006 as cited in McDonald 2008).

Azam (2018) draws on Cooke's (1997 as cited in Azam, 2018) comments around whether Muslim women need feminism; she explains that Muslim women only need to use feminism if they feel they need to, furthermore, feminism is best conceived as an 'instrument in an intellectual and practical toolbox' rather than a 'specific set of ideas' or an 'identity' (Azam 2018:126). Azam (2018) understands feminism as consistent with Cooke's (Cooke 2001:113) idea of 'multiple critique' which she describes as 'fluid' and 'taken up from multiple speaking positions'. This is a useful mechanism for an individual to criticise the problems in a community whilst remaining part of the group. In this way Islamic feminism is flexible and can be deployed depending on the context and is not defined by a choice around how much feminism should be expressed but rather it is more about empowering women to speak to the situation. Azam (2018:126) describes her own standpoint as a 'dynamic engagement with feminism' speaking from a feminist position, raising feminist critique as and when appropriate and from multiple positions. For Azam (2018:126), this is 'liberating in our current cultural, political, and media

environment'. Islamic feminism allows for ways of understanding and untangling patriarchy and religion, their positioning and potential in society and an Islamic way of considering gender equality.

2.2.9 The Muslim diaspora and contextual access to the feminist register

Islamic feminist discourse and articulation of gender equality extends to and is relevant in predominantly Muslim countries too according to Badran (2002) who refers to examples from South Africa, Malaysia and Iran. She makes specific reference to the pioneering feminist movement of Egypt and how it has been articulated within an Islamic framework but not exclusively as this movement has mobilised democratic, nationalist and humanitarian frameworks to drive its cause. She argues that the benefits of Islamic feminism extend to Muslim and non-Muslim women and men, in the East and in the West. Badran (2002) explains how Islamic feminism can serve as a force for improving the lives of Muslim women in their individual lives in Western diaspora communities and as second-generation citizens in Muslim minority communities. However, as demonstrated in this literature review, Islamic feminism presents issues concerning terminology; the oxymoronic nature of the concept itself; developing a consensus amongst scholars; debates around the compatibility of Islamic feminism with Islam and with the West; its suitability to a non-homogenous group of women and its contextual limitations. Muslim women simultaneously inhabit many different identities and spaces and assert any one of these possible identities to give authority in particular circumstances, according to Cooke (2001 as cited in Azam, 2018), who aligns with Badran's (1999, as cited in Seedat, 2013a:), idea of a middle space discussed earlier. This is useful to the Muslim feminist as she can access the 'feminist register', select and express an identity which allows her access via a shared similarity 'to address issues of Islam and women in another setting' (Azam 2018:127). Cooke (2001 as cited in Azam, 2018), offers Islamic feminism as a strategy rather than an identity that allows Muslim women to shift their understanding and implementation of it. Zine (2006:2) discusses the various orientations of 'Muslim women who operate

from either secular or religious paradigms' and therefore claim their right to maintain multiple identities as women and as Muslim women. Khan (2002: ix) writes about 'a third space which identifies women's resistance to stereotypical pre-determinations of being Muslim'. She explains how this space can possibly lead to 'hybridized negotiations' to allow for 'a politics of difference'.

Seedat (2013a) states it is possible for Islam and feminism to come together without the two converging or differentiating, resembling the approach of scholars such as Fatima Mernissi and Leila Ahmed. Scholars such as Kecia Ali (2006 as cited in Seedat 2013a), present themselves as Muslim feminists and explain that it is not necessary to situate the place of feminism in Islam or have a narrative around how the two converge. She demonstrates the difficulties in this as historical gender ideologies do not translate to the interests and issues of contemporary Muslim women. What is important to Ali is to establish that Muslim feminists are pushing the boundaries of Islamic intellectual tradition and that contemporary Muslim women should take responsibility for their own engagement with Islamic intellectual tradition (Ali 2006 as cited in Seedat 2013a), including developing new paths of interpretation. Within the binary position of 'being forced into an orientalist attack on Islam or a defence of it', Khan (2002:x), Muslim women exist in the Muslim diaspora as a non-homogenised group, which requires a non-homogenised approach in the analysis of their experiences.

Despite the name ascribed to alternative feminisms and whether these labels are more analytic tools and a strategy rather than a homogenised category, the ultimate goal of all feminisms is to fight injustice against women and alleviate oppression. Khan (2002:x) discusses the problematic position for her as a Muslim feminist in choosing between the perhaps binary position 'of being forced into either an orientalist attack on Islam or a defence of it'. Khan (2002) describes how she could not find a space amongst feminists or within the Muslim category to practise progressive politics. She describes two almost opposing positions whereby

feminists were happy for her to condemn Islam and Muslim men and where others wanted her to take a theological route involving a reading of sacred Islamic texts to support the rights of Muslim women. Zine (2006) locates her struggle as a faith-based feminist, committed to opposing patriarchy and transforming the oppressive ideology that sustains the subordination of Muslim women. The idea of a context-driven approach to Islamic feminism is justified as is exemplified throughout this review; for example, Mcdonald (2008), discusses how each activist may have a nuanced and differing vision around alternative views of Islamic feminism, however they have commonalities in that they promote the rights of women and use the Quran as a basis for this. These activists are united in their specific (Islamic) type of feminism where the manifestation of female emancipation is divergent from the vision of many western feminists. In the British educational context a specific form of Islamic feminism is applicable to unpick the subordination and oppression of Muslim women and pertinent to the FMTs who participate in this study - a British Islamic feminism is required.

2.2.10 The case for a culturally sensitive British form of Islamic feminism.

The literature I have reviewed demonstrates that Islamic feminism cannot be easily conceptualised globally. There are issues around it being accepted universally as a term, as discussed in the review secular feminists and Muslim scholars alike have reservations around the terminology (McDonald 2008). Muslim scholars raise questions around the concept itself and that Islamic feminism speaks to a Western discourse of feminism opposed by Muslim scholars. The advocators for Islamic feminism highlight the need for this approach as an alternative to the hegemonic European feminist discourses (Seedat 2013); and its importance when used holistically as a strategy or tool (Badran, 2011) to examine the oppressions of Muslim women regardless of the terminology used.

An intersectional approach to identity is useful (Salem, 2013), however intersectionality theory has been largely silent on religion (Nyhagen, 2021). In Crenshaw's (1989), conceptualisation religious identity is not foregrounded and is

not explicitly inclusive of specific intersects such as cultural identity, religious identity and Britishness. The experience of British Muslim women is unique; the challenges of living and working in the British context for first/second generation South Asian Muslim women who are themselves products of the British Education system, is specific and nuanced and requires an intersectional approach which empowers British Muslim women and gives them a definitive 'place at the table' in Western academic discourse; offering a centrality for religious Muslim women in feminist discourses (Lepinard, 2020).

After reviewing the literature and in light of this study, I advocate for an intersectional approach that is culturally sensitive to a British form of Islamic feminism, that recognises the primacy of religion, importance of Muslim culture and the significance of Britishness in the formation of British Muslim women's identity. An initial step towards British Islamic feminism as a political framework, goes beyond challenging Western discourses around feminism and requires a label divergent of intersectionality; it is allowing for 'a place at the table' in western discourse, unashamedly religious. Experiences of Muslim women in British society require a platform that goes beyond intersecting identities, a unique and more holistic form of intersectionality that is specific to the UK and a unique combination of inequalities.

2.3 Part Two:

2.3.1 Muslim women and stereotypes

My study looks specifically at school contexts as the focus is on the experiences of FMTs, according to Mirza and Meetoo (2017:227), schools are important sites for 'social inclusion, citizenship and belonging'. Mirza and Meetoo's study (2017) looks at the experiences of young British women, specifically migrant women and the 'gendered surveillance' they faced through Islamophobic discourses. Zine's study of Muslim girls in Canada (2006) highlights the assumption by teachers that Muslim

girls who wear the headscarf are oppressed at home, which is translated into low teacher expectation for these girls. The construction of Muslim women in public discourse has made them 'Islamophobic signifiers' (Mirza and Meetoo 2017:228) amongst the backdrop of the cultural and religious other in society; signifiers that highlight a lack of agency for Muslim women include religious dress such as the hijab and burkini to gender-based violence for example, female genital violence, honour crimes and forced marriage. According to Pickering (2001), a stereotype is defined as an essentialist representation of a certain group or category of people that is widely shared in society, typically in the form of texts and/or images. Stereotypes are created where unequal power structures and power relations exist. The consequence of stereotypes is the marginalisation of the stereotyped by a dominant group who in doing so speak of and for the marginalised and thereby reinforcing this position. Stereotypes serve to differentiate the racialised other from white subjects; in this way, these stereotypes are said to be the identifiable features of racial minorities.

Abu-Lughod (2013) explains the long history of the Western representation of Muslim women and discusses how after the attacks of September 11, 2001, stereotypical images of Muslim women as oppressed, were taken up by the media and connected to a cultural rescue mission by the West. Events such as the 9/11 attacks in the US and subsequent attacks in the UK such as the London bombing in 2005, the three separate attacks in 2017 including Westminster Bridge and Palace, Manchester Arena and London Bridge (UK Government 2020) caused an escalation in public debate about Islam, and therefore Muslim women as a visible representation of the religion. Post 9/11 many western nations saw dramatic increases in hate crime against Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim (Perry, 2014). Women and girls appear to be vulnerable to hate crime or discrimination since those who are covered are readily identifiable. Whilst the current wave of anti-Muslim sentiments may have been motivated by anger and outrage at the 9/11 attacks, there is a broader history and culture that supports anti-Arab, anti-Muslim and anti-Middle East attitudes (Said, 1979).

According to Said (1979), in his work on orientalism, historically cultural and ideological environments served the interests of colonial powers such as Britain and have targeted many aspects of the way of life of Muslims. Examples of this can be seen in France with the headscarf ban in schools, as the French government wanted to impose their own perceptions on womanhood (BBC News, 2019). The pillar of French republicanism and the main factor in social cohesion, the principle of *laïcité*, is expressed in state law and public institutions as a marked neutrality, especially in relation to religious denominations (Alicino 2016). The *laïcité* model implies a strict separation between the state and Church (Weil 2009). In the twenty first century, under the pressure of immigration and globalisation, France is confronted with the revival of religious identity, ideals and norms as a challenge to a secular society (Williame 2010) and one where assimilation of French citizens to a nation-state is the basis for equality (Alicino 2016). France has seen the *Charlie Hebdo* debate highlight the important discussion around exercising responsibility for freedom of expression in a multicultural society and the principal of *laïcité*. Rootham (2015) discusses racialisation of Muslim identities in the French context and specifically with reference to barriers for Muslim women, for example barriers to Muslim women's employment opportunities.

Media representations of Muslims (Alsultany (2012), Dixon & Wlliams (2015), Schmuck et al 2017), are loaded with associations of immorality, irresponsibility and inferiority. Al-Saji (2010) denotes this as an example of cultural racism and uses the example of the burqa-covered Afghan woman as the symbol for the oppression of women under Taliban rule. This image was perpetuated in 2001 as an alleged moral argument for the United States' war on Afghanistan as an appeal to liberate Afghan women. Al-Saji (2010) subsequently discusses this western representation of Muslim women, conflated with various historical factors and how this contributed to the situation faced by women in Afghanistan, as Islamic fundamentalism became immediately identifiable with the burqa. The media can contribute to the

stereotypical images becoming stronger and more generally, Muslims being misjudged. An example of this is when the then Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson, compared women in burqas to ‘letterboxes’ and ‘bank robbers' in his Daily Telegraph column (BBC News, 2018). According to the anti-racism organisation, Tell Mama (2019) there was a near four-fold increase in anti-Muslim incidents after Boris Johnson’s remarks. This dehumanising language not only risks normalising stereotypes in the media but can ultimately have a damaging effect (Schmuck et al 2017), on minorities who are then targeted with racist or hateful language. Schmuck (2017) comments this may have a detrimental effect on the identity formation of minority members and cause hostility towards majority members.

Consequently, acting upon these interpretations allows dominant groups to actively construct whiteness as superior to exploit the stereotypes and justify anti-Muslim behaviour; the motivating forces for openly racist (Perry 2014), anti-Muslim behaviour are ideologies and images that allow inequities to be articulated and normalised through relations of superiority/inferiority. However there are examples of positive Muslim role models in the media include women such as Nadia Hussain, winner of ‘The Great British Bake Off’ in 2015 and activist Malala Yousafzai, the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. Other examples include Muslim women in British politics such as Baroness Sayeeda Warsi, a former member of the House of Lords and Former Co-Chair of the Conservative Party, who made headlines in Pakistan for being the first woman to wear the traditional Pakistani dress for a meeting at 10 Downing Street. Western media has an agenda, according to Mastro (2016), to accumulate views, money and ratings even if it means adopting the stereotypes associated with Muslims; in addition to this Kasana (2014), notes when a Muslim woman breaks stereotypes or challenges the assumptions created by majority society, she is still scrutinised with orientalist fascination. and as described by Rosenbaum (2013:213) describes this as the Western gaze, which constructs Muslim women as ‘needing liberation’. This ironically leads to resistance by Muslim women, through increased religious observance according to Rosenbaum (2013).

Material aimed at children, for example cartoons, can exemplify how the world can be defined in narrow terms such as good versus evil. In the cartoon Scooby-Doo, Uncle Abdullah is presented with his genie and in Disney's Aladdin, Princess Jasmine is depicted as a submissive Muslim woman. In Porky Pig, Ali-Baba dumps a bad-hearted Arab into a barrel of syrup and Bugs Bunny escapes from being boiled in oil by pleasing a sheikh with a goat (Shaheen and Mamoulian 1984). By contrast, a more positive and complex representation is exemplified by Marvel comics first Muslim superhero, Ms Marvel. Ms Marvel is a Pakistani-American teenager who struggles to maintain her Muslim identity, but her character has relevance to a wide audience as she is shown to have more generic issues such as family, school, peer pressure and what she wants to do with her life (Voanews, 2018). This visual representation of a Muslim superhero in Ms Marvel challenges the lazy, racist and Islamophobic tropes and images used to portray the Muslim community and offers an alternative way of thinking by exposing the discourse around Muslims and their orientalist representations.

Negative constructions of Islam through slanderous imagery or stereotypes provide motivation for the victimisation of Muslims in Western nations (Perry, 2014). There is wide scholarly attention with regards to the othering and stereotyping of Muslim women, for example Van Es (2019), who describes how stereotypes can be internalised, subverted, or appropriated by the stereotyped people, which raises questions around the perceived western ideal of a Muslim woman.

2.3.2 British South Asians: Race, ethnicity and religion as identity

This section focuses on South Asian history in Britain, as the FMTs in my study, including myself share a South Asian migration background (Pakistani) and the ***Scenarios*** dataset includes narratives related to ethnicity and nationality. It is important to understand the migration history of the FMTs in my study as they

represent post-colonial subjects as agents of 'historically emergent and politically convulsive global communities' (Ahmed and Mukherjee 2012:168). One of the FMTs was born in Pakistan and moved to the UK as a child and the other three were born in the UK to migrant parents. I refer to the FMTs I interview as postcolonial subjects. I acknowledge the problem associated with term 'postcolonial subject' as it is restrictive to colonial experiences and assumes no 'pre-colonial past' (Jabri 2012:19) and the reference to subject reinforces the continuation of colonial structures.

In the nineteenth century, at the height of European colonial expansion, most of the Islamic world was under colonial rule. In India, the Moghul empire lasted for over 300 years until it was abolished in 1857 ending 1000 years of Muslim rule. Decolonisation in the post-Second World War period led to turmoil in the region that is now called South Asia and includes the countries India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. In 1947, the Raj gave Pakistan independence from India, forming East and West Pakistan with India in between. West Pakistan would become Bangladesh in 1971. The partition, a parting gesture from the Raj caused the displacement of millions and death of many people (Abbas, 2005). Post-war Britain at this time needed manpower in industrial sectors and turned to citizens of the 'New Commonwealth' nations including the newly formed South Asian ones. The legacy of British imperialism and colonialism has determined when and where immigrants have settled. There was a belief that once employment terminated, ethnic minorities would return to their countries of origin. Instead, these migrants settled and formed communities. Abbas (2005:9) states how South Asian Muslim immigrants were 'systematically ethnicised and racialised' by being placed in the labour market, below that of the white working class.

Immigration from the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) has contributed significantly to ethnic diversity. To represent the people of Indian, Pakistani and/or Bangladeshi origin, the term South Asian is used (Pande, 2014). Li (2021) reports that when the textile factories declined in the late 1990s, Pakistani/Bengali men of the first generation tended to become taxi drivers or

workers in the catering industry. With a low educational attainment and position, 'They, together with the two black groups, were the most vulnerable to hyper-cyclical unemployment and to ethnic penalty' (Li, 2021:7). I refer to these groups specifically to analyse the exchange in ***Scenario 1.1***. (the ***Scenarios*** are a dataset I have used, see section 3.3 for more detail). Abbas (2005:29) reports 'Bangladeshis being worse off than Pakistanis' but both groups are amongst the poorest minority ethnic populations in Britain. This economic disparity, according to Abbas (2005), between Pakistani and Bengali groups can be attributed to the Bangladeshi migration to the UK peaking twenty years after that of the Pakistanis, which meant they saw a very different Britain and did not commit themselves to a doomed textile and housing industry. Abbas (2005:10) reports that many South Asian Muslim migrants '...remain close to kith and kin and the religious and cultural manifestations of their lives directly shape their presence in Britain'. Abbas (2005) suggests that the social divisions that ensued during the early immigration and settlement patterns of South Asian Muslims are prevalent even today.

The politicisation of Islam along with the growing Muslim populations in Britain and Western Europe (Peach, 2006b), suggest religion as the more important variable for socio-geographic investigation over race and ethnicity. However, it is important to analyse how specific positionings, identities and political values are 'constructed and interrelate and affect each other in particular locations and contexts', according to Yuval-Davis (2006:200). For example, a Muslim woman may exert her religiosity in a religious setting differently to in a professional setting; Contractor (2012:74) adds that an intersectional perspective recognises that there are different ways of 'being' a woman and that this is context-specific. Moreover, Contractor (2012), states the importance of exploring the Muslim woman's layered identities and 'the multifaceted contributions' (2012:6) they are making in a pluralist society.

According to the Annual Population survey conducted in March 2018 there are 3,372,966 Muslims in the United Kingdom (Office for National Statistics, 2018),

making it the third largest population after those with no religion (23, 725,080) and Christians of all denominations (33,111,246). The British Asian community forms the largest group of Muslims in Britain in terms of ethnicity. There are also significant Muslim communities from Turkish, Arab and Somali descent with up to 100,000 native British converts to Islam, with Islam being the fastest growing religion in the United Kingdom. Simpson et al (2016) discuss the difficulty with defining categories of ethnic identities with the added element of multiple or hybrid ethnicities are concerned. In their study (Simpson et al, 2016) discuss the reliability of measuring ethnicity using national census data. They state that it is widely accepted that ethnicity is shaped culturally but there are many factors that influence the choice of one group over another such as age, socio-economic status, household structure, marriage partner and location. This suggests, the nature of ethnic inequalities in the UK are dynamic and fluid, especially when individuals may change the category they belong to. Khan (2002: xv) refers to the 'fluidity and shifting categories of Muslim identity' and the resistance she experienced to this idea from feminist and Muslim groups. Furthermore, Contractor (2012:74) comments on the apprehension of the category 'Muslim woman', felt by participants in her study and that there were 'common aspects to all women's struggle' (2012:75). This links to the recognition of how 'socio-economic, religious, class and historical contexts' (2012:74) intersect the category 'woman'.

Varady (2007) describes the large-scale Muslim immigration to British cities, especially in Central and Northern England. According to Varady (2007), these cities have the highest incidence of segregation related problems, with schools being more acutely segregated than the residential neighbourhoods. The segregation rate is the highest for Bangladeshis and Pakistanis and the experience of British Muslims with residential clustering is different to other ethnic groups (Peach 2005). Byrne et al (2020) report on the issue of residential clustering, a specific residential pattern of ethnic minority groups. The concentration of Black and ethnic minority communities in more deprived areas, with poor quality housing and low-wage insecure employment has meant a range of racial attitudes are observable (Byrne et

al 2020). Storm et al (2017 cited in Byrne et al 2020) state that racial and ethnic prejudice was directed mostly at Muslims compared to all other groups. Furthermore, Byrne et al (2020), discuss the increased significance of anti-Muslim racism across Britain and Europe with an emphasis on integration over multiculturalism. Varady (2007:45) points out a link between the rise of Islamic terrorism in Europe and host countries feeling an 'increased nervousness over an ever-growing Muslim population'; the nervousness relates to physical and cultural differences of Muslims and there is a focus on integration for this reason. The implication here is that the Muslim diaspora is to blame for the fear and the phobia that Islamophobia implies (Jenkins 2012). Varady (2007:60) suggests more research is required to identify the social mechanisms through which ethnic concentration may lead to young Muslim men turning to 'crime and terrorism'. I make references to this in my analysis of interview data where issues of segregation, multiculturalism and integration are integral forces.

Throughout Islamic history, Muslim societies have devised institutions, constructs and modes of thought that have played an important role in defining women's place in society to inform the core discourses of Islam. It is interesting to note how female migration patterns have differed to those of male South Asians, with men migrating to the UK in the early 1960s for work and the shift to family reunification in the following decades (Kabeer 2003). The women who migrated to the UK to join their spouses can be less visible as they have lower rates of economic activity compared to other ethnic minority groups or white women: 57.2% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are inactive in the labour market (Casey, 2016:91). A study carried out by Dale and colleagues in Greater Manchester, found that many older women who had migrated to the UK had a limited ability to speak English, which together with a lack of formal qualifications, posed a barrier to seeking paid work (Dale 2002). The stereotype of young South Asian women as 'docile, uninterested in education and destined for arranged marriages' has been challenged by Bagguley and Hussain (2016:43). They point out the increasing uptake of university places by Bangladeshi and Pakistani women through the decades since initial migration with

the prevalence of second and third generation South Asian women in education. First generation migrants are often still dismissed as being poorly educated and not as interested in education, however.

In British discourse there has been a shift from the focus on colour of minorities in the 1950s to 1960s to race in the following decades, to ethnicity in the 1990s and to religion presently as reported by Peach (2006a), with Islam appearing as an attribute of ethnic groups such as Bengalis and Pakistanis. Muslims are seen to belong to a single homogenous group in the media irrespective of race (Alba and Nee 1997), however being a British Muslim is not a unifying category; it is super imposed by ethnically fragmentive grouping. Contemporary mobilisations of 'race' bring to the forefront a range of concerns around multiculturalism, immigration and nation (Vieten and Poynting, 2016). These concerns have been brought to attention during the last two decades by an increasing presence (Hopkins 2016) of right wing political groups such as the English Defence League (EDL) (see Chapter 6 for link to EDL by Zaynab) and British National Party (BNP) who have seen a rise in their influence and have gained political support, especially amongst the working class in English towns and cities, as reported by Winlow et al (2017). The agenda for these and similar parties is around anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiments. Kinnvall (2017:2) comments on how racism is 'grounded in anthropology rather than biology' and is situated in the way of life of a group of people. Race categories remain important social signifiers of identity as pointed out at various points in my study.

2.3.3 Islamophobia and racialisation

There have been key shifts in racialised discourse in the morphing landscape of racism in contemporary Britain. Emerging forms of racism such as Islamophobia (Fekete, 2009), depict the continual evolution of racisms relative to changing political, social and economic contexts. Other forms of racism exist such as xenoracism, antisemitism and anti-Black racism which are beyond the scope of this study. Religion has become an important aspect of contemporary forms of racism,

impacting most notably on Muslims, who state racism exists at the institutional and societal level with a focus on the interpersonal and the individual. As well as Islamophobia, other forms of religious racism include antisemitism. Prejudices and stereotypes that demarcate racialised groups as the 'other' continue to be observable today and legitimise and inform inequalities according to Byrne et al (2020).

Institutional racism was identified as existing within public bodies after the publication of the Macpherson report (1999) in response to the murder of Black British teenager Stephen Lawrence in 1993. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act in 2000 (UK Government, 2000) followed the Macpherson report and two decades on racial disparities and practices of a discriminatory nature remain. Gilbert (2004) describes how the nature of institutional racism means that dominant prejudicial attitudes are hard to change as racial hierarchies operate in complex and unpredictable ways. Institutions continue to systemically disadvantage ethnic minority groups in their operations. Byrne (2020:203) comments that the shift from 'institutional racism' to 'unconscious bias' risks relieving institutions, organisations and governments from confronting 'structural and social causes of racism and inequality'. Moving away from discussions of institutional racism and situating racism within unconscious attitudes of individuals is an ineffective strategy, as argued by Bourne (2019). She states if racism is covert, psychological, individual and subconscious it absolves organisations, governments, institutions and individuals and allows for central government policy to become implicit in compounding inequalities. This is exemplified by the Recommendations from 'The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' (UK Government, 2021b) (see section 1.1.).

The term 'Islamophobia' was first used in print in 1991 and gained exposure and currency through the publication of a Report by the Runnymede Trust (Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, 1997). Islamophobia as a concept was coined

in the late 1990s and early 2000s to draw attention to rhetoric and activity directed at Muslims in Western democracies and Muslims in general (Bleich 2011). Islamophobia is a relatively new form of prejudice (Lean 2019) and there is no widely accepted definition of Islamophobia that can be applied in comparative studies to categories of racism or xenophobia, which makes it difficult in identifying the 'causes' and 'consequences' with any precision (Bleich 2011:1582). Lauwers (2019) argues that contemporary Islamophobic discourse in Europe is increasingly defined as a form of racism. She states Islamophobia could manifest as two distinct but intertwined concepts: anti-Islam bigotry 'a prejudicial rejection of an essentialised idea of Islam' and anti-Muslim racism which implies the negative characteristics associated with Islam and Muslim identity are 'innate and unchangeable' (2019:306). Acim (2019:40) sums up the rise of Islamophobia and racism in the Western world as a phenomena that emanates from a 'burgeoning tendency that tries to tarnish all Muslims with the same brush of ridicule'. The underlying motivators for Islamophobic rhetoric may be racism, political factors, social dynamics or perceived biases about the religion of Islam itself (Lean 2019). There is much scholarly debate and disagreement around the terminology of 'Islamophobia' and whether this term meets the needs of Muslims who face prejudice. The MPAC (Muslim Public Affairs Council) privately encourage alternatives but have adopted the word institutionally as it is commonly and publicly employed, according to Lean (2019). Cheng (2015:562) presents the debate around whether Islamophobia should be called 'Muslimophobia' due to hostility towards Muslims as people rather than Islam as the religion. Lean (2019:26) urges scholars to move away from the debates around terminology and focus on the discourse for 'identifying, speaking about and combatting Islamophobia'.

Miles (1989, cited in Meer and Modood, 2019) conception of racialisation was not premised on 'biological inherentism', for example skin colour (Miles 1982:121, cited in Meer and Modood, 2019); he maintained we should be studying how 'signifying processes' (Miles 1989:79, cited in Meer and Modood, 2019), interact. He outlined how the social dynamics of racism are intertwined with other '-isms' such as

'nationalism, ethnicism and sexism' (Miles, 1989:87, cited in Meer and Modood, 2019). Miles (1989, cited in Meer and Moddod, 2019) suggests that prejudices are rarely discrete in social life and that there are physical and verbal attacks on visibly identifiable Muslims. An example of these visible markers is women wearing the hijab (Allen and Nielsen 2002:16), which signifies a gendered Islamic identity. This is reinforced by Zine (2008:60), who comments that Islamophobia operates in a matrix of oppressions with 'gendered Islamophobia targeting women specifically'. Since the 9/11 attacks there has been a resurgence in Islamophobia, manifesting in anti-Muslim hate crimes across America and Europe, according to Acim (2019).

Meer and Modood (2019) suggest that any concept of Islamophobia should seek to capture the components of contemporary anti-Muslim sentiment that go beyond orientalism. They question whether Islamophobia as a concept can analytically capture the 'racial and cultural dynamics of the macro-historical juxtaposition between 'Europe' and 'Islam'' (Meer and Modood, 2019:32), to delineate the racialising component, which critiques Islam as a religion (Murray 2006). After visiting the UK to assess the situation of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance (Achiume, 2018) the United Nations Special Rapporteur 2018, highlighted the increase in Islamophobic sentiment leading to a political culture underpinned by 'anti-Muslim panic' (Achiume, 2018: 41–2). Furthermore, Meer and Modood (2019) state that the protections afforded to racialised minorities are not extended to Muslims as they voluntarily choose their religious identity. The way religion is frowned upon in 'British intelligentsia invites the ridiculing of Muslims as healthy for intellectual debate' (Meer and Modood, 2019:29) and ethnic identity is more welcome in public space than religious identity. The Muslim minority is perceived to be associated with terrorism and therefore disloyal and a threat. This suggests a political and ideological construct of Islamophobia to justify the treatment of Muslims (Acim 2019).

The above reinforces the view that 'Muslims are viewed as a 'threat' to the nation' (Byrne et al 2020:231). The UK has faced significant Islamist terrorist threat (Thomas 2010:442), for example the 7/7 bombing of July 2005, the failed attacks of 21 July 2005 and the attack on Glasgow Airport in 2007. A worrying element of this is that most of the implicated have been British born, Muslim residents, which suggests that 'some young Muslims are dangerously alienated from British values' (Prins and Salisbury, 2008 cited in Thomas 2010). As well as promoting 'community cohesion' as a policy (Cantle 2001; Home Office 2005 as cited in Thomas, 2010), to tackle the issue of ethnic segregation (Cantle 2001, cited in Thomas, 2010), a key policy since the 7/7 bombing in 2005, has been the Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) agenda (Thomas 2010:442). This policy was announced in October 2006 as part of the UK government's wider counter-terrorism CONTEST strategy (DCLG 2007). PVE is often known as 'Prevent' and according to Thomas (2010:443), should be understood within the broader context of anti-terrorism policies. In the original strategy, initially CONTEST (Home Office 2003), and then CONTEST 2 (Home office 2009), there were four distinct but inter-related elements 'Pursue, Prevent (PVE), Protect and Prepare' (Thomas 2010:444). According to Thomas 'Prevent' was the least developed and since prioritised using a 'hearts and mind' (2010:444), approach aimed at people vulnerable to support terrorists. The introduction of the UK government's Prevent Agenda as part of the Terrorism Act 2006 (UK Government, 2006), has served to act as a form of surveillance whereby Muslims are situated as suspicious. The strategy outlines principles intended to tackle the global threat of violent extremism by sharing domestic experiences and to implement national and regional PVE action plans. This includes the implementation of the PVE agenda (UK Government 2015), in schools to ensure their institutions are environments that meet the benchmarks of security procedures. The Prevent Duty commenced in July 2015 for authorities in the further and higher education sectors; online training was provided in the form of eLearning training packages to develop knowledge around the risks of radicalisation with further training available for institutions covered by the Prevent Duty (UK Government 2015). Counter-terrorism policies such as Prevent involve the implementation of state-surveillance whereby Muslims are positioned as belonging

to suspicious communities, which in turn exacerbates wider sentiment to Islamophobia (Byrne et al., 2020). I navigate surveillance in education using the Prevent agenda as an example in Chapter 5.

It is important to address 'whiteness' when discussing religiously and racially motivated hate crime in the UK, as the perpetrators are overwhelmingly white men (Hopkins 2016); the victims are women as well as men who are perceived as Muslims. There are other victims of religiously and racially motivated hate crime in Britain, for example Jewish people (Flax 2021). Hopkins (2016) uses the intersection of gendered violence with axes of difference such as race and masculinity to explore the gendering of Islamophobia and race. Lyubansky and Barter (2011) endorse the commonly agreed idea that whiteness has three main components: racial identity, racial bias and racial privilege. Racial identity as an element of whiteness holds that ethnic minorities do not resemble the majority group and therefore have less power. As a result of this they experience more discrimination (McIntosh 1989; Stovall 2006). The majority group see their identity as normal and the strength in this is derived from group size and appearance, group discrimination and power as described by Lyubansky and Barter (2011). Whiteness as racial bias holds that society is distinguished by a socially created racial hierarchy that places a higher value on whiteness above other identities (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997). Croll (2013) reinforces this idea, and that of Lyubansky and Barter (2011) described above, by explaining that some people who are white are more susceptible to internalising notions regarding white superiority as they are socialised into the racial hierarchy. Interestingly Croll (2013), points out that this internalisation leads to an unconscious bias even if they consciously reject racist beliefs.

Linked to this idea are concerns around unconscious or implicit racism in a British context and people being convinced that society is a level playing field (Beckles-Raymond 2020). Beckles-Raymond (2020:173) suggests that white ignorance thus underpins colour-blind rationales that justify the maintenance and reproduction of

white supremacy' and this may be useful to apply to British structures and institutes to understand how racism operates. McClendon (2004) adds to this idea and describes the invisible quality of whiteness and that the privilege that comes with the status is the ability to live life without the need to be aware of one's whiteness. Beckles-Raymond (2020:185) argues that 'British identity is an anti-black institution' and that British identity must be included in strategies and discussions around institutional anti-black racism; furthermore, constructions of being white as more acceptable and superior than being black must be changed institutionally. This idea of a more acceptable identity links to Zine (2006:148), who writes about her experience of 'performing whiteness' to 'pass' as an 'assimilated foreigner' but despite her efforts could never really own national identity. I draw parallels with this in the analysis chapters when I ask the participants about their identity.

2.3.4 Surveillance in education and Muslim women

Van Es (2019) draws on the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (Foucault, 1975) to analyse how Muslim women use self-essentialisation to alter the dominant essentialist perceptions of the non-Muslim majority around Muslims. Van Es (2019) argues that Muslim women use self-essentialisation to represent themselves in a modern and emancipated way that counteracts the oppressed woman stereotype, and this strategy is 'part of a politics of belonging' (Van Es, 2019:375). These ideas have been used by several scholars including Mir (2009), and Pauha (2015), to conceptualise the scrutiny faced by Muslim minorities, such as whether they are loyal to and integrated enough to western society. Foucault, (1975) used the idea of the panopticon, an eighteenth-century prison design, based on Bentham's idea of the panopticon where all prisoners can be watched by a single prison guard. The prisoners are unaware of whether they are being watched and so they control their behaviour accordingly. The panopticon is a metaphor for the way disciplinary power is implemented in prevailing societies. An example of the Foucauldian 'panoptic gaze' is the way in which a government controls all aspects of life for an individual, who then internalises this gaze by exercising self-surveillance. For Muslim

minorities, this inspecting gaze can manifest in the form of government but also in the form of the non-Muslim majority, the latter being non-homogenous in their widely varying attitudes towards Muslims and Islam generally. A recent example of this is Covid-19 related racism, where Muslims were blamed for the coronavirus outbreak in parts of Northern England (Rahim, 2020). The government responded with a sudden announcement of local lockdowns just before the Muslim holy festival of Eid-Ul-Adha. The timing of the announcement was criticised by local leaders and politicians.

According to Bi (2018), the concept of the panoptic gaze has been extended to the education system where Muslims and the 'other' are under surveillance, disciplined and punished. There are examples in education where the state uses teachers as tools to execute their policies. I argue the government's PVE strategy operates to condition teachers to act as the 'watchmen' of 'modern day panopticons' such as schools. There is much scope for research here, in particular when the 'watchmen' are Muslim and are carrying out the surveillance, then they themselves are being watched in their own panopticon. There are complexities within the idea of the 'modern day panopticon' Bi (2018), as school settings are dynamic and social places that rely on the interaction of people and operate at a multi-layered and hierarchical level. I argue that the panoptic gaze is internalised by Muslim women and incorporated as a part of the body and mind as though they are being watched in a panopticon. As the Muslim 'other' they are disciplined by being regulated and punished (Bi 2018:139), for example, Bi (2018), provides examples such as Muslim girls as young as five being questioned by Ofsted about their hijab and in this way their bodies are regulated.

In her findings based on a study on Dutch Muslim women, Van Es (2019) states that regardless of women being converts to Islam or born Muslim women with a migrant background, they adopt a strategy where they wanted to change not only the dominant image of Muslim women in Dutch society, but also that of Islam. The

underlying assumption in their strategy is that members of the non-Muslim majority perceive Islam through the behaviour of Muslims, and they use Islam to explain everything a Muslim says or does. The women in the study by Van Es (2019) anticipated a high level of culturalism (Ghorashi, 2009 cited in Van Es, 2109). This is an essentialist concept where minority religions or cultures are seen as homogenous and static, and the factor in determining the actions of all minority individuals. This is an example of how the 'panoptic gaze' can be used almost as a form of reverse psychology or reversed culturalism. Muslim women feel they are under constant scrutiny, so they shift their behaviour and attitude to a level where they display behaviour to challenge and subvert the dominant perception of Islam which is that Muslim women are oppressed. Mir (2009:253) comments on the 'gaze' Muslim women are subjected to and how their multiple identities are extended through negotiations of expectations from dominant discourses. In representing an alternative message about Muslim women and Islam they strategically challenge the stereotypes and prejudices they themselves are subjected to.

Contemporary literature suggests surveillance has become routine in individual lives and signs a shift from the panoptic gaze to post-panoptic. Conversely, Boyne (2000) argues the power technique is no longer surveillance but rather a cultural tool by which individuals set their social relations. The power in post panopticism is an interpretive involvement in concrete events. Unlike the panopticon, post-panopticism does not require confinement of spaces and allows for surveillance anywhere at any time, for example, through computer-based technologies. The post-panopticon monitors daily practices of subjects outside of the limitations of purposes and spaces and is therefore ambiguous in nature. Basturk (2017) argues post-panopticism should be conceptualised with Deleuze and Guattarian arguments around reterritorialization. Deleuze and Guattari used the paradigm of reterritorialization to 'investigate surveillance on both individualistic and social bases' (Basturk 2017:1). They (Deleuze and Guattari) reject the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon that power is external to subjects; on the contrary, power is

rooted from ‘immanence’ and flows through control societies (Basturk 2017:7). Bogard (1996:21) describes the panopticon as operating as a ‘regulator whereas surveillance power in control society operates as a ‘modulator’. Modulation allows not only a monitoring of daily lives, but ‘interprets’ the activities of the individual to consider whether they are normal or abnormal. Post-panoptic surveillance monitors the contingency to monitor the unforeseen and to manage the future; the panoptic only focuses on present time and its scopes are limited to being determined in society; for example, the aim of power is to manage abnormalities in certain spaces. There is no coding or relating the facts with contingencies, in the post-panopticon power handles external abnormalities by interiorizing them in coded expressions. The power of surveillance as cultural practice depicts an alternative form of a subjectification process that links independent tendencies with modulation and allows individuals to integrate themselves into dominant discursive society (Mathiesen, 1997; Bauman and Lyon, 2012).

The panoptic gaze can be used by women to counter prejudices and stereotypes through their behaviour and lifestyle through a realisation that as ‘ambassadors’ for Muslim women their actions and words could be connected to their minority group and religion by the non-Muslim majority. This strategy is not unique to Muslim women and has been adopted by African American women in looking at one’s self through the eyes of the white majority, (Du Bois, 2014). This is an example of a form of self-essentialisation where the identity of an individual becomes reduced to a single element, being Muslim for example. Dwyer (1999) describes the replacement of identifications such as Asian or Black with the ‘emergence of a self-consciously Muslim or Islamic political identity’ (Dwyer 1999:55). Dwyer (1999) mentions the origins of the political aspect of this identity to the protests following the publication of Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses in 1988. This notion around identity is described by Bullock (2007), where many Muslims will identify with being Muslim above all other identities such as their nationality or ethnic background. This comes with a cost and a burden on the individual, as many aspects of routine life become politicised. A manifestation of this is when a Muslim woman wears the

hijab (headscarf) she becomes hyper-visible and takes on an opportunity and responsibility to represent Islam to the rest of the world, including Muslims themselves (Pauha 2015).

As stereotypes are constructed within unequal power relations they can be challenging to break. Van Es (2019) discusses a common feature of the othering process where 'bad' others are representative of all people in their group whereas 'good' others are seen as unusual (Elias & Scotson, 1965; Lamont, 2000 cited in Van Es 2019). The challenge for Muslim women is to alter the perception of Islam as 'backward' and Muslim women as 'oppressed'. This is even more arduous when 'emancipated' and 'modern' Muslim women are taken as exceptions to the status quo and the 'good' other. My research explores whether the degree of emancipation transcends to the classroom and how it manifests.

In her study Van Es (2019), interviewed Muslim Dutch women about their experiences and noted how none of the women considered themselves as positive exceptions – they wanted to transform the overall image that the non-Muslim Dutch majority had of Muslim and the dominant image of Islam. The women referred to themselves as 'ambassadors' Van Es (2019:375), of Islam and wanted to positively represent their religion. The hijab wearing women used this immediately recognisable symbol of being a Muslim in combination with non-stereotypical behaviour as a strategy to disturb dominant thought amongst the non-Muslim majority. It is interesting how these women depicted themselves as being emancipated and open minded whilst maintaining their devout Muslim identity. This happened through subtle practices of having a paid job, for example; or using humour – any behaviour that did not confirm the 'oppressed Muslim woman' stereotype. An example of Muslim women using their bodies with agency to ascribe image can be seen with French Muslim women who deliberately adopt more fashionable hijab-styles compared to their migrant mothers (Jouili, 2009) in a bid to exemplify self-assurance and recognition as pious women. Jouili (2009:464) uses

the concept of 'self-assurance' to signify the importance of the confidence displayed by a veiled woman. Despite the differences in their strategic approaches what unifies these women is their conviction that Islam empowers women. Acquiring Islamic knowledge and aspiring to live a pious life is what forms the basis to the emancipation of a Muslim woman and ultimately to the breaking of the 'oppressed Muslim woman' stereotype.

Van Es (2019) draws on Schielke's work (2015), in particular the term 'normative register' for values and ideals that provide a guideline for living a 'good' life. In the context of her study, Van Es (2019) applies the normative register to Dutch Muslim women where living a 'modern' and 'emancipated' life is an ideal they should subscribe to be accepted as 'Dutch'. She discusses that when Muslim women try to counter the stereotypes by presenting themselves in a certain way, this does not mean that their self-representations are false or simply strategic. By emphasising certain aspects of themselves and their identity and by behaving contrary to negative expectations they endeavour to try to disprove dominant stereotypes. Van Es (2019) states that, in doing so, Muslim women reinforce those aspects of their identity, and their emancipation is not just a matter of liberation but a deliberate moulding to a particular normative regime, and in doing this they reconstruct social norms regarding Muslim women.

2.4 Where are the gaps in the literature?

In this study, I ascertain the specific issues faced by a group of FMTs within their educational contexts in the Northwest of England: the impact of who they are, the way they present themselves, the extent of self they project in their settings, and the impact of this in the wider context. Within this inquiry the interactions between pupil-teacher relationships and dynamics in the classroom offer a lens into wider societal issues around being a Muslim woman in the twenty first century and the consequences for all agents going forward. The data and analysis will shed light on the links to social identity and school culture; diversity and image; surveillance

culture and power relations; school culture and leadership; Islamophobia and otherness; racism; and gender. Compared to Australia (Clyne 1998), Canada (Zine 2008) and the US (Mir 2009), research on FMTs in the UK is limited. The next chapter will explore and justify my research design, specifically addressing some of the key themes that have emerged in the literature along with the gaps identified above.

Chapter 3

Methodology

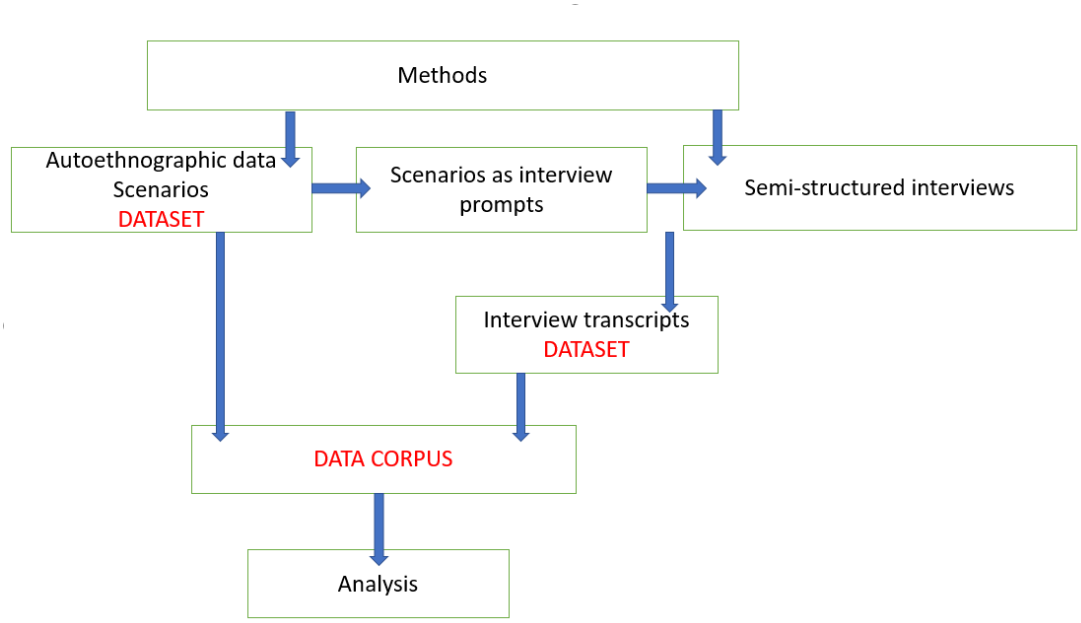
3.1 Introduction to the methodology

For this study, I apply a qualitative research approach as my study is concerned with understanding people and their interactions to gain meaning (Symon and Cassell, 2012). I use feminist methodology which includes using an array of research strategies, methods and approaches (Naples 2017). This methodology is particularly suited to my study as it places the lives of a group of people (Muslim women) at the centre of analyses, who may otherwise be considered marginalised in UK mainstream media and society. Reinharz (1992) identifies self-reflexivity in the role of feminist researchers and a goal of their research is to contribute to social change to improve the lives of women. This study creates an opportunity for Muslim women to share their experiences. This uncovers the often-hidden experiences of FMTs participants, allowing me as the researcher to be able to access the voices of under-represented populations. The epistemological and methodological focus in much feminist research draws on the importance of women's lived experiences to unearth knowledge (Devault & Gross, 2012), and this feature distinguishes feminist methodology from other modes of research (Naples 2007).

The central imperatives behind this research are to use feminist research methods to unravel the status quo and dominant traditions around systems of oppression and prejudice in the British education system. The use of more than one method is given as a feature of and appropriate to feminist methodology (Naples 2017). Fonow and Cook (2005:1) point out the use of multiple methods and techniques in feminist research 'to capture the complexities of gender as it intersects with race, sexuality, and class'. The following two methods are used in this study, further details are given in sections below in this chapter:

1. Autoethnoethgraphic data in the form of ***Scenarios*** (see section 3.3)
2. Semi-structured interviews.

The diagram below shows the integration of the ***Scenarios*** and the structure of the methodological approach:



As exemplified by the diagram above, the ***Scenarios*** are both:

a) autoethnographic data
b) a methodological tool in the semi-structured interviews

I apply thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) to the semi-structured interviews. The autoethnographic data (***Scenarios***) was used as prompts during the semi-structured interviews and therefore became incorporated into the thematic analysis. The ***Scenarios*** are embedded into the analysis chapters, each within a sub-theme as detailed in section 3.11. The dual use of the ***Scenarios*** as interview data and as empirical data is discussed below in section 3.3. The use of semi-structured interviews is an appropriate research method for a qualitative study such as to exemplify the transformative role of FMTs. I conduct semi-structured interviews with four FMTs based in or around Manchester, UK. Their educational contexts are distinctive in terms of demographic and socio-economic positions. I discuss relations of power in social research situations and the consideration of being an insider as a researcher in the ethics section (3.11) below. There are other considerations such as gender, generational and ethnic differences in research encounters (Hopkins 2009) and structures such as class, patriarchy and racism (Zine

2016). These considerations were sensitively negotiated and carried over into the research process and helped to construct the profiles in the interviewee background section (3.7). The considerations outlined above were dynamic through the writing process and were adapted to the task of articulating cultural representations.

3.2 Theoretical framework to the study

The frameworks applied are appropriate to my study because they narrow the scope of the data by defining the specific viewpoints, I will take in analysing and interpreting the data.

I employ a critical feminist framework drawing on Islamic feminism throughout the analysis chapters (4-6). A critical faith-centred perspective acknowledges the notion that religions can be a domain for oppression but that they also offer spaces for resistance according to Zine (2006). Within this, there is a hermeneutic space for critical dialogue and political engagement. This space allows for the non-homogenisation of Muslim women, dialogical and strategic links and divergent epistemologies. Furthermore Nyhagen (2019:3), discusses how religious feminists attempt to '...reconcile religious faith with feminist beliefs'. Islamic feminism connects with my study as a framework as I interrogate and analyse the challenges, oppressions and injustices faced by the FMTs I interview to create a space for engagement. I interview 'ordinary' (Nyhagen, 2019:3) Muslim women and their engagement with gender equality and feminism; Nyhagen comments that the scholarly knowledge here is scarce; I focus on social context rather than the theological discussions.

I apply a Foucauldian perspective to analyse the data generated to achieve Objective 2 (Chapter 5), using the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975), to conceptualise the surveillance faced by FMTs in education. I explore ideas that were of interest to Foucault, specifically the idea of institutional surveillance and its impact within education. I use the Foucauldian perspective to analyse surveillance culture in education and whether Muslims are more at risk of this due to policy

agendas. I use the concept of behaviour modulation to conform and relate this to the scrutiny faced by some female Muslim teachers by pupils and colleagues. I explore Foucault's conceptualisation of assumed power relations as a force for control, regulation and discipline in modern institutions (Piro, 2008).

3.3 The *Scenarios*

3.3.1 Conceptual background to the *Scenarios* dataset

In section 3.1, I outline the two methods I use in this study. This section details the background to the first method, the 'autoethnographic data in the form of ***Scenarios***':

Ellis (1999) states the various genres and forms autoethnographic writing and research can take including journals. During my childhood I developed a habit of keeping a diary, this stayed with me into adulthood particularly during key aspects of my life. During my Initial Teacher Training year, I found myself making journal-like entries in my teacher's planner; this practice continued throughout my career. I would take notes of certain events or incidents over the duration of fourteen years, that struck me as poignant. This data was based on interactions and experiences I have had with students and colleagues teaching in secondary schools in Manchester, UK and one at a seminar in a higher education setting.

I qualified as a science teacher in 2007 and my journey of questioning how identity constructs meaning in education began in my teacher training year. I completed my school-based placements in two very different contexts, one being 98% Bangladeshi in terms of pupil ethnicity and the other with over 95% white pupils. Both schools are located outside of Manchester and challenged my conceptions around race, multiculturalism, identity and belonging. Without realising, I started collecting data in the form of conversations I found myself part of and sometimes witnessed.

Sometimes a quick question or comment in passing would transform into a rich narrative about personal stories about individuals' lives, opinions, political declarations and commonalities in life experiences. I often found myself comparing and referencing the narratives to my own life and of family and friends with similar experiences. I was starting to make connections between my own life experiences and those I was drawing from my participants' lived experiences, while also recognising the ways in which discourses of colonialism, multiculturalism, power, feminism, socio-politics, religion, racism, educational policies, Islamophobia, British Values and family honour were embedded into these narratives.

At the time it was to help me process the events and benefit from the therapeutic aspect of dealing with my experiences/observations by recording them in this brief way in what was often a very busy working day. Ellis (1999) argues for the therapeutic value of our stories; at the time I did not conceive that these might form a type of data for research; however, I was beginning to become aware of the volume and richness of my entries later in my career. At the conception phase of this study I knew I wanted to do something with this data and decided to write it in its narrative form (***Scenarios***) The notes in my teacher's planner were brief and from variable points in my teaching career spanning over a fourteen year period. They were a type of 'field notes' that I would later write from; however, I did not follow traditional rules of ethnographic methodology (Ellis, 1999) as I did not know at the outset that I would be using the data in this way.

The use of the ***Scenarios*** dataset allows for the space to operate both relationally and reflexively. This data set has been anonymised with pseudonyms and each has been presented with contextual information such as the date and setting, see example ***Scenario*** below:

1.5 Context: 2013, A seminar about the Prevent Agenda at Manchester Metropolitan University, as part of the Master's degree in Education.

Nick - Well in my school there is only one Muslim student, she wears a headscarf so stands out even more. We have the Prevent number printed on our staff badges so in case of an emergency we know exactly what to do.

Louise - Have you ever needed to call it?

Nick - Well I teach this girl RS, I set the class an assignment on the troubles in Israel and Palestine, you know to see her response….

Louise- That's not on the curriculum

Nick- Well I knew she would have interesting viewpoints, best to get it out there and dealt with

Louise- Sounds like you set her up

Nick- She openly expresses her religion by dressing as a Muslim so no I didn't set her up, I gave her an opportunity to share her views

Louise- She's allowed to dress any way she should please, without being set up so you can use your hotline…outrageous

3.3.2 Evocative Autoethnography and use of *Scenarios* as a dataset

In writing the ***Scenarios*** I put myself into conversation with myself and the participants as the readers of this empirical data. Bochner and Ellis (2016:37) describe the importance of texts that can 'deeply implicate the reader'. As the author of the ***Scenarios*** and the researcher in this study I have exemplified how subjectivity can be used in an interactive way to generate a reflexive dimension. This is supported by feminist researchers such as Harding (1986) who argue for a

self-reflexive approach to understand how relations of power shape knowledge production in different contexts, to produce objectivity. Using the personal voices of participants from the semi-structured interviews combined with my own autoethnographic account (***Scenarios*** dataset), I examine how identity constructs meaning in the diverse world of education. Gannon (2017) describes the high stakes involved when using autoethnographic methods as credible in education. She comments on how the author's account often sits alongside other participants to examine the complex world of education. Bochner and Ellis (2016) outline a framework for thinking about types and categories of autoethnography and explain that the typologies of autoethnography in social science research need to be looked at differently to that in the sciences. They state that 'critical autoethnographies can be evocative, and evocative autoethnographies can be critical' (Bochner and Ellis 2016:59). The autoethnographic method I have used navigates the landscape of lived experience in an unconventional and creative way. Bochner and Ellis (2016) comment on how these experiences influence our perceptions and how we interpret the lives of others. In this way I situate myself within the study using a 'narrative voice' (Berry 2013) to allow the reader to 'feel and/or to do something' (Bochner and Ellis, 2016:59). The autoethnographic data reveals my vulnerability as a researcher in not being able to take back the data I have presented and in not having any control over how the participants interpret it. This is an ethical implication and Ellis (1999:672) describes how 'honest autoethnographic exploration generates a lot of fears and self-doubts – and emotional pain'. There is a dimension of professional critique involved as I am presenting data that involves a snapshot over the years of my own experiences as a practitioner to other practitioners in the same field. However, as Ellis (1999), explains there is a potential for deeper understanding of the self with this element of looking inward which allows for deeper understanding of others and thereby providing a way to create meaning for yourself and others.

Positionality according to Holmes (2020), describes the ontological and epistemological assumptions of an individual, including those around human nature

and agency and the position they adopt around the social and political context of a research task. An individual's values and beliefs may be shaped by factors such as gender, religious beliefs, sexuality, ethnicity, political allegiance, social class and status to name a few and these influence the outcome of research as well as the research process (Rowe, 2014). Cohen et al. (2011) explain the importance of a reflexive approach as a prerequisite for an ongoing process where the researcher identifies, constructs, critiques and articulates their positionality. In this research I use a reflexive approach to situate myself in the research using autoethnographic data (***Scenarios***). The ***Scenarios*** form part of the interview process as a prompt, they are autoethnographic in nature as they present my own lived experience, by using the data in the interviews in this way they became part of the discussion and therefore present in the interview transcripts. The two methods (autoethnographic ***Scenarios*** and semi-structured interviews making use of ***Scenarios*** as prompts or stimulus material) combine as methods in a unique way; I have included the ***Scenarios*** in my analysis chapters as a reference point to the interviews but also as a dataset for analysis. This ensured that all the ***Scenarios*** were subject to analysis either in this way or through being combined in the interview transcript. In this way a reflexivity is achieved through an explicit self-consciousness (May & Perry 2017), as a researcher; the interviewees reflect on my ***Scenarios*** dataset and then I analyse their reflection of this. As a researcher I am aware of the preconceptions in my views and beliefs that I bring to the project and that in presenting personal and professional lived experiences as data (the ***Scenarios***) to my interviewees, I may directly or indirectly influence the outcomes; however, acknowledging a sensitivity to my own cultural, political and social contexts (Bryman, 2016) is necessary for this reflexive process, where values can change over time and therefore positionality is fluid, situation and context driven (see section **3.7** where I include a researcher profile). In using the ***Scenarios*** dataset in this reflexive way, my positionality and exploration of this field is continually being shaped and informed by the research process itself.

The dataset I have presented as the ***Scenarios*** is a form of first-person writing; as a researcher, I have become a principal object of research; the narrative I present in the ***Scenarios*** gives voice to a group of people traditionally left out of social science inquiry, ultimately the autoethnographic data is designed to deliver knowledge through 'emotional arousal, identification, and self-examination rather than abstraction and explanation' (Bochner and Ellis, 2016:61), and in this way the data satisfies the definition of evocative autoethnography outlined by Bochner and Ellis:

> We depicted evocative autoethnography as a genre of writing designed to put meanings in motion so that readers of social science texts could not only receive but also feel the truths of first-person accounts of lived-through experiences.
>
> (Bochner and Ellis 2016: 218)

Gergen and Gergen (2018) make a distinction in exposition between autoethnographic writing and evocative ethnography. They explain that in autoethnographic writing the reader is brought close to the life of the writer; in their vision of the evocative there is a question around 'whether the writing can generate resonance with the yet-to-be articulated potentials of what there is' (Gergen and Gergen, 2018:276). They go on to explain that there is no fixed method for evocative ethnography. The ***Scenarios*** I have constructed offer an evocative representation of my lived experience in an emotionally relevant way.

3.3.3 Limitations to using the *Scenarios* dataset

The initial notes taken in my teacher's planner would serve as partial interpretations as they are a form of truth from observations written retrospectively even if on the same day as the event, Ellis states 'The truth is that we can never capture experience' (1999:673). This is a potential limitation to the accuracy in data recall as I am writing from memory and as a researcher, I am

explicitly aware that the words expressed in the narratives may not be exact words spoken; I had enough memory of each dialogue to reconstruct the scenes to justify the initial journal entry. El Refaie (2008:12) states that retelling involves 'selection and artful construction' as memory is always incomplete; however, I was surprised by how much I did recall; Ellis (1999:673) writes about being able to recall events when they are 'emotionally evocative'. Chaney (2011) discusses how autobiographies may not be 'verifiably true' but offer an 'emotional truth' (Chaney 2011, cited in McNicol, 2019:4) to the way they make sense of an author's life. My journal notes often were written in an emotional state, which allows for easier access to the details of the events, however the disadvantage of this deep engagement with data is detaching yourself from it to gain analysis of the event from a cultural perspective (Ellis 1999). She goes on to explain the validity of events constructed from just memory and without notes and how 'there's no single standard of truth' (Ellis 1999:674).

I acknowledge the fact that memory is not a linear concept and that we use our current position to remember events from the past but as a researcher I have strived to present my experiences in a meaningful way. This view is reinforced by Ellis (1999), she infers that validity might arise from connecting with your readers in a way that evokes feelings around the possibility and believability of the experience being described and that validity can be measured by the way it might improve the life of others and the researcher. Ellis (1999) explains how there is no such thing as orthodox reliability in autoethnographic research, however reliability checks can be performed when other people are involved by taking the work back to them and offer collaborative interpretations. In this case it was not possible to contact the people who were involved in the dialogues I wrote due to timeframes involved with retrospective writing and constraints such as accessibility. In some ways writing about the events at the time whilst my feelings were still strong and then going back to process it with emotional distance has allowed for an analysis of 'thoughts and feelings as socially constructed processes' (Ellis 1999:675); Ellis explains how

moving between the processes of the advantages and disadvantages of emotional lived experiences is what makes an effective autoethnography.

3.4 Methodological approach in qualitative research

I have considered the dominant values in academic research and have pondered the problem of achieving an unbiased view. I have already challenged this positivist stance in a way. 'Objective', positivist research was not considered as a methodology to achieve my aim, as in this paradigm research is based on the researcher following scientific rules (Guthrie, 2010). In contrast post-positivist, qualitative methodology views knowledge as cultural and having many forms. Of the three major methodological approaches in qualitative research (post positivist, interpretive and critical) my research lies between that of interpretive and critical. Social reality is an ongoing construction (interpretive) through group interaction in the semi-structured interviews; therefore, social reality can be understood in this meaning making activity. However, my research lies more towards the critical approach as I use autoethnographic ***Scenarios*** as a methodological tool to create discourse to shift fields of power and construct social reality. In section 3.12.2, I clarify my use of autoethnographic data and my role as an insider-researcher. I explain how the axiology of my research (Park et al, 2020) is not detached from important subjective experiences and values of both the participants and myself as the researcher. Similarly, to Tallbear (2014), my research approach is an opportunity for the sharing of knowledge through conversation in a non-linear way. Tallbear argues that democratic knowledge production that serves both the inquirers and those who are inquired upon should involve a softening of boundaries between those 'who know versus those from whom the raw materials of knowledge production are extracted' (Tallbear 2014:2). The ***Scenarios*** are subjective narratives that tell part of my story as an educator. In presenting these 'stories' as the storyteller, my attempt is not to understand the 'unitary self' as described by Seale (2007:104), but rather to tell the stories of many selves each situated in the particular contexts I describe. Smith and Watson (2010) argue that

the female self-constitutes itself through ethnographic and autobiographical extracts, and through writing women move beyond silence.

3.5 Participant selection and ethics

Including participants in my research stimulated conversations to enrich the content of my own self-narrative in the form of autoethnographic accounts (***Scenarios***). I used convenience sampling and did not consider sampling from the public, as it is more efficient to use relevant contacts I have through professional networks, especially since I had a full-time post as a Head of Department at the time, which brings many time constraints. The decision to collect targeted data from participants with whom I had rapport was relevant to the study and the objectives. During the planning and designing phase of my research project, several acquaintances expressed an interest in my study and mentioned they would be willing to help if I needed to recruit more participants.

I selected participants from a variety of ethnicities. I used convenience sampling as it has advantages in being a quick and easy way to target participants who are matched to the study and are accessible. Lewis et al (2004) explain how convenience sampling may be the most efficient way to access a definitive population, in this case FMTs, however there are drawbacks. Convenience samples may yield interesting findings but a researcher is unable to generalise beyond the samples and know whether the sample is typical or a typical of other groups (Lewis et al, 2004). I selected participants who appeared to exemplify a range of religious/cultural outlooks, for example, whether they wear the hijab or not. I did not limit participation selection by other factors such as age; practitioner experience; migrant generation; primary or secondary sector; and subject taught, but I endeavoured to cover as many variations as possible. I have given consideration to obvious researcher bias here in my specific selection (Lewis et al 2004), however, to capture the experiences of FMTs who satisfy the participant profile this was justifiable. An issue with convenience sampling is the sample agree

to be interviewed and therefore may have strong pre-existing opinions in the subject area. However, as can be seen from my interview data all interviewees stated that they had not thought about the issues discussed prior to the semi-structured interviews taking place. This suggests that they were better informed post interview in some of the issues being discussed and didn't necessarily have strong pre-conceived ideas.

Over the years, I have encountered various women who would fit the participant profile and I was therefore able to use my network of contacts to approach potential participants. I approached interested FMTs informally and received positive responses from several. As someone who belongs to this demographic, I have a level of relevant insight and contextual applicability that will give my research a multi-faceted depth. In this context, the interview can be seen as 'an encounter between women with common interests, who will share knowledge' (Devault & Gross, 2012:178) - I will critically explore the implications of this as part of my research.

Participants were purposively selected based on several practical and methodological questions according to the research design. I managed personal and potentially sensitive data in line with Manchester Metropolitan University's ethical guidelines (section 3.12). I considered consent forms, information sheets, preliminary conversations, the option to opt out and assurances of confidentiality. Participants were recruited on a voluntary basis and taking the factors below into consideration. Selection criteria included the following:

The participants were in or around Manchester, UK at the time of the interview (August-October 2019) as school holidays were a factor; they were able to dedicate the time needed for the research to take place as teachers have busy schedules during term time; they are Muslim and female; they are experienced

teachers/newly qualified teachers/recently qualified teachers/teachers with a teaching and learning responsibility/heads of department who hold posts in secondary schools; they have permanent teaching contracts in or around schools in Manchester, UK.

Four FMTs were interviewed. Boddy (2016) explains that determination of sample size is contextual and that even a single highly relevant sample can be worthy of publication if it is highly informative and meaningful. Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews, I had potentially more participants available to interview if needed. However, at the point of four interviews I considered the richness of the data after applying thematic analysis. The two datasets (interview data together with the autoethnographic data) provided adequate data to develop my analysis within the context of a thesis for the Doctorate in Education. At the point in coding the data where no new codes were being found just instances of the same code, a decision was made related to further sampling and I arrived at the decision that four interviews provided sufficient data to achieve thematic saturation and further data collection would be unlikely to lead to further themes or codes for my analysis. Saunders et al (2018:1895) describe this saturation as being closely related to the notion of 'theoretical saturation', whereby sampling is guided by the emerging theory. This is supported by Bryman (2012:18) who explains that saturation develops as a non-linear process and causes the researcher to 'combine sampling, data collection and data analysis'. Saunders et al (2018) highlight the potential confusion in the use of saturation and how to limit this to protect its coherence and potency. Braun and Clarke (2019) offer a critical commentary on capturing data saturation and they interrogate assumptions around the processes of thematic analysis that inform data saturation. They argue that although the concepts of data saturation are coherent with discovery and finding meaning, they are not consistent with the values and assumptions of reflexive thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke (2019:201) encourage researchers to 'dwell with uncertainty' and that the generation of meaning from data is interpreted and should not be subjected to and limited by the number of data items. Furthermore they argue the number of data

items and when to stop data collecting cannot be 'determined (wholly) in advance of the analysis (Braun and Clarke 2019:201). I have applied saturation in my study to operationalise the research questions in a way that is consistent with the theoretical position and analytic framework (Saunders et al, 2018). The sample size was not determined prior to data collection as emphasised above in my discussion of the non-linear process applied but rather about the 'quality' and 'richness' of the data and not simply the 'quantity' of data collected (Braun and Clarke 2019:202). In this way thematic saturation was achieved, where no new codes/themes were identified.

3.6 Interview process and the use of semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted between August-October 2019. They were held in public locations away from participants' places of work (e.g. coffee shops) in locations in and around Manchester at times that were most convenient for the participants. Each interview was recorded, lasted between 60-90 minutes and was conducted and transcribed in English.

I explained my research aims to each participant and posed questions regarding their previous experiences in the form of a semi-structured interview. The use of semi-structured interviews was suited to my study as it allowed for the use of prompts (***Scenarios***) prepared before the interview and the use of a range of questions during the interview. This is important as before the interview I developed the initial questions, which were broad, and then adapted these depending on the response of the participant. Savage (2008) describes how researchers use open-ended questions in a written interview guide prior to the interview. There were questions related directly to the concepts under investigation and those based on listening to the interviewees' response to the ***Scenarios***. I found this approach helped the participants feel comfortable to talk about their experiences; Savage (2008) describes how this can help build rapport between the interviewer and interviewee resulting in data that is a collaborative

effort between investigator and informant. To maintain interpretive validity I avoided the use of leading questions. Based on the review of some of the literature in this area I developed the following questions:

- Why do Muslim women go into the teaching profession?
- What are the experiences of Muslim women in education?
- What are the stereotypes associated with Muslim women and why?
- Do you present yourself as a Muslim and does this present as a barrier?
- Have you ever had to challenge a stereotype in your setting?
- At what point do you introduce yourself as a Muslim if you do and do you feel comfortable discussing your faith in your setting?
- Are there any tensions between your identity as a teacher and your minority ethnic background?
- Do you see yourself as a role model?
- How important is Muslim representation of staff in your context?
- Have you ever faced prejudice in your context?
- Have you ever used your Muslim identity in your teaching?
- What is your identity and how does this contribute to your professional life?
- Have pupils/colleagues ever made any assumptions about you?

The interview process began with the questions outlined above and then the ***Scenarios*** were presented as prompts for further discussion. I had written more than ten ***Scenarios*** in total (15 were written originally) based on the notes in my teachers' planner, however I only used ten of these ***Scenarios*** to act as prompts for use in the semi-structured interviews and analysis in the thesis. The unused ***Scenarios*** were considered less relevant to the purpose of this study and discarded. The ***Scenarios*** I used are indexed as Appendix 2 and the context for each one provided below with reference to the relevant section and page number where they are analysed in the analysis chapters.

Number	Context	Section	Page
1.1	2007, Oldham, Majority Bangladeshi Secondary school 11-16. 'Miss are you Bengali?'	4.1	91
1.2	2020, Year 10 boys, in a South Manchester high school with a high percentage of BAME pupils 'Miss are you a Muslim?'	6.1	143
1.3	Tameside, Majority white Secondary school 11-16, Second placement on PGCE year 'Miss are you Shilpa Shetty?'	4.2	99
1.4	Secondary, Independent Girls school in Manchester. 'Can you supervise Hindu Assembly?'	5.2	124
1.5	2013, A seminar about the Prevent Agenda at Manchester Metropolitan University, as part of the Masters degree in Education.	5.1	118
1.6	2018, This is a secondary school based in a majority white area, in Greater Manchester 'What does a terrorist look like?'	6.5	167
1.7	2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18. 'In conversation with my subject mentor'	5.3	128
1.8	2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school. 'Fish and chips'	5.2	127
1.9	2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18. 'Muslim Committee'	5.4	135
2.0	2018, majority white state comprehensive, Tameside 'Miss do you drink?'	6.4	161

After exploring the questions outlined above for the semi-structured interviews the ten ***Scenarios*** were presented in turn to the participants. They took a few minutes

to read each one; they were then asked to share their thoughts. Each participant selected a variety of ***Scenarios*** to discuss. This worked well as they did not feel pressure to discuss each one and instead chose the ***Scenarios*** that resonated with them in some way. I did not designate a particular number of ***Scenarios*** that required discussion; this was at the discretion of the interviewee. The interview duration was between an hour and an hour and a half. All the ***Scenarios*** have been embedded in the analysis chapters, whether they have been discussed in the interviews or not. In this way this dataset serves a dual purpose in the study – as interview prompts and as autoethnographic data. Each ***Scenario*** is analysed as and when presented in the analysis chapters under the heading of the relevant sub-theme arrived at through the thematic analysis. The epistemological status of this type of evocative autoethnographic data is that meaning is constructed socially (Ellis 1999), in a dialogic manner. In presenting the ***Scenarios*** to the participants I demonstrate researcher vulnerability through a willingness to share my own experiences. Bochner and Ellis (2016) use extracts from their students in lectures where they describe how a researcher and participant can seek out new meanings, research questions and understandings about each other based on mutual respect. See section **3.3.2** where I have discussed my positionality as a researcher and section **3.1** where I have outlined with the use of a diagram how I have embedded myself as a central participant in this research.

The themes that were explored through the interviews were based around the experiences of the women in schools, for example, Muslim women and stereotypes; and teacher-pupil dynamics. I then explored, through further questioning, how the women felt about the stereotypes and if it has had an impact in their professional context, for example, the practical implications of positive and/or negative experiences in the classroom. I explored the perception of identity and image of Muslim teachers by using the pupil-teacher dynamic as a tool.

To equalise the hierarchical disparity between researcher and participant, I shared my own experiences in education with the participants in the form of '***Scenarios***' posed to them. This helped to alleviate the researcher-participant barrier and established a common ground. The ***Scenarios*** data set acted as useful prompts for discussion with an additional layer of contextualisation which was necessary to further probe the views of the participants. This dataset also created an awareness amongst the participants around the narratives that can take place in educational settings. I found their reactions to this fascinating as in some cases they responded with shock and bemusement. This exemplifies how social research can have a positive and liberating effect through promoting conversations and raising awareness. The ***Scenarios*** have been used in a dual way as interview prompts and as empirical data. Savage (2000) describes the use of multiple voices to inform representations, in the case of this study the autoethnographic data. In presenting the ***Scenarios*** to the participants as a researcher I hoped to elucidate alternative interpretations which may have escaped consideration with a single approach analysis (Savage 2000). The ***Scenarios*** were subject to multiple analysis initially by the participants as prompts in the interview and then analysed further in the analysis sections of the thesis as empirical data. The nature of the findings are constructed with the use of pre-determined but open-ended questions (Given 2009).

3.7 Interviewee background and initial post interview reflection

In this section I have provided a description of the four research participants, outlining their main characteristics to provide an insight into their subjective locations, for example whether they wear a hijab or not and their teaching career trajectory. After each interview I wrote post interview reflections pertaining to my inferences and judgements about each participant. These have been added in Appendix 3 as they are not central to the purpose of the study but were useful to me at the time to record my immediate thoughts. I have started this section with a similar biographical description of myself 'researcher profile'.

Researcher Profile: As an active researcher-educator I have over fourteen years of experience of teaching Science in secondary schools and post-16 settings in and around the Manchester, UK. My exposure in contrasting contexts, including state comprehensive, independent and state academy, respectively has enabled me to develop a range of skills both as a classroom practitioner and in the wider school community. In terms of professional knowledge and understanding I have conducted research in various current educational issues as part of my ongoing postgraduate research. After graduating from the master's degree in education (The perception of young, British Muslims, in my context, of their positioning within British society) I commenced the Doctorate in Education degree. I held the post of Head of Biology in a mixed 11-16 Academy at the time of collecting the interview data. I am a first generation British-born Muslim woman of Pakistani background. My parents did not place an expectation on me to wear the hijab growing up; my mother started to wear the hijab in her fifties after performing the Hajj (Muslim pilgrimage) As an adult Muslim woman I have made the choice not to wear the hijab but dress modestly. I have a very open and honest approach to questions about my cultural and religious affiliation and invite debate and discussion around identity and belonging in Britain.

Sabah was a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) at the time of interview, in her late twenties and does not wear a hijab. She has lived in both Pakistan and the UK. Her school setting is in one of the most deprived areas of Manchester and the demographic of the student body is majority white. Her subject area is Business Studies and Economics, and she is the only Muslim teacher in her department. Sabah came across as quite confident and had a lot to say.

Yasmin is an experienced Psychology teacher and is also a Head of Department post holder. She is in her late twenties and does not wear a hijab. She is an ambitious individual and passionate about teaching the 16-19 age range as she feels she can really make a difference here. She comments on how the job brings something new every day and she enjoys this challenge. She is confident in her approach in tackling questions and dealing with an array of issues surrounding young adults.

Aminah is an experienced Science teacher, in her early thirties and wears a hijab. Her context is majority white in a town that is surrounded by towns with large concentrations of Asian communities. There is a notable proportion of Asian staff in the school. This is unusual as is not reflected in the student body; the Asian staff, including Aminah, tend to commute from neighbouring towns which have a higher proportion of Asians. During the interview I got a sense of difference between Aminah and myself in terms of our experiences growing up in very different communities and geographies. Aminah is from a town on the outskirts of Manchester that has concentrated pockets of established generations of migrant communities.

Zaynab is a Recently Qualified Teacher (RQT) and so relatively new to the teaching profession. She is a teacher of Religious Studies, in her early forties and wears a hijab. Her context is in a geographical cold spot nationally for social deprivation. The demographic of the school is majority white reflected in both staff and student communities. She comments on pursuing teaching to make a direct difference to young people, regardless of their background. Although she is new to the profession, she feels she has a lot of lived experience to offer. She is a mother to three children and had an arranged marriage in Pakistan, as a result has lived in Pakistan for many of her married years.

3.8 Transcription of verbal data

Interview data was recorded on my phone (password protected) and once transcribed the files were saved on my computer, where the documents were password protected. Pseudonyms were assigned and a key created after transcription which was stored separately to the transcribed files and then assword protected. The process of transcribing the data proved to be a productive way to carry out thematic analysis as it allowed a way of engaging 'interpretively' with the data at a very early stage of analysis in what Braun and Clarke (2019:204), refer to as 'data familiarisation'. The semi-structured interviews were transcribed after all

four had been conducted and as described above, at the point of analysing the fourth transcript no new codes or themes were found.

3.9 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a useful and flexible method used for qualitative analysis. Holloway and Todres (2003) discuss how diverse, nuanced and complex qualitative approaches are. They suggest that thematic analysis should be seen as a foundational method for this type of analysis as it provides the core skills useful for conducting other forms of qualitative analysis. They identify 'thematizing meanings' (Holloway and Todres, 2003: 347) as a generic skill across qualitative analysis. Boyatzis (1998) defines thematic analysis as a tool that can be applied across different methods which is one of the main advantages. It provides a flexible and useful research tool through its theoretical freedom as a method that is essentially independent of theory and epistemology (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

A disadvantage of the method as discussed by Braun and Clarke, is the absence of clear and concise guidelines around thematic analysis, which is sometimes a critique of qualitative research (Antaki et al, 2002). To overcome this critique, I implemented a clear demarcation of thematic analysis whilst maintaining flexibility in relation to application. The data corpus I collected is specifically for my research and the themes I have identified are strongly linked to the datasets. Patton (2015) suggests this form of thematic analysis bears some resemblance to grounded theory. As I have not used a pre-existing coding frame prior to collecting the data, the approach I have utilised is inductive (Frith & Gleeson, 2004) The analysis which follows is data driven instead of being based on my own theoretical interest in the area. However, it is important to note that data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum and as a researcher I cannot free myself completely from theoretical and epistemological assertions. I appreciate that with the inductive approach the specific research question may evolve through the process of coding. During the coding process I used, I found this to be the case. At the outset the broad themes

were around identity and image; however, through coding, threads such as the transformative role of Muslim teachers and questions around oppression, racism and sexism surrounding Muslim teachers became more prevalent. Subsequently I adjusted the objectives to help achieve the aim of this study. I also adjusted the initial aim to include the transformative role FMTs play in Britain's multicultural education system.

Themes can be identified at levels as described by Boyatzis (1998), at a semantic or explicit level, or at a latent or interpretive level. The themes I have identified from the data involve some interpretive work and therefore go beyond the semantic content of the data and start to identify and examine the underlying ideas and ideologies that inform the semantic content of the data. This form of thematic analysis overlaps with some forms of discourse analysis, specifically referred to as 'thematic discourse analysis' (e.g., Singer & Hunter, 1999; Taylor & Ussher, 2001). This is where broader assumptions and meanings are theorised as underpinning what is articulated by the data. Thematic analysis focused on 'latent' themes tends to be constructionist. From this perspective, meaning and experience are socially produced and reproduced (Braun and Clarke, 2006), rather than inherent in individuals (Burr, 1996). This form of analysis conducted within a constructionist framework does not focus on individual motivation or mind-set, but rather seeks to theorise the socio-cultural contexts and the structural conditions that facilitate the accounts provided.

3.10 Generating broad themes

The analysis process started during the collection of data, where patterns of meaning and areas of potential interest started to emerge. After each interview I added emerging ideas and potential themes around the dataset. I re-visited these after each data item and adjusted my notes accordingly. At this stage I did not engage with relevant literature as I did not want this to narrow the analytic field of

vision whilst I was still moving back and forward between the entire data set. This complements the more inductive approach, discussed later.

As my interview data set was collected through interactive means I came to the data with prior engagement and knowledge of the data along with the initial analytic notes/thoughts. I enhanced my notes with repeated reading of the data until I arrived at organising the data into four broad themes:

A. Pupil response to Muslim teachers
B. Staff responses to Muslim teachers
C. Different representations of Muslim women
D. Why do teachers have varying ways of tackling questions?

The entire data corpus was arranged in table format below each of the four main themes stated above.

3.11 Reflections on the data and refining themes

The next stage involved giving attention to each data extract including the ***Scenarios*** and writing reflections in the table mentioned above. Working systematically through the data allowed further interesting aspects of the data to come through. Next the reflections were incorporated with relevant data and presented under the headings of the four broad themes mentioned. A further addition was made after this stage in the form of questions I raised under each data extract. These questions acted as a code for supplementary organisation into potential themes within the four broad areas. I created a thematic map, see *Figure 1* below, around the questions to create a relationship between overarching themes and subthemes within them. I used a hard copy of my data extracts with the questions I raised and arranged these on a wall:

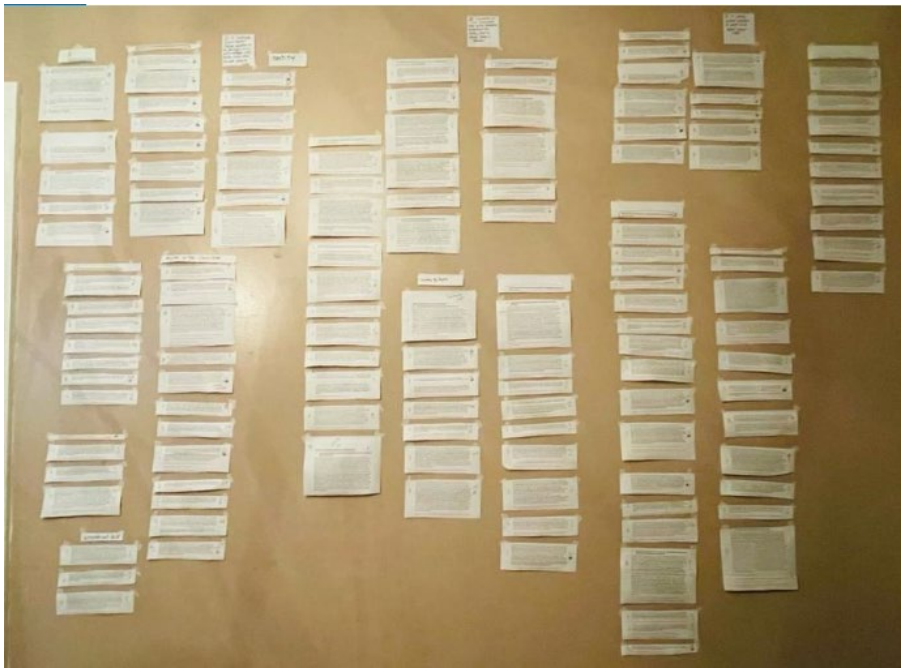


Figure 1: Thematic map

This allowed me to physically map the data into refined sub-themes within the broader themes. During this process some data extracts were discarded as they did not fit into the main themes. The sub-themes are as follows:

A. Pupil responses to Muslim teachers
    1. Stereotypes of Muslim women
    2. Normalisation and increasing diversity of Muslim women's experience
    3. Muslim women in the classroom - issues around disclosure and responsibility to be role models
B. Staff responses to Muslim teachers
    1. Muslim Teachers: Dealing with stereotypes in the classroom
    2. Socialisation and cultural understanding - Is the non-pedagogical aspect of education a responsibility for Muslim teachers?
    3. Spaces for dialogue - Is the education system failing our young people?
C. Different representations of Muslim women

1. The implications of surveillance culture in education -are Muslim teachers more at risk of this due to policy agendas?
2. School ethos and inclusivity: Are Muslim teachers under pressure to explain/defend or blend-in?
3. Are schools relatively powerless establishments at challenging cultural expectations and stereotypes?

D. Why do teachers have varying ways of tackling questions?

1. Muslim teachers' objectivity in the classroom versus a fear of indoctrinating pupils.
2. Curriculum and teaching decisions must be based on pedagogical reasons not religious opinions.
3. Do Muslim teachers' responses breakthrough or reinforce the stereotype?

To arrive at these distinctive sub-themes, I arranged the data according to the broader theme and not the individual participant as I did initially. This allowed me to effectively cohere data together within themes whilst maintaining identifiable distinctions between themes. This process did involve constant reviewing of data extracts. This ensured the themes adequately captured the contours of the reflections I added and the questions I posed that acted as codes within the data. This approach enabled the thematic map to tell the story of the data. The final stage involved refining each sub-theme after reflecting on the questions I raised and a refined categorisation by linking the sub themes with each of the three objectives. This involved physically 'mapping' the data sets (interviews with my reflections and ***Scenarios***) to fit as follows:

Objective 1 (To investigate how female Muslim teachers (FMTs) manage the challenges of stereotyping in an educational context):

1. What are the internal identity battles faced by Muslim teachers? (***Scenario 1.1***)
2. How do FMTs respond to stereotypes? (***Scenario 1.3***)

3. FMTs: Dealing with stereotypes in the classroom.
4. Normalisation and increasing diversity of Muslim women's experience.

Objective 2 (Demonstrate how the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) conceptualises the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education):

1. The implication of surveillance culture in education - Are Muslim teachers more at risk of this due to policy agendas? (***Scenario 1.5***)
2. The role of schools in challenging cultural expectations and stereotypes (***Scenario 1.4*** and ***1.8***)
3. Panoptic versus post-panoptic surveillance
4. School ethos and inclusivity: Are Muslim teachers under pressure to explain/defend to blend in? (***Scenario 1.7***)
5. How do pupils react to Muslim teachers? (***Scenario 1.9***)

Objective 3 (To identify the significant transactions for FMTs in educational contexts that have implications for teaching practice):

1. Muslim women in the classroom: Issues around disclosure and responsibility to act as role models (***Scenario 1.6***)
2. Is the development of socialisation and cultural understanding amongst students a responsibility for Muslim teachers?
3. Religious views and teaching practice (***Scenario 1.2***)
4. Responses towards theological discussions (***Scenario 2.0***)
5. Spaces for dialogue - Is the education system failing our young people?

3.12 Ethical approach

I am aware of ethical concerns related to the collection of data via participant interviews; these have been addressed in my approved ethics application.

The University's EthOS system was used to determine the form of ethical approval required for this study, this involved automatically generated questions on an

online platform. The sections I refer to here relate to the Ethics Application form which has been attached as Appendix 4 (Submitted in March 2019).

3.12.1 Ethics Process:

I have highlighted the main ethical issues addressed in the Ethos application below (sections A and B of the form) and provided reference points for further details provided in this chapter:

In section A, the questions pertained to health and safety, data protection, researcher details, project title and brief description of the project with the commencement date.

The next stage (section B) required submitting an abstract, keywords, details of the supervisory team, details of timescales and location of data collection (in section 3.6 I have provided details of the interview process). I clarified the purpose and design of the project including the rationale, aim and objectives/questions, methodology, methods of data collection and analysis and submission of the project protocol.

In addition to this in section B, I detailed the demographics, eligibility and identification of the participants, their gender, lower/upper age limit and inclusion/exclusion criteria (further details for participant selection criteria are provided in section 3.5). I provided details for the number of participants and their recruitment (convenience sampling and sample size is explained in section 3.5).

I outlined the consent procedure including how the participants will be approached, whether written consent will be obtained; if audio/video/photography consent is required and how long participants had to decide to participate or not, with the withdrawal process made clear (data protection is addressed in section 3.8). I addressed the issue of having a past relationship with the participants (researcher bias is discussed in section 3.5) and whether this added pressure to participate; whether the recruitment method added peer pressure to participate, and the steps taken to mitigate this risk.

The consent forms and participant information sheets have been added as Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 respectively

3.12.2 Insider-researcher position

Belonging to the group I am researching presents as an opportunity as a researcher to represent the group in question as an insider. Being an insider may present a challenge or complication in socio-demographic characteristics, but can also reveal certain biases, assumptions, beliefs and expectations (Kirpitchenko and Voloder, 2014). As a researcher, dealing with the research questions I am posing to the FMTs in my own practise and using autoethnographic data as a tool in the research process involves confronting a sense of vulnerability and my own humanity in a broader social context. Ellis (2004) highlights the powerful nature of self-narratives in autoethnography. I reveal my own thoughts and emotions using the ***Scenarios*** as a dataset, in the narrative of which I sometimes explicitly feature. There is an important reflexivity here as the ***Scenarios*** are presented as personal stories and draw upon researcher experience; this dataset characterises the data analysis and the presentation of results.

There can be a barrier in place when it comes to 'outsiders' researching Muslim communities. Bolognani (2007:282) points to a 'general sense of mistrust' and then there is the issue of misrepresentation which may be a critique of research work in this area. As a researcher, through my autoethnographic data I present a willingness to identify with the FMTs I interview, furthermore belonging to the group I am researching not only helped with recruitment of participants but enabled access to the voices of the female Muslim teachers in my study (Mcdowell, 2016). Oakley (1981) uses the example of women interviewing women and how rapport through having shared experiences can have benefits to the research. The insider perspective I bring to the interview process is significant in helping to overcome the researcher-interviewee barrier, DeVerteuil (2004), explains that an insider could overcome barriers that may hinder the success of the research; this

adds an element of empathy and sensitivity to shared lived experiences and thereby broadens the scope of the data gathered. I bring to the fore questions around the tensions of self, shared identities, lived experiences and understandings as a FMT who is highly engaged with the social worlds I study. In addition to the potential advantages of being a cultural insider including an understanding of the issues; gaining access to participants; establishing relationships with them; having shared cultural norms, codes and histories (Voloder and Kirpitchenko, 2013).

There are disadvantages to being an insider too, as discussed by, Voloder and Kirpitchenko (2013), for example, an expectation of sympathy, loyalty and understanding for a cause from the participants. Simmel (1950) raises questions of researcher prejudice and how a similar background to the participants may influence how the data is interpreted. In contrast to this Merton (1972), argues that just because someone belongs to a similar group it does not mean they have similar views, and that there are challenges other than being an insider or outsider researcher to consider, such as the focus and approach to the research, which may have a greater bearing on the outcomes. As a FMT I am culturally and professionally an insider and as a researcher I am aware of my positioning and my subjectivities both in relation to the interviewees but also in relation to the broader context and sociocultural circumstances of the research topics.

Chapter 4:

Female Muslim Teachers and Stereotypes in the Classroom

Objective 1: To investigate how female Muslim teachers (FMTs) manage the challenges of stereotyping in an educational context.

In this chapter I analyse the stereotypes around Muslim women and whether the teachers I interviewed can be argued to reinforce or breakthrough them. I look at how Muslim teachers deal with stereotypes in the classroom, and in particular issues in the classroom with hijab wearing teachers. To provide some background to this section I begin with identity and diversity of experience of the teachers I interviewed and investigate normalisation of Muslim identity.

4.1 Identity, belonging and education

During my PGCE year, at my first training school and my first experience of classroom teaching I was faced with the identity question (***Scenario 1.1****):*

1.1 Context: 2007, Oldham, Majority Bangladeshi Secondary school 11-16. My first classroom experience.

Ghulam-	Are you Bangladeshi Miss?
Me-	No, why do you ask?
Ghulam-	I can't tell
Mahmood-	Bet she's Pakistani
Ghulam-	You can't teach here if you're Pakistani Miss
Mahmood-	You need to teach at Hillcrest Miss, that's where all the Pakis are
Ghulam-	Yeah, only Bengalis here
Me-	I am Bengali
Ghulam-	She's lying, look she's smiling…say something in Bengali
Me-	I only speak English

Ghulam and Mahmood laugh

Ghulam- She's defo Paki

Me- You shouldn't use that term, it's offensive

Ghulam and Mahmood converse in Bengali and laugh

Me- It's also rude to speak in a language I don't understand

Ghulam- Well you are definitely a coconut Miss

Me- What does that mean?

Mahmood- Brown on the outside and white on the inside

Ghulam and Mahmood laugh

The demographic of the school was 98% Bangladeshi. It was eye opening for me as I did not realise that an area so close to where I had grown up was so segregated even within the Asian community. Most Pakistani pupils attended a different high school. Living in a large city, I had experience of more multicultural settings. The pupils managed to make me feel slightly uncomfortable with my Pakistani roots in a Bangladeshi environment, ironically in a British school setting. ***You can't teach here if you're Pakistani Miss***. This was the first time in my career where I started to question my own identity and how I was being perceived by the young people I was interacting with. I remember wondering why it was important for them to know my ethnicity: if it was about relatability and common ground then wasn't being brown enough? ***You need to teach at Hillcrest Miss, that's where all the Pakis are.*** I was left feeling that in Oldham or in this school at least there are more facets to identity and belonging. ***Well you are definitely a coconut Miss... Brown on the outside and white on the inside.*** I felt out of place and as though I didn't belong. I then learnt that most of the Asian staff working in the school were also of Bengali ethnicity. At a practical level it would make sense as a lot of the pupils spoke English as an

additional language, and it would take away the need for support staff to translate in lessons. ***Scenario 1.1*** shows that pupils look for connections with their teachers, in this case it is the ethnic connection. I chose to withhold information about the Pakistani element of my identity as I sensed it would not be appreciated in a majority Bangladeshi context. Identities are complex discrepant constructions (Said 1993) and are 'shaped by multiple cultural formations' (Subedi and Daza, 2008:5). Subedi and Daza point out how researchers negotiate their identity to open spaces to serve epistemological purposes. ***Scenario 1.1*** is an example of how I transact ways of being and knowing. I felt alienated even though collectively the pupils and I belong to the South Asian diaspora. This was my introduction to teaching, but it was effectively so much more as I was left questioning the homogeneity of Muslims as a group.

Gilbert (2004) points out that there is wide variation with the extent that a faith is practised by individuals in a faith group. Differentiation at the social level is also apparent in sectarian affiliation, occupation, languages, customs and traditions. He writes that the word Muslim is not synonymous with the term Asian. This is exemplified in my interview with Aminah where she is responding to my question about her identity. ***I say British because I am British, but I say a British Muslim. And then I say I'm a British Muslim Pakistani because that's partly why I'm here and that's what I'm proud of.*** The order of her ascription towards identity is thought-provoking. British, Muslim and then Pakistani. She justifies her Pakistani identity to the reason why she is here and that she is proud of that part of her identity. She affiliates pride with being Pakistani but does not hold Pakistani nationality. In section 2.1.4 of the literature review I discuss the main categories of contemporary ethnic minorities in Britain and how being a Muslim is not a unifying category but is instead super imposed by ethnically fragmentive grouping.

Aminah feels strongly that certain traditional values that emerge from ethnic and cultural roots should not be changed, Aminah uses the word 'diluted' to express

this. ***And to a point, certain bits of it should be diluted but there are some bits that shouldn't, you know, and it's just a matter of how as a parent you would put that into your child like virtue of like respect.*** She uses respect and virtue as examples, which is intriguing. She attributes these values to being Pakistani. Aminah uses socio-cultural practices as justification for ethnic self-definition (Verkuyten and DeWolf 2002). This makes me wonder about the extent of the role played by culture, religion, upbringing - the people and contexts we are exposed to - in identity formation. Evidently identity is multi-layered and is complicated further by generational shifts. Zaynab feels more associated with Pakistan than her own children. ***I still see that I'm…I kind of still live in a little bit of a limbo because when I hear, I get told I'm a Paki.*** She attributes this to being first generation compared to her children about whom she says ***they totally belong here***. Even though Zaynab was born in the UK she feels an affiliation with Pakistan which is interesting and identifies that her children do not have this. ***When I'm in Pakistan it's kind of we are British. So, we kind of feel…sometimes you feel you don't belong here, you don't belong there, so where do you actually belong?*** There is a disparity around identity in how Zaynab classifies herself, compared to her children. ***I'm kind of sometimes a little bit in limbo or, you know, maybe…I do see myself as a British-Pakistani without a doubt. That said I'm a British-Pakistani whereas my children see themselves as British through and through.*** Zaynab points out that first and second-generation British Muslims are more integrated than their parents' generation who settled in community groups when they first emigrated to the UK...***their daughters, they're solicitors, they're teachers, they're engineers, whatever, they are going out into all fields as well...we are trying to kind of move around and integrate more because we…I live here. We live here.*** For subsequent generations of immigrants Britain is 'home'. Bhatti (2006) suggests their parents' nostalgia for life back home is not shared by the second and third generation of Pakistani and Bangladeshis settled in Britain; however, Zaynab's association with Pakistan as a British born woman may stem from being married to a Pakistani national.

There is a difference in identity formation between first generation migrants and subsequent generations. Bhatti (2006) explains that second and third generation South Asian families do not want to feel pathologized and if young Muslims specifically feel they are not accepted they will carve out a place for themselves and form a new identity (Ramadan, 2004). This suggests that young Muslims have more autonomy over their identity and are not as reliant upon their parents' or grandparents' generation for direction. I argue that education can teach dominant cultural norms and provide a space where young people can develop more complicated identities that neither annihilate or assimilate but rather provide a source of self-regard (Morrison and Taylor-Guthrie 1994). Positive and meaningful educational outcomes are key to young Muslims reaching beyond the confines of community and the essentialized characteristic assumed by Labelle and Ogbu (1978) and (Bhatti, 2006). Ogbu's questions scrutinise issues about achievement and identity; this is relevant and applicable to my analysis as they invite a critique and re-negotiation to create a more just outcome for many more agents in the education system and the societies they represent. The issues I explore in this thesis are deeper than ostensible identity but also about belonging, and how young people will contribute to society in the future.

Aminah also points out the generational shift that has taken place with reference to immigrant, first, second and perhaps even third generation Muslim women. This is fascinating as the shifts that have taken place are perhaps more cultural and related to the social behaviour of these women...***our mother's generation all Muslim women were the same. You were a housewife, you looked after your husband, you did the house, you did this, that, you didn't work, you weren't educated, you'd come from somewhere else and there was…that was a Muslim woman.*** In terms of religiosity and outward expression of one's faith then arguably that has become stronger over the decades and generations. This is perhaps due to young people ascribing to the unifying power of religion and belonging to the Muslim diaspora (explained in the literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.1.8, p27) over ethnic affiliations that have become more and more changed over time. Aminah alludes to

retaining cultural capital through the maintenance of identity through religion. In contrast Zine (2009:148) discusses gaining 'national capital' through 'performing whiteness'. Aminah's stance is perhaps partly due to an almost reflex action to hold onto ties and traditions when a community is faced with oppression, whereas Zine's pertains to passing as an assimilated foreigner. I discuss and explain the rise in Islamophobia in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.1.6, p25) and how a return to religion gives Muslim youth a sense of belonging, security and identity. Aminah responds to my question about a lost generation with an identity crisis. She infers that she would take a different approach to identity with her own children compared to her mother's...***you know, it's slightly different because I have been to school. My mother didn't go to school.*** She suggests this would be since she is educated but her mother is not. I wonder whether this may be because her children would have British parents and therefore an adjusted outlook on living life as a British born citizen. I can relate to Aminah's experience growing up as a first-generation migrant and use my own mother as an example. Growing up in a Pakistani household in Britain in the 1980s, culture meant wearing the traditional Pakistani dress, speaking the native language of my parents, and eating mostly Pakistani foods. The religious and national identity performed and encountered in my home was that of an Islamic and Pakistani one and my mother embodied this. She was secure and confident with her identity in that space; however outside of the space she constructed, she would rely on me to communicate in English when she could not, explain concepts that, to her, would seem against her Muslim and Pakistani identity. We can use intimate spaces such as the home to exemplify the embodiment of national identities (Lyons, 2018). I found even at a very young age I was consciously trying to understand the shifting nature of identity and how belonging, especially across different spaces, was problematic. Lyons (2018) states how affective atmospheres, such as the home, unpack the ties between people and the nation, and I acknowledge the usefulness of exploring this to inform how 'Britishness' is felt. However, I would go further and say the overall feeling of belonging is not just formed across spaces, but by the diversity of the agents in these spaces and the uniqueness of individual experiences. To exemplify this, had my mother been proficient in speaking the English language, she might have

maintained the power she displayed in the home outside the home space too. This may have reinforced the British side of my identity growing up, but instead I was constantly reminded, in being her support, that I was dissimilar in some way to the majority society around me and to her. There are of course varying degrees of exposure to religious practice, culture, language and challenges with integration between and within subsequent immigrant generations. This is exemplified by Yasmin who is a non-hijab wearing Muslim teacher who explains she has always been confident with her Muslim identity regardless of experience in the teaching profession. ***So, it's not something that with experience you become more confident in? No, no. I know I'm very confident with who I am, and my religion is who I am, it's something that is very personal to me.***

My first experience of teaching (***Scenario 1.1***) led me to reflect on how important the ethnic connection was to pupils. I was made to feel like an outsider in a majority Bangladeshi school and it was the first time I was called a 'coconut' by a student. I was left questioning the homogeneity of the Muslim diaspora and felt that being Muslim was not the same as being Asian. This raised questions of difference, loyalty and integration but in relation to one's own group. Verkuyten and DeWolf (2002:373) comment on 'acting white', 'selling out', 'coconut' and 'bounty' used as terms to infer a betrayal of sorts to the ethnic group. The ascription of identity by Aminah (British, Muslim, Pakistani) supports this view. Aminah's pride in being Pakistani has more to do with her traditional Pakistani cultural upbringing than a result of feeling loyalty towards a country she rarely visits or is not a national citizen of. Aminah believes she acquired her values from being Pakistani over any other identity and points out the generational shifts that have taken place, particularly with women and their social behaviour, with ascription to faith over ethnicity becoming more prevalent in subsequent generations. Zaynab's affiliation with Pakistan is different to that of her immigrant parents' nostalgia and the dismissive attitude of her own children. She is ***in limbo*** as she puts it and does not know where she belongs even though she is a British born citizen. Yasmin represents a non-hijab wearing Muslim teacher who is confident with her identity and describes religion as

something personal to her. It is interesting to note how Sabah, for example, is selective about the identity she wishes to disclose, depending upon who is asking. In doing this, Sabah exemplifies that self-ascription of identity is autoethnographic in nature and even strategic (***Scenario 1.1)***. The FMTs in my study relate to belonging to the Muslim diasporic domain; however, they speak of a hybridity that encompasses nationality with ethnicity. I link this to Homi Bhabha's idea of the flux in cultural hybridities in the discussion (Chapter 7, Section 7.1.4, p163). My study shows how FMTs perform diasporic identities to re-position their locations within the British education system. Individual and collective identities are relational articulations and not constructed in isolation as discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.1.8, p27). Verkuyten and DeWolf (2002:390) refer to the different influences as 'a reification of culture and an equation between ethnicity and culture'. All four FMTs show agency in making personal choices around the cultural influences that determine their combination of identities.

The fragmentation that inequality and racism in education can create results in different levels of motivations within and between different factions of the Muslim community. This is especially the case with the backdrop of Muslims and historic underachievement in education (Gillborn and Gipps, 1996). The women I have interviewed or are part of the data corpus reflect varying nuanced representations of Muslim women: From physical attributions such as hijab wearing to non-hijab wearing; from overtly to covertly practising Islam and differences at the social and lifestyle level such as smoking and drinking. Each has their reasons, some self-justified and others not so sure how or why they present themselves in a certain way, but all are in relation to their multiple identities as Muslim women. Women have multiple and fluid identities, which are further contextualised when compared to men. The identity of migrant women is further complicated by a change in nationality and taking on the label of an 'ethnic minority'. Some women experience a shift in the nomenclature used to identify them when they take on their husband's name; they change physically and become marked through their bodies when they become mothers. My data shows that FMTs' agency is constructed

through relations with peers, friends, family, pupils, but also through their social, personal and sometimes political and professional circumstances. In a more nuanced way, however, Muslims' perceptions of who they are lies with the perspective of the host society, which I discuss in the literature review (Chapter 2). I argue that FMTs' agency is more intrinsic than this and is somewhere between a 'masculine, combative Islamic political identity' (Afshar et al., 2005:263) and the feminist face of Islam (Karam 1998). Faith provides a psychological and social anchor for these women who hold multiple and changeable identities. Muslim feminists' 'modern' Islamic interpretation allows for a distinctive approach to understanding what Vallely and Brown (1995:2-4) refer to as a new 'British form of Islam' and includes the 'liberation of Muslim women'.

4.2 How do FMTs respond to stereotypes?

***Scenario* 1.3** below is an interaction between pupils and myself, from my first lesson in my second placement as a trainee teacher.

1.3 Context: 2007, Tameside, Majority white Secondary school 11-16.	
Katie-	Looks like Shilpa Shetty
Ella-	Oh yeah that Asian woman who just won Big Brother
Katie-	Miss, are you Shilpa Shetty?
Ella laughs	
Katie-	Are you her sister Miss?
Ashton-	Have you never seen an Asian woman before?
Ella-	They don't look like that
Katie and Y laugh	

Me- I'm not Shilpa Shetty and she's not my sister but thank you for the compliment.
Ella- She sounds dead posh…Miss are you from London?
Me- I'm from Manchester
Katie- She's one of them training ones, Miss we're the good kids, be nice to us otherwise we can make you leave like the others
Katie and Ella laugh

This was a very different experience for me compared to my first placement in Oldham. The demographic of the pupils and staff in this school was majority white. It was clear to me that some of the pupils I was teaching in this setting hadn't been taught by an Asian/Muslim teacher before. ***Have you never seen an Asian woman before...They don't look like that?*** Once again, I found myself questioning why my identity was a concern and the relevance of that to these pupils. This time it was not Bengali pupils trying to work out whether I belonged to their group, but instead white pupils trying to align me with an Asian celebrity who had recently created a national media storm in a reality television show. I did wonder at the time what Ella thought Asian women 'looked like' and why I was problematic for them; however, at the time teaching my first lesson well and establishing an initial rapport with these pupils was more important. Looking back at how I felt at the time (***Scenario* 1.3**) there was an instinctive need for me to try even harder at this placement to build relationships compared to the majority Bangladeshi context of my first placement (see ***Scenario* 1.1**). At this point, what I didn't realise was that 'Whiteness' was in operation (see literature review, Chapter 2, section, 2.1.2, p20). As the only teacher of an ethnic minority background in a majority white setting I subconsciously took on a form of responsibility in terms of representation. The interaction in ***Scenario* 1.1** highlights that if I didn't already feel I belonged to a minority group in the school community the pupils concerned ensured I was aware, even if it was unintentional and because of internalising 'whiteness'. This

awareness had the effect of making me feel as though I was an imposter of sorts. I needed a sense of belonging, but there wasn't an ethnic or religious group I could affiliate with in this environment which meant I didn't have a social identity. Tajfel and Turner (2004) propose that the groups to which we belong provide a sense of belonging and are important to social identity; this group membership is the main argument of social identity theory. Furthermore, they suggest that this belonging enhances our sense of self as we enhance the status of the 'in-group' - the group we belong to. This division of people into 'in' and 'out' groups (social categorisation) underpin an 'us' versus 'them' mentality and allows people to adopt the identity of the group to which they feel they belong. McLeod (2008) suggests that self-esteem and emotional significance become bound with group identification and belonging. Understanding these processes is important in determining how prejudice works since differences between groups and similarities in the same group may be exaggerated (Miller, 2016).

Yasmin describes her views around changing perceptions of pupils she describes as having a 'linear' way of thinking. She strives to impact on the views of all students she comes across and, in that way, she feels she is fulfilling her duty towards changing perceptions. ***I think even if I can change the perceptions of the 80-100 students I teach every year, that's my contribution to challenging the ignorance that some people, some student's experiences, especially those from predominantly white suburban areas who have never really come across anyone different that have this linear kind of way of living where they don't really interact with other people from different backgrounds.*** She finds this rewarding as she feels she is shaping the mindsets of the young adults she is interacting with. She realises the implications of exposure to a Muslim woman such as her will have on these pupils not only in their own lives but also future generations. ***So, for me when I come across those students in particular is even more rewarding because they will go on and then they will remember that actually not everyone's the same.***
Zaynab's reasons for going into teaching are directly related to creating awareness and are because of her experiences. She goes on to explain that for this reason she

chooses to work in a majority white school. ***I get so many questions fired at me as a teacher and even before I was a teacher…why do you wear a headscarf? Why do you fast? Why do you pray? Why do you not drink?*** She points out Islamophobia and the role of the media. Zaynab suggests young people need to be taught about Islam and other religions.

Sabah's point about the negative portrayal of Muslims in the British media aligns with Zaynab's thoughts...***We don't have many programmes or any… I wouldn't say news articles or any information, but we don't really have much explaining or discussing the good things that Muslims are contributing to the British society being British ourselves, but naturally when something negative happens and it was so disgusting, that it is then highlighted.*** Aminah adds to Sabah's point by referring to the mixing of culture, ethnicity and religion. ***I think as soon as you bring Islam and Muslim into it, then you're messing things up because that then becomes quite targeted...When it's a Muslim man, then they're not going to say an Asian man. It's always a Muslim man.*** She points out the negative Muslim stereotype in the media. Aminah is responding to a question in ***Scenario 1.6;*** what does a terrorist look like? She places accountability on the media for this. She does, however, suggest that the Muslim community should take more responsibility towards tackling this ...***maybe it's something for the Muslim community to think more about.*** She advocates for the role of mosques in teaching young people - thereby creating alternative representations of Muslims perhaps.

When questioned about the hijab as a visual representation of a Muslim woman Aminah feels strongly it is her duty to represent Muslim women. ***I feel it's part of my duty to do that as well, just to like represent a Muslim woman. Like I feel like it's important.*** Aminah suggests the hijab is comparable to a uniform that signifies belonging to a group of people with a particular function or role in society. Aminah offers a generalisation here that all Muslim women who wear the hijab represent Islam but also confirms the idea of social identity and the security it perhaps offers

to her as a member of the 'out' group. By wearing the hijab in a majority non-Muslim society, it effectively exaggerates the prejudices, described above, alluded to by Miller (2016); that is, the differences between the 'in' and 'out' groups become greater and acceptance via similarities to the members of the 'out' group are increased. Zaynab experiences the further division of Muslims into groups; the perception of staff of 'different people with Islam' is based on whether they wear the hijab or not, a physical representation and symbolism of being a Muslim...***when I first went in, some of the teachers in my department said to me we got two different people with Islam here because the other is hijab.*** I find Aminah's binary outlook on her pupils' perceptions of Muslims interesting. She reinforces the philosophy of social identity theory in terms of categorisation. She sees the problem inherent within groups but does not show an awareness of accountability within the Muslim group. She questions where the negative responses towards Muslims shown by some pupils have come from. She attributes them to the media, their parents and peers. ***So, I thought people had not been exposed…generalisation about the headscarf, the hijab. Maybe there's a lack of knowledge at this, you know, in their education.*** Her response is almost defensive. She does not hold any accountability towards British Asian Muslims themselves. She also does not pick up on the lack of integration between communities. I describe South Asian migration and settlement in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.1.3, p21). Aminah grew up in, and still lives in, a very segregated part of Northern England, but does not see this as potentially a root cause of the stereotypes around Muslims in the wider context of the media and majority white communities. She does, however, feel strongly about giving back to the community that she grew up in. She has strong local ties and a sense of belonging and loyalty. ***I would like to give back to the community that's been a part of me and educating people, not just about being good citizens but something about being a good person and, you know, that kind of thing.*** Additionally, Yasmin pursued teaching to actively challenge the perceptions young people have about Muslims. ***And another reason I think that I really wanted to do it is to challenge students' perception of Muslim people in general...in discussion it comes up that I'm Muslim, a lot of students do get a little bit taken aback because they say, "Oh, you're not what we***

expect," and I try and challenge that and say, "Well, what do you expect?" Yasmin is a non-hijab wearing Muslim woman and refers to the stereotypical representation of a Muslim woman including wearing a hijab, modest clothing and minimal makeup...***if you're not wearing a scarf, you must be an Indian, if you got your hair out, you've got nice makeup on, that's what you must be, however if you got a hijab on and minimal make up, modest clothing, you must be a Muslim. Again, very stereotypical views.*** She is aware that she represents a divergent representation of the stereotypical Muslim woman and asks her pupils directly about their misconceptions. Perhaps Yasmin's outlook is a result of her own inquiry into dominant cultural markers in a multicultural society. She refers to non-hijab wearing women as ***you must be an Indian.*** There are of course Muslim women who are Indian who wear the hijab and those who do not. This exemplifies dominant models that exist in multicultural societies which equate country of origin with religion and culture (Afshar et al., 2005).

I asked Sabah if there was anything she might change because of the questions posed to her during the interview. In her answer she works through the logic of answering potential questions around being a Muslim. She arrives at the conclusion that she went into teaching to change perceptions and challenge the stereotypes she refers to...***there's no reason why I should not encourage that dialogue so that they see me as that individual and they're like, "Oh Miss, are you Muslim?" and then ask me those questions and I could answer those questions. I mean, hijab is just one aspect of it and at the end of the day it's not something major anyway, so if there's anything else that they could ask me about then why not?*** She points to the fact that she has not previously thought about the issues raised in the interview and would take this on board going forward in her practice. ***But wait, Miss is a Muslim also which means not everyone's like that," and that's the reason why I am in teaching so I think I would definitely take that onboard.*** In doing this she would be challenging the perceptions some pupils may have of Muslim teachers. Davidson (2012) discusses how modern anti-Islam discourses present Islam as incompatible with liberal democratic values in the West where Islam is widely

viewed as hostile to human rights, patriarchal and opposed to women's rights. Muslim women are only seen as active and autonomous agents if they work against the culture that constrains them (Keddie et al 2019). In the case of the FMTs in my study the hijab is seen as only 'one aspect' of being Muslim (Sabah) and in the case of Zaynab, she wears the hijab with conviction and is prepared to defend her stance on this...***if someone says something to me, I will retaliate.*** I would argue that these women challenge the view presented by Keddie et al (2019), in their study, around an ambivalence related to their identities. This is exemplified by Zaynab and Aminah trying to make their place in Western society withstanding their religious values and the way they openly express religiosity. The 'reductionist perspective' (Keddie et al 2019:167) claims the veil has no religious value for Muslim women and that they are victims of their circumstance, it does not account for the view of women such as Zaynab.

Aminah acknowledges different contemporary representations of Muslim women. She starts by commenting on lifestyle choices made by some Muslim women such as those who drink alcohol or have children without being married. ***Now, you can have a Muslim woman who does drink. You can have a Muslim woman who's not in a marriage, but she's got a child…you've got all these different situations, so we have in a way as we've developed, we've confused people.*** She remarks on this by saying as we have developed '***we've confused people***'. She refers to other physical aspects of representation such as wearing the niqab, wearing jeans or a skirt. She infers from her comments that because there are so many types of Muslim women, she does not blame people for being confused and having certain perceptions...***You've got so many different versions of a Muslim woman.*** The arguments of post-feminism are that gender equality is equivalent to the notion of female sexual agency depicted by women having the option to expose their bodies to others (McRobbie, 2009). This dominant discourse around gender equality becomes a defining characteristic of Western liberal society particularly in comparison to Islam (Thobani, 2007). Zine (2009:149) writes 'Muslim women's bodies are the new frontier upon which battles for national identity and citizenship

are being waged'. She comments on how a head covering represents foreign values to a western nation and how it has become a symbol of 'pollution' and 'corruption' (see literature review, Chapter 2, section 2.2.4, p31, where I discuss Muslim women as a threat to the state). Interestingly a comparison can be drawn between migrant or first-generation Muslim women not wearing the hijab and their daughters/granddaughters wearing the hijab for political reasons, showing semantic versatility (Shirazi, 2001). Aminah points out the many nuanced representations of a Muslim woman. Within this there are women who are 'emancipated' as they are closer to the dominant discourse and progressing towards liberty as defined by post-feminism. Nonetheless, there are many young Muslim women living in the West who choose to express Islam as the primary marker of identity (Poynting, 2009), and take on a role and responsibility to challenge stereotypes of Muslims.

4.3 FMTs: Dealing with stereotypes in the classroom

From my own experience, I know the impact and power of exposure as a Muslim to both Muslim and non-Muslim students. The impact of having a Muslim teacher for Muslim pupils offers them hope and a sense belonging with someone who shares a similar identity. In the case of non-Muslim pupils, Muslim teachers can be an example of someone establishing themselves in a majority non-Muslim society and challenging the stereotypes. Muslim women in the West who choose to symbolise Islam through religiously sanctioned dress, become a focal point for negative views about Islam. The western mainstream view being that Muslim women are oppressed is taken as a given even by those who have never met a Muslim woman (Bullock, 2007). I discuss the marginalisation of Muslim women in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.2.5, p33). In this part of the analysis, I explore how Muslim teachers deal with stereotypes in their practice and then go on to look at the impact of wearing the hijab, or not, as a Muslim teacher in the classroom. I will start with analysing some of the views held by staff around negative stereotypes.

Sabah compares the result of actual exposure to Muslims to the negative stereotype portrayed in the media. She explains why her colleagues may feel the way they do attributing the negative Muslim stereotype to the portrayal of Muslims by the media...***you're almost mixing they're a bad person and linking them to a religion and then all, obviously, as soon as you see a Muslim and think, oh gosh, and we make associations.*** She justifies their position by attributing it to a combination of a lack of exposure to Asian Muslims and the misinformation by the media...***it's probably because they've not mixed with Asian people before. It could have been that they've been just brought up in an area…what they see is what the media shows them, and they just watch the telly or whatever, news, and that's that. That then becomes their perception.*** Sabah is inferring here that negative perceptions of the hijab can be found at all levels of society and is perpetuated by various commentators including print media and popular culture. She compares the views of some adults she has interacted with to probably what she is more used to dealing with - the views of young people...***they're grownups and yet they even still have stereotypes and there's also misconceptions around being a Muslim.*** Sabah's comment ***as soon as you see a Muslim*** is problematic for several reasons. When I relate this to 'Miss are you a Muslim?', taken from the title of the thesis, there is a dichotomy of sorts. How do you see a Muslim if not all Muslims project a homogenised image? I was misidentified as a Hindu (see ***Scenario 1.4*** in Chapter 5, section 5.2, p106) by senior staff members. There are Jewish women who cover their hair (Yadgar, 2006), and Muslim women who are white (Khan, 2019), to give some examples of deviations on the Muslim stereotype.

Pupils' questions around the Muslim way of life can be based around lifestyle choices such as whether their teacher drinks alcohol or not, for example Zaynab says...***Of course I'm getting asked all types of questions, why don't you drink? How do you have a good time without drinking?*** They feel a non-drinker is missing out on having a ***good time*** without alcohol, which could point to cultural norms and attitudes towards alcohol with some young white people in Zaynab's context.

Aminah says the perception her pupils have of her is a strict teacher. ***They think oh, she's wearing a headscarf, she looks like she's strict.*** She relates this directly to wearing the hijab. I wonder whether she uses this to create her teacher persona. Aminah makes interesting correlations such as that women who do not wear the headscarf are not necessarily bad people and that women who wear the headscarf are not necessarily good people. ***Some women might not necessarily wear the headscarf, but that doesn't mean they're not a good person.*** She goes on to explain to her pupils that the headscarf is a visible indicator of a practising Muslim woman. ***…that's the only way that you can see that they are a Muslim woman. Like apart from that you can't tell initially. If you…if you look outside and you see a woman with a headscarf on, you know that is a practising Muslim woman.*** I feel she may be generalising here as hijab wearing and non-hijab wearing women practise Islam to varying degrees. Bullock (2007: XVIII) describes three emerging trends. The first is the rise of young Westernised Muslim women reclaiming Islam on their terms and rejecting conservative interpretations. The second is the rise of the 'progressive' Muslim, and the third an 'unveiling trend' amongst hijab wearing Muslim women who are now removing it. Bullock (2007) points to an overlapping view between these trends that the hijab is not a religiously sanctioned dress, but an interpretation from the Quran about women dressing modestly. Aminah's views exemplify a wide spectrum of opinion, which can sometimes lead to antagonism within Muslim communities. She points out that there are different representations of Muslim women and that there is an element of personal choice involved with how a Muslim woman chooses to represent herself. She makes a comment about how wearing a hijab signifies a sense of pride in being a Muslim. ***It just shows you the fact that she's a Muslim and that's why many women wear it because they…they are proud to be that.*** This points to the issue of symbolism associated with the outward expression of being a Muslim. This raises questions such as why she feels Muslim women may need to display their pride in being a Muslim and the root cause of this feeling. Does wearing a hijab bring unwanted attention to Muslim women who are wearing it to show pride, especially since the negative feminist discourse labels it as 'oppressive'. I discuss the Islamic feminist and secular feminist

stance on religiously oppressed women in the methodology (Chapter 3, section 3.2.1, p51). Bullock (2007:84) comments on how the women in her study describe the hijab as a symbol of 'purity', 'modesty' and 'a woman's modest identity', which aligns with Aminah's views around the positive symbolism in wearing the hijab. Aminah's views contrast those of Yasmin; she associates wearing the hijab as a symbol of weakness and vulnerability. Is this how she personally perceives hijab wearing Muslim women - is this a stereotype about Muslim women she has? Aminah reinforces the cultural artefact that the hijab is 'oppressive' as she sees it as a barrier of sorts, especially in terms of her own professionalism. She feels Muslim hijab wearing teachers must work harder to build rapport with their pupils. ***They've had a lot more behavioural issues to deal with, and I believe that they have a bit more of a disadvantage in getting the students on board, because I think students almost sniff that out as a weakness or as a vulnerability in their teacher, and I think they have to work that extra hard to instil that discipline in the class.*** Perhaps Yasmin's voice would be generally upheld by majority western society whereas Aminah's views confirm the 'native' voice.

Aminah alludes to the barrier represented by the hijab and goes on to say that sometimes her pupils may want to ask her something which may not be offensive but then they withhold as they don't want to offend her. ***Sometimes it could be a barrier.*** I wonder whether this can be attributed to an individualised persona or whether other Muslim teachers who wear the hijab experience this? Aminah wants her pupils to ask her questions and hopes as rapport increases with students the barrier represented by the hijab might be overcome. ***It could be a barrier in the sense that they want to ask me something, it's not actually offensive, what they don't…they don't end up asking me because they feel like I might be offended.*** She doesn't want them to feel she might be offended by their inquisitive nature. The hijab acts as a physical barrier in this case. She feels if she wasn't wearing it then they would say what they thought. ***Like they're questioning themselves before they question me whereas I think in other cases, they wouldn't. They would just spit it out whatever they thought but because I have the headscarf on, because I am***

speaking to them in a certain way, they feel like I can't…you can't just ask her like that. Does this barrier add or subtract from forming teacher-pupil relationships? Yes, it provides a physical barrier that supports a level of respect enforced by a symbol of authoritarianism, but at the same time it may be an obstacle. Zaynab has become accepting of negative attitudes and stereotypes around her wearing of the hijab. ***Can I be honest? Do you know, the…being an ethnic minority, being Muslim, and I only started wearing the hijab ten years ago, you almost start to accept some things, some stereotypes, some negativity and you take it all in everyday life if that makes sense.*** Despite the conflicting resonance of wearing the hijab in the West, Zaynab demonstrates how its adoption has significant effects on the actions and perceptions of others (Tarlo, 2007). ***But there's a sense of responsibility I feel that I should…that I should do certain things as part of my own religious perspective and to show good manners.*** Aminah feels strongly that she depicts herself as a good Muslim role model and uses her hijab and outlook on life to build that persona. The hijab is a physical projection of that ideal, the more internalised aspects of being a good Muslim transpire through talk and displaying ***good manners***. Aminah refers to a situation where wearing the hijab served almost as a deterrent to male attention. ***So, it's interesting because there's almost a distinction there between how adults and especially male adults perceive you and how children perceive you in school.*** Wearing the hijab represents female piety and symbolises religiosity in this case for Aminah.

Sabah does not see this as an opportunity to make her pupils aware of differences but chooses to conceal her own differences. Sabah clearly is not comfortable being seen as a Muslim or practising her religion in front of her students...***would I be comfortable being seen in a hijab praying in front of my students? Most certainly not because I feel that they wouldn't understand what it is that I'm doing.*** In the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.2.4, p31), I highlight how inter-cultural difference combined with misrepresentation becomes an unruly threat. Sabah chooses to represent herself in a particular way that she feels is acceptable in her context. According to Piddocke et al (1997), teacher conduct is monitored both in

the classroom and outside of it for behaviours that might upset community norms. FMTs such as Sabah feel they must conceal themselves in addition to this. This is an example of how the agency of FMTs is relational. Secular feminists argue that the hijab is a symbol of 'political Islam' and should be resisted by the West (Bullock, 2007). I discuss the association of the hijab with traditional male patriarchy in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.2.4, p31). The progressive Muslim voice, as represented by Sabah in this instance would be gladly taken up by racist and Islamophobic voices in the West and secular feminists. This bizarrely supportive relationship reinforces the western colonial desire to unveil Muslim women - in this case perhaps by Muslim women.

In ***Scenario 1.3*** I inadvertently challenged Katie and Ella's stereotype of an ***Asian woman*** by giving them direct exposure to someone they are not used to seeing in their everyday lives. I feel I reflected positively with Katie and Ella, but perhaps that was down to my ability to build rapport with them on an individual level rather than a conscious effort to represent a Muslim (Asian) woman. As a teacher new to the profession, I was less concerned about understanding how prejudice works and avoided the 'us' and 'them' mentality presented in the analysis. Yasmin discusses how she strives to change perceptions of young people with a 'linear' way of thinking. Yasmin is challenging is the concept of 'whiteness' as a racial bias which I discuss in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.1.2, p20). A thread that has transpired through my data is the responsibility Muslim women feel as representatives of their group. Spivak (1994:23) writes '(the thinking) of responsibility is also (a thinking of) contamination. Spivak rejects the possibility of pure responsibility which arises out of unevenness of relations (Noxolo et al 2012).

The ideas of belonging and self and of self-coupled with social identification can be applied to Muslim women wanting to belong to a social group. Zaynab chooses to work in a majority white school to challenge the misconceptions held by the pupils she interacts with. Aminah, Zaynab and Sabah all mention the negative stereotypes

of Muslims in the media. Aminah alludes to the political motivation in wearing the hijab and feels it is her duty to represent Muslim women. She feels the Muslim community should do more to tackle negative stereotypes of Muslims in the media.

4.4 Normalisation and increasing diversity of Muslim women's experience

To underpin the assertions made based on the data, in this section of the analysis I will draw on the notion of 'Orientalism' defined by Edward W. Said (Said, 2014), as seeing the Arab culture as exotic, uncivilised, backward and dangerous. Orientalism is explained in section 2.1.1. Sabah is perplexed about her justification of not wearing the hijab and proclaiming her Muslim identity. She is unsure about how to tackle the questions that may proceed. She comes across as apprehensive about dealing with what may appear as a perceived double standard in Islam. ***If they ask me why I do not do hijab, I mean, I'd say I am Muslim, and I wouldn't necessarily know how to respond to that because if I say I don't do hijab because I choose not to but then they'd say, "But why do the other Muslims do it?" And then my answer...the actual answer is, "Well, we have announced in our religion to do hijab," and if I say, "But I choose not to," then they could say, well, then just like that how can you say those Muslims who are open to say other societies or other cultures?*** She mentions how she chooses not to subscribe to an expectation of the religion and seems conflicted by this. Is this a weakness on her part in not being able to vindicate her own stance in choosing to not wear the hijab? By her own admission she claims she is selecting her own version of the religion, and this will make no sense to others. ***I don't want to get caught in that crossfire where some Muslims who have the wrong perception or religion are, you know, committing these atrocities and what not, but then at the same time I'm also choosing my own version of my religion.*** She chooses to avoid getting caught up in the crossfire and political debate that may ensue because of this debate. She highlights that some Muslims have a negative perception of Islam and does not want to come across as someone who belongs to this group. She emphasises the Western secular assumption that faith should be confined to the private sphere (Mavelli, 2013). It is important to her that she comes across as someone who is confident and has

integrity in her choices. Sabah is perhaps unknowingly ascribing to the Orientalist discourse and approaches the acts of outward Islamic expression as symbols of segregation and suppression.

Yasmin classifies her religiosity with being Muslim at heart. ***I do feel for the teachers that do kind of battle with that. I mean, I don't wear a hijab, I don't look like a Muslim, but I am one in my heart.*** In the experience of some of her peers, wearing the hijab has had negativity associated with it. ***I have friends that have worn scarves, have a bit of an accent, and they've had bordering racist challenges in the classroom.*** Yasmin realises her identity might cause confusion as she appears to be Asian but beyond that there are no indicators of her affiliation to ethnicity, religion or background...***straightaway the way you dress, the way you carry yourself is such an important thing, straightaway they will notice that you are obviously from an Asian background, they will start to speculate whether you're Indian, whether you're Pakistani, whether you're a Hindu, whether you're a Muslim.*** Her appearance is generic in that sense. She has an awareness that the way a teacher presents or carries themselves has an impact on their pupils as they question it. There is an issue around scrutiny here - a Muslim woman cannot be scrutinised for being a Muslim if she doesn't look like a stereotypical one. (I analyse scrutiny in more detail in analysis Chapter 5). Yasmin associates the hijab with negativity and racism. This can be explained by the hijab as a symbol of fundamentalist Muslim violence in the West, described by Bullock (2007).

In choosing not to wear the hijab, perhaps some Muslim women (Yasmin and Sabah) exhibit agency and try to break through the stereotype of being submissive and oppressed. Having autonomy over the image they project may even infer a 'critical perspective' (Mohanty et al., 1991). This idea of a critical perspective can be aligned with a study by Rassoul (1999), where students from the former colonies examine their own perceptions of their own ethnicity. Rassoul (1999)describes the problem of 'in-betweenness' (Rassoul, 1999 cited in Bush et al., 2006: 293)and the

ambiguity and conflicts this brings about especially when the concept of identity is further complicated by 'community, racism, culture and belonging' (Bush et al., 2006:293). For these FMTs their social consciousness and identities have been shaped in relation to their lived experiences in British society.

Yasmin refers to the stereotypes of the members of majority society against Muslim women...***again it's a stereotype that this is how a Hindu looks, this is how a Muslim looks outwardly if you're not wearing a scarf, you must be an Indian, if you got your hair out, you've got nice makeup on, that's what you must be, however if you got a hijab on and minimal make up, modest clothing, you must be a Muslim. Again, very stereotypical views.*** The stereotypes include wearing a hijab, minimal makeup and modest clothing. Yasmin has concerns about appearing to be different and the political overtones associated with the hijab in the Western perspective. She presents a global picture about Muslims and refers to herself as a representation of most normal Muslims...***there are over 1 billion Muslims in the world, and that in the news and whatever social media platforms you hear and read, that's only a very small percentage of individuals. Majority of us are like me, normal citizens going about their daily jobs.*** She condemns the media for the misrepresentation of all Muslims and attempts to normalise herself as belonging to the majority Muslim ***normal*** group. Similarly, Aminah refers to the normalisation of Muslims. She has taken the opportunity to represent Muslim women, or at least ***a hijab wearing one that's actually normal***. She has underpinned the contextual stereotype herself by suggesting the connection between Muslim and not being normal. ***So, I thrived at it because I almost felt like, you know what, this is probably the first time they've actually seen a Muslim woman or a woman that wears a hijab that's actually normal.*** Aminah raises the point about the relatability of Muslim women. She brings up how she has thrived upon probably being the first Muslim woman her students have ever seen and talking about ***normal*** things normalises her to them. ***Like she's talking too about normal things and, you know, and they could almost relate.*** In analysing Aminah's transcript, I noticed she refers to ***normal*** multiple times during the interview. This raises the question of

compatibility between Muslim and non-Muslim identities. Perra (2018:90) points out how British Muslims are 'considered inassimilable in society' and their perceived threat despite their participation in neoliberal practices such as in the political, economic and civic life of the country.

> In fact, 'normality' is not equated with universal values such as the rule of law, freedom and democracy; rather, neoliberal societies produce increasingly narrow, de-politicised and de-ideologised definitions of 'normal behaviour'.
>
> (Perra, 2018:90)

The challenge to the Western lifestyle lies in the display of religious devotion by Muslims, which is equated to radicalisation and therefore abnormal behaviours. Therefore, when Aminah constructs being Muslim as abnormal and connects being normal with doing so-called ***white*** activities (e.g. camping) she is showing an awareness of assimilation practices. Aminah grew up in a very segregated part of the country in terms of religio-cultural postcodes. She mentions the cultural divide when she explains that white children have a different cultural upbringing and that she does not remember going to places during her childhood where she believed white children would go, for example, camping. This is a form of internalised racism by the racially subordinated, as emphasised by Pyke (2010). Internalised racism involves acceptance of a racial hierarchy (Johnson, 2008) where race exists as a social construct. My own experience of teaching in this part of the North-West of England was one of utter bemusement at the lack of integration between the white, Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities (***Scenario 1.1***). This was an example of conscious and unconscious systemic racial hierarchy which directly affected outcomes for young people.

Yasmin, Sabah and Aminah have all in their own ways acknowledged the importance of appearing to be ***normal*** or a ***normal Muslim***. This reminds me of a

speech made by George W Bush within the weeks following the 9/11 attacks. He was trying to distinguish between 'terrorist' and 'peaceful' Muslims. Muslims were indiscriminately targeted, and this was made possible by a process whereby 'Terror' became translated into 'Islam' (Mavelli, 2013). The speech located the source of fear and threat as Islamism and in postulating a direct connection between 'Islam' and 'terrorism' fed into a broader discourse which considers radical fundamentalists part of mainstream Islam (Jackson, 2007). Bush drew a line between 'good Muslims' and 'bad Muslims' (Mamdani, 2002), and posed that 'peaceful' Muslims cannot be opposed to hegemonic politics and foreign policy as this would make them terrorists. Mavelli (2013) observes the implication here is that Islam needs to be securitised. This brings me back to the idea of a 'normal' Muslim as posed by the FMTs I interviewed. Is their perception of a normal Muslim the same as the 'peaceful good Muslim' postulated by George W Bush? This was reinforced by Prime Minister Tony Blair in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in London of 7 July 2005, where the translation of 'terror' into 'Islam' was made possible. In 'normalising' themselves in a context of European secular hegemony perhaps some Muslim women are ascribing to the 'good Muslim' label and blending the philosophical and historical religious and political debate. In disrupting the problematic (in Western discourse) and 'Oriental' Muslim woman stereotype perhaps Muslim women themselves are locating a new identity as a normal Muslim woman.

Chapter 5:

Female Muslim Teachers and surveillance in schools

Objective 2: Demonstrate how the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) conceptualises the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education?

This chapter will explore and analyse ideas that were of interest to Foucault (1975), specifically the idea of institutional surveillance and its impact within education. I explore surveillance culture in education and whether Muslims are more at risk of this due to policy agendas. I analyse whether schools are relatively powerless establishments at challenging cultural expectations and stereotypes. I compare panoptic with post-panoptic surveillance, using ***Scenario 1.8*** as an example of modulation, to allow for the integration of individuals into dominant society (Mathiesen, 1997; Bauman and Lyon, 2012). I relate this to the scrutiny faced by some female Muslim teachers by pupils and colleagues. I then look at ethos and inclusivity in schools and whether Muslim teachers feel more pressure to explain/defend or blend in.

5.1 The implication of surveillance culture in education: Are Muslims more at risk of this due to policy agendas?

1.5 Context: 2013, A seminar about the Prevent Agenda at Manchester Metropolitan University, as part of the Masters degree in Education.

Nick - Well in my school there is only one Muslim student, she wears a headscarf so stands out even more. We have the Prevent number printed on our staff badges so in case of an emergency we know exactly what to do.

Louise - Have you ever needed to call it?

Nick - Well I teach this girl RS, I set the class an assignment on the troubles in Israel and Palestine, you know to see her response….

Louise-That's not on the curriculum

Nick- Well I knew she would have interesting viewpoints, best to get it out there and dealt with

Louise- Sounds like you set her up

Nick- She openly expresses her religion by dressing as a Muslim so no I didn't set her up, I gave her an opportunity to share her views

Louise- She's allowed to dress any way she should please, without being set up so you can use your hotline…outrageous

This was a conversation that took place post seminar between professionals working in education. The debate was based around the provisions put in place by different settings to reflect the introduction of the UK government's Prevent Agenda as part of the Terrorism Act 2006 (UK Government, 2006). The comments and actions of Nick in his setting were met with shock by most people at the seminar. ***Well in my school there is only one Muslim student, she wears a headscarf so stands out even more. We have the Prevent number printed on our staff badges so in case of an emergency we know exactly what to do.*** Piro (2008) notes how school architecture can serve as an intensifier of power by defining and promoting what is normal and abnormal, resulting in Foucault's (1995) 'Binary division' (Foucault, 1995 cited in Piro, 2008:41). The failure of this individual to understand how his approach in executing the PVE Agenda might have had a negative impact on the young person he had unfairly targeted was received with dismay. He justified his behaviour towards this student through her overt expression of religiosity. ***Well, I teach this girl RS, I set the class an assignment on the troubles in Israel and Palestine, you know to see her response… She openly expresses her religion by dressing as a Muslim so no I didn't set her up, I gave her an opportunity to share her views.*** Nick targeted this pupil as she presented as a Muslim, there may have been other Muslim pupils in the school but would have gone unnoticed to Nick. There were numerous complaints about this individual post

seminar. Durodie (2016) explores the mechanisms where the language and practice of security seem to be being transformed in education. Durodie (2016) acknowledges the work of several scholars (e.g., Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009; Frawley 2015; Furedi 2003), who have identified aspects of an emerging therapeutic culture in education which impacts on the outlooks of those working in the fields of security rather than the securitisation of education.

Max Weber's 'iron cage' (Weber, 1994), is a concept used to describe how individuals in Western capitalist society are contained in systems based on teleological efficiency to achieve control, coupled with Foucault's conceptualisation (Piro 2008) of populations being disciplined by modern institutions based on assumed power relations. These power relations do not regard the possibility that the contemporary culture of education may influence how security is conceptualised and its application by those in authority. Perhaps there is a sociological shift in education from the transfer of knowledge to the socialisation of children (Evans, 2004; Furedi, 2009; Hayes 2004) and the acceptance of a dominant cultural outlook, which designates security as an assumed necessity. The example provided by ***Scenario 1.5*** emphasises the issues with procedural management through 'expert knowledge' fixated on external threats when the confusions are perhaps more internal and a result of a lack of training with respect to the implementation of the Prevent Duty in schools as part of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 (UK Government, 2015). I would argue that teachers executing the Prevent Agenda act as a kind of regulatory mechanism such as 'CCTV' surveillance in schools. Lawrence and Low (1990:485) comment on the use of surveillance measures such as CCTV in schools to contribute to 'the maintenance of power of one group over another'. More research and empirical assessment is needed to address the impacts of the Prevent policy to address whether the efforts of frontline staff and investment by the government is justified, and to research the effects on the Muslim community, according to Moffat and Gerard (2020).

Davies (2016:12) offers 'positive insecurity' to challenge injustice and describes four major areas: 'inclusivity, encounters with difference, networking and active and non-violent citizenship'. The example provided in ***Scenario 1.5*** represents the essentialization of a dissimilar group because of a securitisation initiative. The teacher's actions in this case do little to dissolve boundaries but instead amplifies the inequalities between teachers and learners. UNICEF UK's Rights Respecting Schools movement (UNESCO, 2011) revolves around the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ultimately increases inclusivity along religious and ethnic lines (Howe and Covelle, 2005). Davies (2016) argues that encounters should not be about increasing stereotypes, but to make boundaries or divides less important. The challenge is in examining identities or as Davies puts it 'engage in a common endeavour and forgetting your origin' (2016:13).

Linked to Davies (2016:12) comment around 'positive insecurity' to challenge injustice, Yasmin touches on several issues including institutional racism that filter from the top down and then at another level with pupils themselves. She feels as part of a minority ethnic group she, along with others, fulfil a quota and that employment is not necessarily based on merit. ***I feel like being in the education sector, I think we are constantly battling the tide with sometimes racism from teachers within teachers, so it's not something that...it filters down, it's the institutional level, it's not something that is just within the students. There are prejudiced views that leaders hold...faculty leaders hold, principles and there is this idea that they have, and I think we're constantly battling that prejudice whether we get the job because they want to make the quota of, "We haven't employed anyone of an ethnic minority," so we have to work not just hard but I feel 10 times harder to justify our jobs.*** She feels that to hold these places in employment minority groups must work harder. Even though Yasmin is quite pragmatic about how she handles prejudice in the workplace she seems to have a defeatist approach to unfairness in the workplace and accepts it as something that can't be changed...***you accept it and it's not something that we can change...But it speaks volumes about their stereotypes.***

Linked to the ideas of surveillance culture in schools and examining identities discussed above, Yasmin explains how she feels conflicted with the pastoral role she has alongside her religious values. This is Yasmin's response to a question about managing tensions between being Muslim and her teacher identity. ***When I've had students say to me they are pregnant and want an abortion or that they want to have sex with their boyfriend when they have been Muslim, and they would like my advice on this.*** Clearly as a Muslim teacher she seems to be a point of reference and a trusted body for her Muslim pupils, especially when there are safeguarding issues that they may wish not to disclose at home. In this way she represents an evolved Muslim in some ways - a Muslim woman in a position of authority who can be trusted by young Muslim women who may have stepped outside of the cultural and religious expectations placed upon them. Yasmin does feel compromised by the pastoral duty she has towards her pupils and her religious views. She comments on always giving a neutral opinion. Yasmin forges her way through situations where she is at odds with her commitments to her faith and profession. She displays a dynamic and hybrid British Islamic identity.

Yasmin provides an example challenging identities and using encounters to decrease stereotypes (Davies 2016), she is confident enough to say to her colleagues that she does not drink alcohol and eats halal food. ***I know I'm very confident with who I am and my religion is who I am, it's something that is very personal to me. So for instance when there's staff events and there's always maybe alcohol brought up or a party thing situation brought up, or a restaurant was brought up where we're discussing where to go, so very early on, "I'm Muslim, I don't drink and I eat halal meat," because I don't feel like I should be ashamed of it, and in actual fact I think I always used to thrive of breaking those bias views of being the best version of myself.*** She thrives on breaking biased views of people around her but at the same time realises the added pressure to be her best. ***But saying that, I think being a Muslim, there is that added pressure to be***

your best because- I'll give you an example. When the terrorist attack happened in the arena, I went into work and some of the teachers were discussing it, and they said, "What do you make of all of this? She uses an example of a time when she felt she had been singled-out as a Muslim to express her feelings about a terrorist attack. ***But why did you physically feel the need to come to me and ask me what I make of this? I said, When Anders Breivik went on the island in Norway and killed, massacred the children of all those political leaders, did you get anyone to come to you and say what did you make of that?*** She handles the situation with conviction and throws it back to her colleague...***when you're a Muslim, you feel like the act of an extremist is almost something that you're guilty for and something that you need to apologise for and something that you need to explain straightaway, "We're not all like this, we're not all like this."*** In challenging her colleague, who perhaps tried to use their power, Yasmin uses her truth to produce a reality, exemplifying that:

> 'Knowledge and power are intimately and productively related to each other, the relationship that ultimately determines the production of truth'
>
> (Basumatary 2020:323)

Foucault describes this as a 'new political anatomy' (Foucault, 1977:208) which relies upon the individualisation of the objects of power and then reconstituting them as objects of knowledge for surveillance.

Panopticism as a technology of power is often applied in education through inspection and is used to explain how teachers perform 'the normal' to evade the inspectors' gaze (Perryman, 2006). Leading examples of panopticism include the clinic and the prison; they signify the surveillance of part of the social (abnormal, prisoner) that have deviated from the norms of society. These spaces represent indirect social control as they are exclusionary spaces for 'normal' people (Basturk, 2017). Foucault argued modern daily-routine spaces such as schools are designed like panoptic spaces with surveillance as the basic element of power. A premise of panopticism as a surveillance mechanism is 'total and conscious visibility' (Courtney, 2016:6), where behaviour modification is achieved through compliance.

Yasmin comments, ***I think being a Muslim, there is that added pressure to be your best.*** This permits differentiation and a hierarchical division and as Courtney (2016), suggests ultimately normalisation of power relations. Yasmin affirms the visibility factor and classifies her religiosity with being ***Muslim at heart***. ***I do feel for the teachers that do kind of battle with that. I mean, I don't wear a hijab, I don't look like a Muslim but I am one in my heart.*** In the experience of some of her peers, wearing the hijab has had negativity associated with it. ***I have friends that have worn scarves, have a bit of an accent, and they've had bordering racist challenges in the classroom.*** Perhaps subconsciously Yasmin is adhering to the compliance issue, and I would argue that this provides an example of panopticism operating through fear. Yasmin is aware of the 'gaze' and provides an example of teachers who have faced challenges because of wearing the hijab. I discuss literature around how Muslim women negotiate and shift their behaviour to subvert dominant perceptions in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.3.2, p42). This idea can be used to explain Yasmin's stance. Perhaps she feels she cannot be scrutinised by the panoptic gaze if she does not look like a Muslim and in this way has modified her behaviour as a precautionary measure. Aminah feels the need to correct the view of colleagues that may be too generalised. ***I wouldn't say it's tension but even staff can have perceptions that are not genuine…that are too general and again, it's about talking to them about it, understanding where…which perspective they're coming from.*** She points out that she feels a need to understand their perspectives but also explain the perspectives of the Asian Muslim communities. She feels quite confident in doing this and takes a balanced view.

5.2 The role of schools in challenging cultural expectations and stereotypes

1.4 Context: 2010, Secondary, Independent Girls school in Manchester.

Mr Nixon- Hello, how would you feel about being the supervisor of Hindu Assembly every Thursday morning?

Me-	Okay, do I need to be Hindu to do that?
Mr Nixon-	Are you not Hindu? The principal said you are.
Me-	No, I'm a Muslim.
At this point the staff near us stopped their conversation and looked my way.	
Mr Nixon-	Oh…I will let the Head know.
Me-	Thanks for the offer, though. I can help with Muslim Assembly.
Mr Nixon-	No, that's a job for the Director of Studies.
Me-	Oh, is he a Muslim?
Mr Nixon-	No.
Bell for end of break.	

This conversation took place in the second week of my post in this school. The head of Religious Studies, Mr Nixon approached me in the staffroom and asked me to supervise Hindu Assembly. He had no idea that I'm a Muslim. ***Are you not Hindu? The principal said you are.*** His reaction was one of shock, as was that of the staff listening in on the conversation. It made me wonder if I was employed under the false impression of my religious affiliation. Aminah's responds to ***Scenario 1.4***, she comments on a lack of cultural awareness on the part of the headteacher as she assumed I was a Hindu because I didn't look Muslim enough. ***Obviously, this person has got a perception of what a Muslim looks like, I mean a head teacher. Maybe that person needs to be obviously a bit more culturally aware.*** This shows a certain degree of a lack of awareness on the part of senior leaders in educational settings. Davies (2016:14) discusses the key to change is no longer 'to nurture visionary educational leaders and school principals' but will depend on the networks they create or not between clusters of schools, teachers and students exchanging ideas and problems. For the eight years I held a post in this school I was the only Muslim

member of staff. This was not reflective of an ever-increasing cohort of Muslim girls as part of this group. When I offered to supervise Muslim assembly instead, he declined and said…***No, that's a job for the Director of Studies.*** The Director of Studies is not a Muslim. I held a post in this school for eight years and remained the only Muslim teacher in my time at one of the most academically successful independent girls' schools in England. I tried to understand the historically transmitted patterns of meaning including the values, beliefs, ceremonies, norms, traditions that have transcended over the decades, unchanged, by members of the school community. These represent this school's culture; Brooks and Miles (2010), suggest that the culture of the school affects the entirety of the organisation and comprises several different dynamics. There are unwritten rules about behaviour, norms and values. Fraise and Brooks (2015:6) argue that 'school culture' should be rejected as a construct. They suggest that schools should not be seen as places of potential cultural conflict, where cultural diversity can be 'detrimental' to the normative constructs of success. They challenge the assumption that school culture can be seen as 'monolithic', and the role 'culturally relevant leadership' can play in building bridges. Instead, they propose that cultures and subcultures are individual, not collective and that they flow in and out of schools continuously. They suggest cultures should be understood rather than changed. They argue that members of a school community should define their own values instead of having them prescribed. As a Muslim teacher employed possibly with the pretext of appearing to be Hindu, I navigated the school's visible and hidden cultures for several years. In practice, the suggestions made by Fraise and Brooks (2015) are challenging and are contrary to the ideas I explore in my analysis of ***Scenario 1.4***. For example, if a school's 'culture' is to employ staff of a certain demographic then that is their prerogative and then there is no cultural flow. ***Scenario 1.4*** is an example of school leadership defining the culture in the school. As a Muslim member of staff, I was an ideal candidate to supervise Muslim assembly. This raises the question as to why this was ***a job for the Director of Studies***? This was a perfect opportunity for cultures to flow naturally and progressively. This infers that the issue is a structural one and will take more than individual construct to bring about understanding. Yasmin points out the lack of knowledge and awareness that might exist amongst

senior leaders in the school...***they don't have an awareness, they don't have the knowledge of the different religions, and the huge differences in the practice of them.*** She is referring to ***Scenario 1.4*** where senior leaders assumed that I am a Hindu as perhaps I don't appear to look like their preconceived notion of a Muslim.

Leaders in schools internalise the definition of success (Hoyle and Wallace, 2007), and apply surveillance to try to ensure the practice of all staff comply with the ideal. This connects with cultures of managerialism and bureaucratic systems that have little space for individuals, culture and religion (Gulson, 2012).

An example of neoliberal policy discourses acting to proliferate differences is through the privatisation of education. Brown (2006) suggests that this leads to differences vacating the public sphere and thereby being reduced to a cultural problem. The setting in ***Scenario 1.4*** is an independent girl's school with a majority white demographic which is non-representative of the socio-geographic location of the school. This may explain discourses taken up by some schools that are associated with neoliberal policies that reconfigure relationships and power dynamics. These policies in effect determine who belongs in a particular space, such as a school setting, relevant to staff and pupils. The definition of compliance in education could be seen as problematic as there is a range of possible responses, especially where unequal power relations exist (Strain, 2009). The implementation of the Prevent Agenda, discussed in the literature review, to varying and discretionary degrees is an example of this and is affirmed by the narrative in ***Scenario 1.5*** (pages 121-122), I have always wondered if I presented as visibly Muslim whether I would have been employed by an institution where my individual culture may have been problematic. Fullan (2011) explains that when school leaders fail to value the complexities of race, subcultures, gender, religious difference and sexuality in their teachers they create schools that operate from a 'stuck' position, however school cultures do vary widely and are not static, as exemplified by my experience in a contrasting context (***Scenario 1.8)*** below:

Scenario 1.8 was an exchange at the staff table in the dining hall of my very first post as a Newly Qualified Teacher.

1.8 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school.

Mr Sharston - You sure you have enough food there?

Me- Love fish and chips, it's Friday, think I deserve it

Mr Hirst- She probably doesn't get fed at home

Mr Sharston and Mr Hirst laugh

Me- What do you mean by that?

Mr Hirst- You know with your Pakistani husband, surprised he lets you out of the house, arranged marriage, was it?

Mr Sharston and Mr Hirst are both middle aged white men; lunch was provided for by the school free of charge to staff. At the time, I remember feeling overwhelmed by their comments and wished I had the confidence to respond. ***She probably doesn't get fed at home.*** With hindsight I realised my reasons for staying quiet. They clearly had developed views about Asian culture. ***You know with your Pakistani husband, surprised he lets you out of the house, arranged marriage, was it?*** I was the only Asian teacher in the school and felt singled out, 'When BME teachers are appointed, they often experience isolation or 'exclusion' within the school' (Bush et al., 2006). I was very new to the school and profession and didn't know how to tackle their views. There was also a secret irony in the conversation as I did fit their stereotype. They may have made their comments in jest; however, there was more than an element of truth to what they were insinuating. I did have an arranged marriage; my husband was from Pakistan and I did have to fight to work against my husband's wishes. The comment about not getting fed at home

bothered me on more levels as it made me feel like a thing that needed to be fed by someone, even though I was holding my own and clearly employed and earning in my own right. I was left feeling transparent, an open book, as though my background and personal situation was apparent, visible to all and was something that should be concealed.

5.3 School ethos and inclusivity: Are Muslim teachers under pressure to explain/defend or blend in?

Scenario 1.7 is an exchange between my Subject Mentor, Miss Khan and myself. This setting was my first experience in a school, as a trainee teacher.

1.7 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18. In conversation with my subject mentor.

Miss Khan - So the school organises an Eid do Uzma, you should come. I get proper dressed up in Eid clothes, the kids love it. They ask loads of questions though.

Me - About what?

Miss Khan - Well they know I don't fast during Ramadan and stuff.

Me- Why don't you fast?

Miss Khan - I can't give up the fags (laughs) I like a drink now and then too, only with my fella though.

Me - Are you married to a non-Muslim?

Miss Khan- Oh he's Muslim, but we're not married yet, we live together. It's a long story…I was forced to marry my cousin in Pakistan, I didn't want to call him over when I got back to the UK, fell out with my parents and moved in with my boyfriend.

Me -	Wow
Miss Khan-	Yeah the kids in the school know my story, everyone knows someone who knows someone in this town, can't really keep it quiet…and look at me, I dress how I want to, if I want to show my body and go to a nightclub with my man I will, gives people more to talk about.
Me -	Do the kids in the school ever say anything to you?
Miss Khan-	They wouldn't dare, my boyfriend does security at the Tesco near school, kids know him, they know they would get their heads smashed in by him if they ever dared to say anything to me.
Me -	What about the Muslim teachers in the school?
Miss Khan-	(Laughs) Well the women live in their own little backward world, and I couldn't give a shit and the men are just men, Muslim or not, I keep them sweet have a little banter and a flirt, they love it. They know my story and what I've been through, if you want to get ahead you need to keep the white crowd sweet, have you noticed SLT in the school are all white? All the Asians are just classroom teachers and TAs. SLT have sympathy for me and that's what matters. You will learn, you're new to this.
Me -	I didn't realise it was like this in schools, Manchester schools are more multicultural.
Miss Khan-	Yes but racism exists everywhere. You will get used to it.

I instantly warmed towards Miss Khan when I started my placement. She liked me on a personal level too as I didn't judge her and instead found her life choices

intriguing. She would always be ready to answer my questions and I felt she felt she finally had an Asian 'friend' in the school. I had never met anyone like her before. Her, what might be described by some as, very western or liberal dress sense (for a Muslim woman), her use of vulgar language, her cigarette breaks during the day, her open admission to drinking alcohol, her living in 'sin' with her boyfriend, the way she carried herself with such confidence. As a Muslim woman working in a school where most of the female Muslim staff wore the hijab, I felt I stood out. Miss Khan made me feel better relatively, as she provided a greater talking point amongst staff – sometimes I would overhear these conversations but always felt a sense of loyalty towards her.

I admired how she had the audacity to openly live her life the way she wanted to. She seemed to not be concerned about cultural pressures and instead exemplified the complexity between an individual's culture and his/her ability to exercise choice. Bullock (2007:215) explains that choice is restricted by the range between '...what a culture considers acceptable and unacceptable'. It seems from her point of view there is an acceptance from her peers (majority group) when she breaks the traditional norms of her own culture. It makes me question whether there is an acceptance from the majority group when an individual from the minority attempts to 'breakaway'. Does this complicate and raise further questions about integrity and ideals of certain members of the minority group? This was my first exposure to what it might entail being a Muslim Asian teacher and raised many questions including why Miss Khan was so accepting of prejudice? ***...racism exists everywhere. You will get used to it.*** I tried to locate responsibility in this acceptance of discrimination; I was left wondering whether it was okay because Miss Khan is inferring racism is institutional and as I have subscribed to the institution by choosing to become a teacher, I am therefore now part of it and should feel absolved from blame. Did the responsibility (Spivak, 1994) lie with my mentor as she should know better as the 'other', or perhaps that is the issue here: the person I see as the 'other' in this ***Scenario*** is trying her best to belong to the 'majority' group. This is perhaps deeper than an identity crisis and more damaging

than institutional racism as the victims of discrimination could be perceived as passive perpetrators.

Miss Khan's admission that it was important to her to keep the ***white crowd sweet*** to get ahead is interesting. Her apparent un-Islamic behaviour would assist in her appearing to blend in with that group. I analyse the notion of 'whiteness' and 'belonging to a group' in Chapter 4.

In a similar vein, Aminah attempts to validate and justify her position to her colleagues by explaining her experiences of wearing – and not wearing - the hijab: ***I normally say I have the experience wearing the hijab and not wearing the hijab.*** By offering this to her colleagues does it rationalise her choice to a degree as they are better informed about the process behind her decision to wear the hijab? Is she offering a common ground by pointing out that she has experienced not wearing the hijab but chooses to wear it having tried the alternative? Perhaps she is keen to portray this as it removes the stereotype about Muslim women being forced into certain behaviours. From a professional standing she is trying to show that through the operation of personal choice: she is not being brainwashed or coerced into adopting cultural or religious norms. Kirmani (2009) challenges the category of 'Muslim women' in her study where she uses the narratives of Muslim women to challenge stable group boundaries. In doing this, it moves the narrative away from over-simplification and generalisation, but instead offers the diverse and complex ways that women react to discourses of categorisation. In her own way, Aminah contends with categories in her narrative by offering to her non-Muslim colleagues a more composite version to the stereotypical hijab wearing Muslim woman. Through her justification she is constructing a cohesive place for herself within the 'host' (Afshar et al., 2005:278) society. I discuss the hyper-visibility of hijab wearing Muslim women and the responsibility they feel to represent Islam in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.3.4, p31). In this way Aminah creates a feminist political identity that supersedes the stereotypes of minority Muslim groups.

Zaynab tries to understand the ignorance of a member of staff by providing a rationale for their attitude. ***They do it without knowing. You know, little things that they say.*** She almost tries to vindicate them by suggesting it is not necessary to understand a minority group in a majority society as it would ***put them out***. ***Then there was another trainee there who was brown skin colour and she couldn't figure out whether it was me or her that she needed to speak to. So, she kept saying my name and then she kept saying her name, and it was a little…it was a little bit upsetting for people. You're obviously thinking two brown people, it's going to one of them, which one is it? That was really like really, are you serious? We need to know who you want to speak to before putting you in that situation or putting yourself in that situation, making yourself look stupid. I didn't say anything to her obviously, but it makes you feel like you are an outsider.*** She tries to avoid the racist undercurrent in the situation she has described, however she did state that it made her feel like an outsider. The juxtaposition of how a member of staff made her feel and Zaynab's own approachability about being a Muslim is insightful. ***They're not going to put themselves out and understand our different religion especially when you're only one of the only other religions there. Then how can you maybe teach it?*** Zaynab is very forthcoming and proactive in wanting to change attitudes towards Muslims and chooses to deal with racist views to try and protect herself. This is in reference to management creating a space for Muslim teachers to pray. ***So, someone somewhere had the discussion.*** Even though there are only two Muslim teachers in the school they have been accommodating.

Sabah acknowledges that adults (staff) would have a wider exposure to people of different religions and therefore felt more comfortable displaying religiosity around them. ***Obviously, members of staff are educated, they have exposure, they know about different religions, et cetera, they've been to universities and lived with or whatever, dealt with different individuals in all walks of life.*** An example of this is asking for a prayer room in school but at the same time she mentions keeping the

door locked when she prays. ***I was provided any room that I could use for my prayer, but I used to make sure that the door was locked so no student would walk in, because then I don't know what their reaction would be if they saw me doing that because they'd probably be like, "What is she doing"?*** I discuss the degree of emancipation that Muslim women exhibit and the construction of social norms in the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.3.5, p45). Staff become aware that Sabah is a Muslim during social situations when drinking alcohol is a factor. Sabah feels a cultural affiliation to the Indian member of staff. ***So, my colleagues know I'm Muslim only because of my surname and I think maybe not all of them know that because it's not a very common Arab name anyway but my head of my department does but because she's Indian, and so she knows that I'm Muslim.*** She feels members of staff assume she is not a Muslim until she points out otherwise...***they speak about going for a drink or this and that, so I don't think they know that I'm Muslim and that's when I say to them I don't drink so they're, "All right, okay." So that's where I know because they probably didn't think that I was Muslim.*** Her reference to staff perhaps knowing she's a Muslim through her surname shows that she is aware of factors that may allude to her Muslim identity. Kandiyoti (1991) argues religious identity cannot be disconnected or isolated from societal factors and positions as all identities are relational. Sabah prefers to eat with fellow staff members rather than drinking alcohol. ***So I do go out with them socially but we end up going for meals or if they're going for a drink they'll obviously say, "Right, we'll meet for a meal first," so I don't- and if I have gone out, I'd just order a coke but it's limited interaction in that respect unless we're going out for meals and stuff but not if they're going out for drinks only so I tend not to go if they're just going out for drinks because they know I'm not going to drink anyway.*** Sabah mentions her interactions are limited to non-drinking social contexts. Sabah does not feel that not socialising with staff hinders her professionally or their perception of her. She feels she has built strong relationships with her colleagues and is self-assured and confident with who she is. ***I think I'm very confident and self-assured in terms of who I am***. She feels if not drinking alcohol was ever going to be a barrier it would have been at university.

Zaynab references a time when she went out with a colleague who did not drink alcohol out of respect to her. ***Of course, I'm getting asked all types of questions, why don't you drink? How do you have a good time without drinking? And that's just not kids; that's adults as well.*** Her colleague surprised herself by having a good time. ***The next day, in fact, that evening she called me and said, I have just had the best evening ever. And I don't understand because I didn't drink.*** Zaynab feels she has somewhat changed the mindset of a colleague by demonstrating her way of life in a positive way, perhaps exerting her individual agency. In some ways Zaynab has challenged normalisation of behaviour to conform (discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.4, p94).

5.4 How do pupils react to Muslim teachers?

In my first year of teaching, as an NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher), the following conversation (***Scenario 1.9)*** took place between the Head of Sixth Form, Mr Roberts and me.

1.9 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18.	
Me-	I'm having a few issues with Abdul. If I make any suggestions during our weekly meets, he ignores me…it's as though I'm not in the room
Mr Roberts-	Hmm, he's from a very traditional Muslim background.
Me-	What does that have to do with it?
Mr Roberts-	He has mentioned a few things….
Me-	Such as?
Mr Roberts-	Look it's my fault for suggesting you supervise the Muslim

	Committee, it's run by lads obviously and some of them may think you're not the right fit…
Me-	Because I don't wear a hijab?
Mr Roberts-	Look, don't take it personally but these kids don't really respect Asian women, it's the culture. You're young and yes you look a certain way, in your culture women don't really have strong positions. These lads don't even listen to their mothers, you know this already, they respond better to men. You don't have to do it anymore if you don't want to.

I was the only Muslim member of staff, so he had asked me to supervise the Muslim Committee. This was a committee run by Muslim Sixth Form students. The members of the Committee were all male - the first thing I noticed. My role was supervisory but also required an element of providing guidance to the students. I was met with hostility from the young men; some of them had very strong Islamic views and I presented as problematic for them. ***Look it's my fault for suggesting you supervise the Muslim Committee; it's run by lads obviously and some of them may think you're not the right fit.*** When I tried to talk to them at times some of them would lower their gaze and didn't manage to make eye contact with me. ***Look, don't take it personally but these kids don't really respect Asian women, it's the culture. You're young and yes you look a certain way, in your culture women don't really have strong positions. These lads don't even listen to their mothers, you know this already, they respond better to men. You don't have to do it anymore if you don't want to***. Despite the Head of Sixth Form suggesting I give up the role, I persevered and noticed a change in the pupils when I started to attend Friday prayers – for which I did wear a hijab. I felt I had earned their respect somewhat, but only after they could see a level of conformity on my part. There are

many stereotypes in the narrative of ***Scenario 1.9***, for example patriarchy amongst all cultures and religions and teenagers of all genders refusing those in positions of authority. Some Muslim boys do respect their mothers. Many families, including Muslim, recognise and respect the role of women as leaders in the family. Equally there is a case for same gender groups preferring leaders/advisors of the same gender to navigate what might be regarded as sensitive and complicated terrain. The Head of Sixth Form could have handled the conversation in a more sensitive way taking the above factors into account.

Sabah highlights a distinctive experience to that of mine, where she offers her views around expressing her faith to non-Muslim pupils. This is Sabah's response to me asking her if it would change her pupils' relationship with her if they saw her praying. Sabah is apprehensive about pupils seeing her in a different way and refers to it as the unknown for them. ***I think if they saw me doing that, they would be confused about what it is I'm doing and, yes, maybe see me… I wouldn't say see me differently but yes, possibly that initially, if they see me do that, it's like the unknown, isn't it? And I wouldn't say fear of the unknown but confused by the unknown. And then, unless they spoke to me about it and unless they discuss it with me or ask me, "Miss, what is it that you were doing?" and sort of like breaking that barrier, I don't know if they would feel the same way.*** She places the onus on the pupils for breaking the barrier, which I find intriguing. She has trepidation about not being seen in the same way. She clearly has an image or persona which she wants to uphold and does not see this is an opportunity to explore, or add to, her pupils' perceptions of Muslims and the act of worship in Islam. Sabah conceals this part of her life, perhaps to avoid experiencing potential harm from stereotypes and microaggressions . When asked whether she feels she is living almost a dual life in school, Sabah answers 'yes' with reference to praying, but she is happy to share her choice to abstain from consuming alcohol as part of her religious practice with her pupils. Perhaps this is because choosing to drink or not is a socio-cultural choice and not always something associated with religious beliefs. She is selective about the parts of her faith and her choices associated with faith

that she wants to outwardly express. ***In terms of my prayers, yes. But in terms of any other practice, no. Because, I mean, I don't drink and I'm very vocal about that, I fast-… But yeah, I would say that, you know, not with the members of staff but definitely with the students because I feel that students in that context have very limited knowledge. I mean, I'd had my PGCE experience in a Jewish faith school as well, I won't feel awkward or uncomfortable, but I'd never feel that I'm living a dual life in that context because they themselves have a religion that they follow so they understand what religion could mean for other individuals. But in this context, with so many white pupils who have very, very limited exposure to any life around apart from within the areas that they belong to, so yes.*** She says she would feel more comfortable expressing herself in the Jewish context due to the commonality in religiosity. It is an interesting alignment she draws here with a Jewish context being hypothetically more accepting of her beliefs than those in a secular context. She also assumes that her white pupils' exposure to life is limited by their geographics. She uses this as grounds to make choices about how she chooses to represent herself as a Muslim woman.

Yasmin consciously decided not to tell her class that she is a Muslim until the end of the discussion...***towards the end of the lesson I said that I'm also a Muslim, and lot of them...I believe that a lot of the Muslim children or students in the class, they did seem to smile a little bit towards me because at this point I wasn't actually...I was omitting it, I wasn't saying it, but then I am proud of my religion.*** Perhaps she wanted the discussion to take place without apparent bias from herself, but at the same time she chose to share this information at the end of the lesson. Pupil-teacher connection is important to Yasmin...***students make that first impression straightaway, and then when I open my mouth and I begin to speak or I begin to deliver, I'm well-spoken and I don't necessarily have the accent that they might expect to come out of me, I think they do tend to respect that a little bit more.*** She has an assumption that her pupils would expect her to have an accent and feels she starts to build a relationship based on first impressions by being well spoken or delivering her lesson well. Sabah refers to being professional and not

disclosing fasting during Ramadan earlier in this conversation, yet she discloses that she is fasting to Muslim students when asked directly. ***My Muslim students knew I was fasting because they'd ask me, "Miss, are you fasting today?" And I'd say yes and there have been other non-Muslim students around them at that time, but nobody questioned it.*** Sabah highlights interventions made by the school to promote inclusion and create awareness. ***Oh, yes during form time once, during Ramadan, the school tries to be very inclusive so what they did was that during form time they have presentation about what fasting is, why Muslims fast this and that, and I think there was a general, "Oh my God, I didn't know the Muslims had to not eat for the whole day."*** What strikes me about her response here is that she is aware of the non-Muslims around her when doing this; how she is perceived by others is very important to her and she connects non-disclosure about being a Muslim with being professional.

Aminah has built rapport with her students and mentions she has been in the school for several years. It is intriguing that she felt they needed time to adjust to her before she could be forthcoming with answering questions. ***Initially they were quite reluctant to ask any questions. Now because they're comfortable, they can ask me anything and I actually give them the opportunity to ask me questions.*** This is an assumption she has made about her students and is a stereotype in itself. Aminah identifies a link between Muslim women and their physical appearance as perceived by her pupils. She points out common questions around why they wear the hijab and why all Muslim women don't wear it...***they've been scared to ask or if they have, the only kind of question they have been asked is things to do with physical appearance.*** Perhaps as a Muslim woman who does wear the hijab Aminah is more likely to be asked these questions as opposed to a non-hijab wearing Muslim woman...***how come all Muslim women don't wear it?***

Sabah refers to the following several times in the interview: ***I would say that, you know, not with the members of staff but definitely with the students because I***

feel that students in that context have very limited knowledge. She feels more comfortable expressing her faith and being herself around staff compared to her pupils. This is Sabah responding to ***Scenario 1.6,*** she works in a similar context to that mentioned in this ***Scenario*** in terms of demographics and geography and so can relate to the views expressed by these pupils. She has understanding and is sensitive to the formation of stereotypes against some Muslims. ***I think the reason why I'm not surprised is just because I feel that students, young people actually, they form their worldview based on the areas that they're living in, whether that's coming from home, whether that's coming from television, whether that's coming from their circle of family and friends. So, if their circle of family or friends is predominantly white and they don't have that exposure to anyone else, you can't really blame them for having that. So, it might not necessarily be a racist thing, it might just be an ignorant thing.*** She points out the factors involved in forming pupils' responses towards some Muslims and alludes to their lack of exposure to Muslims. She refers to the media, circle of friends/family and pupils' geographics as facets that may have a major influence on stereotype formation. She attempts to rule out racism and instead attributes attitudes to ignorance. I feel she chooses not to disrupt the status quo; having a privileged position as a Muslim teacher she chooses to avoid conversations which may manifest her as the 'other' and prefers to blend in.

In conclusion, Section 5.4 has examples of dialogues that represent dichotomies or binary positions between teacher and pupil. For example, male pupils/female teacher in ***Scenario 1.9*** and Sabah displaying or concealing Muslim/non-Muslim traits such as praying and fasting. Further examples are, Sabah noting differences in pupil perception in religious/secular settings and Yasmin disclosing/not disclosing her faith to pupils. Aminah contemplates wearing the hijab/or not with her pupils and Sabah inferring whether her pupils have had exposure/no exposure to Muslims relative to geographical factors. The positions described are irreconcilable when perceived through an orientalist lens as for Said this is how the West becomes the West (Said 2014), see literature review (Chapter 2).

Chapter 6:

Female Muslim Teachers as Role Models: pressures and practices

Objective 3: To identify the significant transactions for FMTs in educational contexts that have implications for teaching practice.

6.1 Muslim women in the classroom: Issues around disclosure and responsibility to act as role models

In this section I explore classroom issues around disclosure and the responsibility some Muslim women feel in acting as role models to their pupils. I question whether Muslim teachers must work harder to create the 'human' connection with their pupils and whether sharing life-stories supports the pupil-teacher relationship. I look at the autonomy of Muslim teachers in the classroom and finally investigate the spaces for dialogue in education.

Scenario 1.2 is a conversation that took place between me and two Year 10 boys during a science lesson.

1.2 Context: 2020, Year 10 boys, in a South Manchester high school with a high percentage of BAME pupils

Mohamad - Just ask her…

Yusuf - Nah

Me - Ask me what?

Yusuf - It doesn't matter Miss, I don't want to offend you

Mohamad - Basically Miss…

Yusuf - Miss are you a Muslim?

Me - Interesting…why would I be offended by that? (To Yusuf) What I would like to know is what made you wonder that?

Yusuf - It's just that he (gestures to Mohamad) thinks you are, but I think you're not.

Me - Why would you think I'm not a Muslim?

Yusuf - Because I'm Somalian and all the Muslim women I know wear a hijab and you don't

Me - Tell me something (to Yusuf) did you get up at 5am to offer your Fajr prayers?

Yusuf - No I didn't

Me - I did

Yusuf - Oh

Me - So the answer to your question is yes, I am a Muslim and I pray my five a day or at least try to.

Mohamad - That's really good Miss

Me - Let me ask you both something, do all the hijab wearing women you know perform their five salahs a day?

Mohamad and Yusuf - No

Me - Let me tell you something which might get you thinking…I watched a documentary a while ago about the treatment of women in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. The thing that struck me the most was that sex workers would wear the full veil. So, let me ask you a question, is religion something that is outwardly expressed or can it be a personal thing?

Mohamad -	I've never thought about it like that Miss
Yusuf -	True, but in Somalian culture women have to wear it, there isn't a choice.
Me -	So when I was your age, so we're talking about the 1990s in my high school there was a huge influx of Somalian refugees. When I drive through Moss Side and Hulme I notice that first and second generation Somalian women present themselves in a more modern way to their refugee past generations. In a few decades time we could be having a very different conversation.
Yusuf -	Miss you've really got me thinking
Mohamad -	Yes me too
Me -	Me too (all laugh) let's get on with our work.

I have been asked this question a few times in my career, ***Miss are you a Muslim?*** which makes me wonder how many pupils have thought about, whether I am a Muslim. This conversation struck me as poignant as firstly Yusuf is of Somalian ethnicity and there seems to be (in Yusuf's view) a cultural requirement for Somalian women to appear a certain way...***Because I'm Somalian and all the Muslim women I know wear a hijab and you don't.*** The Somalian viewpoint is something I haven't come across before. According to Rassool (1999), Somalians have a more traditional approach to religion. Secondly, if I compare my reaction to the pupils in ***Scenario 1.1***, I can see a clear disparity between how I react to my identity being questioned. ***Let me tell you something which might get you thinking…I watched a documentary a while ago about the treatment of women in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. The thing that struck me the most was that sex***

workers would wear the full veil. So, let me ask you a question, is religion something that is outwardly expressed, or can it be a personal thing? As a classroom teacher I am more equipped at handling questions around identity and exposing reflexive spaces for dialogue. ***So, when I was your age, so we're talking about the 1990s in my high school there was a huge influx of Somalian refugees. When I drive through Moss Side and Hulme, I notice that first and second-generation Somalian women present themselves in a more modern way to their refugee past generations. In a few decades time we could be having a very different conversation***. Thirdly, there is a clear impact of this dialogue on the pupils and possibly others listening in on the conversation. ***Miss, you've really got me thinking.*** Ulvund (2018) discusses how working with life-stories in the classroom can strengthen meaning-making and democracy:

> Life stories are potentially valuable both to the individual and to the immediate cultural and social classroom context. Furthermore, it helps to locate the knowledge close to each individual and based in interaction.
>
> (Ulvund 2018:2)

I felt I had established a level of respect with these Muslim boys, which is secondary to the respect I have gained by just being their science teacher and teaching them well. The conversation says a lot about rapport through communication as well. At first, they were reluctant to ask, but when they did it wasn't an uncomfortable conversation. When contrasted with ***Scenario 1.1*** (section 4.1), ***Scenario 1.2*** shows my adeptness in dealing with the identity question. The two ***Scenarios*** are also thirteen years apart, which speaks to my personal growth as a practitioner and as a teacher-researcher. Although the overarching theme with both ***Scenarios*** is my identity being under question by pupils, ***Scenario 1.1*** is about ethnicity whereas ***Scenario 1.2*** is about religion. Both data extracts are reflections of contextual disparities and represent socio-geographic microcosms.

Yasmin offers her journey to her pupils to inspire them to have high aspirations. ***I tried to tell them that in a way to inspire them that it doesn't matter the circumstances you might find yourself in, the most important factor is you and***

what you do with those circumstances. She presents as a Muslim woman who has prevailed in adverse conditions, and this allows her to embed a human connection with her pupils. ***I try to be very inspirational in that way and then let an understanding, and I think it makes me more human towards them, and it's always created that instant connection because a lot of the students have also...they might not necessarily be deprived kind of they're from but it maybe that this is with family problems or they might have parents with mental health conditions, or they might have addiction or something like they're battling elsewhere.*** Sarwar (1996) comments on the responsibility placed on teachers to combine knowledge and practice. Yasmin is willing to share her challenges, not all teachers feel comfortable to share their personal stories with their pupils as it can exemplify a vulnerability and a person in a position of power as unguarded. ***But the main message that I try to get across is perseverance and resilience and the fact that you can overcome the challenges.*** Equally, if a good teacher-pupil relationship is established that it can act to strengthen that dynamic as Bruner (1986), explains storytelling can be utilised to seek understanding and interpretation, with the goal being meaning-making and ultimately reflection. How are these reflections organised in the classroom dynamic and what is the understanding that is generated dependent upon?

Yasmin feels the constant challenge in offering guidance to young people but at the same time not encroaching on the way they choose to live their lives. ***I think it's really important that we allow young people to make their own decisions because ultimately, they're the ones that have to live with them, but it is a constant challenge with regards to that.*** This stems from her own Muslim ideals, which she projects to her pupils by offering them snippets of her own life and ultimately acting as a role model. ***And when you are a role model, I think it's really important that you act accordingly as well. So, in terms of some of the information that you give the students about your own life, I think it's really important because they do look up to me.*** Mogra (2010) points to how traditionally in Islam teachers are afforded high esteem and make significant contributions to communities and share

their wisdom. Yasmin feels the pressure of representing herself in the best Muslim way possible. ***I think being a Muslim, there is that added pressure to be your best.*** It is important to examine the epistemology and ontology of Muslim education and historical and religious backgrounds. According to Mogra (2010:317), the spreading of knowledge and wisdom was the driving force behind the 'sunnah' (practice) model exemplified by the prophet Muhammad (pbuh), as an educator:

> In addition, Muhammed was the refiner of characters and purifier of the souls of his first students. Hence the Muslim teacher assumes the role of developing students intellectually, providing nourishment for their souls and moulding their personality.
>
> (Mogra 2010:321)

Mogra (2008) questions whether there is a need to create awareness amongst contemporary Muslim teachers to adopt the model of Muhammad.

Zaynab has had a very open approach even when training as a teacher. ***Even for my PGCE and when I was so open, I felt like my students understood me more. Therefore, if they understood me more, they're going to understand my religion and other religions more acceptingly.*** She felt having this approach helped to build rapport with her pupils and therefore help them to understand her way of life. Her pupils are very candid and pose questions to her directly related to her way of life...***They'll stop me in the corridor and say, "Miss, are you fasting today?"*** As a Teacher of Religious Studies, she has the curriculum space to enable her to probe her pupils and challenge their views if needs be. ***All the questions...radicalization, prejudice, discrimination, what they think of it? How does that make them feel? So having those talks around them helps them to deal with questions and answers that they wouldn't ask anybody else. Maybe situations that I can explain as an older person that someone their age couldn't explain to them very well.*** Zaynab approaches the pupil-teacher dynamic with a sense of parity. She is learning from their responses and sensibilities as much as they are from her. ***I felt that my students were teaching me more about anything, you know.*** Perhaps it is this

congruence which allows the space for valuable dialogue. The benefit of narrative discourse in the classroom supports not only individual meaning-making and a space for individual stories but allows for connections through negotiating personal as well as common values. ***I was just giving them information, but then what they did with it, and they threw it back at me through their writing, though the questioning was a lot more. So now yes, I feel like a role model and I can teach my children and I can help them understand life experiences as a Muslim ...as a British Muslim growing up, even to some Muslim students who are finding it difficult.*** She extends the benefits of these discussions to her Muslim students too, even though they are a minority in her setting she can see the benefits to them, which suggests that the motivations of some Muslim teachers to act as role models can be situated contextually. The fact that some Muslim teachers choose to withhold their Muslim identity highlights this point. Sabah does not explicitly reveal her Muslim identity to pupils. ***It never felt like they view me as anything else or anything more or anything less, it's just the teacher irrespective of what my name is or irrespective of my colour, irrespective of my religion so they've never really made any assumptions actually.*** She wants to be seen as just their teacher irrespective of name, colour, or religion. This answer from Sabah was a response to my question about whether her not being open about being a Muslim might change with experience. She responded with a 'yes' and attributed her decision to being an NQT. She does make a distinction between staff and pupils and relates this to the greater exposure adults may have to different kinds of people. Sabah does not see this as an opportunity to make her pupils aware of differences but chooses to conceal her own differences. ***I had spoken to them about a prayer room and they provided me with a prayer room, but would I be comfortable being seen in a hijab praying in front of my students? Most certainly not because I feel that they wouldn't understand what it is that I'm doing.*** Sabah clearly is not comfortable being seen as a Muslim or practising her religion in front of her students. ***I used to make sure that the door was locked so no student would walk in, because then I don't know what their reaction would be if they saw me doing that because they'd probably be like, what is she doing?*** This shows that Sabah is attentive to

the effects of the Orientalist stereotypes and gendered Islamophobia. According to Zine (2006):

> …developing a framework for diversely oriented and ideologically situated Muslim women to collaborate in the struggle against common oppressions is a contemporary challenge.
>
> (Zine, 2006:21)

Mogra (2010) suggests where Muslim teachers work in secular communities, they should apply the educational implications, (discussed on page 148) derived from Muhammad considering a specific historical context. Mogra comments that Muslim teachers in Britain should embrace two approaches: faith and professionalism. He goes on to advocate the significance of diverse role models and a heterogeneous Muslim teaching workforce in Britain. Sabah displays the flexibility Mogra refers to, in her response to a question I asked around feeling more comfortable discussing her faith with Muslim students. ***I think it's because of the context that I'm teaching in, I feel that those students don't have much exposure to Muslims and Islam in general and they might have certain misconceptions and I think in terms of discussing anything about religion or me being Muslim.*** She feels she has a duty to address misconceptions students may have around religion and Muslims as they do not have that exposure in this setting. I find it interesting how Sabah takes a differing view on how she tackles questions or misconceptions from Muslims compared to non-Muslim students. In the latter case she does not want to appear to have double standards, yet in the case of Muslim students she feels she almost has a duty towards them. Sabah connects wearing the hijab and appearing to be a Muslim and more importantly does not want to make it explicit to her students whether she is a Muslim or not. ***I think because I don't do the hijab, I don't have my students know that I'm Muslim.*** She refers to the few Muslim students who may infer that she is a Muslim because of her surname. Yasmin takes a different approach and introduces herself as a Muslim at the end of the mentioned lesson...***towards the end of the lesson I said that I'm also a Muslim.*** I wonder if her pupils picked up on this anyway.

This shows that there is not one way to be an FMT. This is not a homogenised group; not all FMTs feel it is their responsibility to 'teach' the dominant culture or share practices related to their individual religiosity. These FMTs are positioned between secularism and religion (Contractor, 2012). When Sabah is asked whether she feels she is living almost a dual life in school she answers 'yes' with reference to praying, but she is happy to share not drinking as part of her religious practice with her pupils (as discussed in chapter 4, section 4.3, p89). She uses this as grounds to make choices about how she chooses to represent herself as a Muslim woman. Responding to ***Scenario 3.0***, Sabah feels it is important that there is proportional representation of staff and students in terms of religious and ethnic denominations. ***I think in a predominantly white context, it's good that they have exposure to somebody else, somebody different or forms in different culture, and religious background, because that's their sort of link to that other side.*** She refers to the importance of exposure. I find her view on this fascinating as she values the importance of representation but refrains from exploring 'the link to the other side' she refers to. Zine (2006) comments that Muslim women need to create spaces for collaborative engagement. Perhaps this space would help FMTs such as Sabah develop epistemological divergences that exist between secular and faith-based feminists. When I asked whether Aminah thought it was more important for her to be teaching in a majority white school or at a majority Pakistani school, she responded ***I think yeah, in a culture like this, the fact that I have been working in a predominantly white school and love the fact that I've been educated and tell them a bit more about who I am and who Muslim women are and what we do and what we, you know, are normal.*** She alludes to the similarities and overlaps between all cultures and the human issues that impact all children whether they are Asian or white. ***You choose to…you show yourself to be a brilliant Muslim woman, but you know, that might not necessarily be the case.*** Aminah makes the point that having good role models is important in both contexts as not all Asian children have good role models at home.

> Muslim teachers must never detach from social issues that confront communities. Theirs can never be a passive or indifferent attitude toward the problems of the community or their solution.
>
> (El Tom, 1981:40)

This links to Aminah's comments as she comprehends the scope and impact of teaching her pupils more than just the Science curriculum and educates them about acceptance of others. ***...in the future you might actually bump into another Muslim, or you might bump into another person from a different culture. You have to be accepting of people.*** This is something she has actively chosen to do and integrate into her own practice. In response to my question, she replies with ***yes,*** she sees herself as more than just an educator - another representation of herself. Representation of Muslim teachers in a predominantly white school is important to Aminah...***But in a school like this where it's predominantly white, then I think teachers become a go-to….Like a reference point in most.*** She sees herself as a point of reference and information for these young people...***Because I'll be like who else are they going to go on to about this or who else are they going to talk to about this.*** Mogra (2010) notes the importance for Muslim teachers to understand the issues in their immediate and wider communities in a globalised world. In addition to this, I argue that FMTs have an added layer of challenge in patriarchal structures and gendered Islamophobia which operate in their lives.

6.2 Are FMTs responsible for the socialisation and cultural understanding of their pupils?

Aminah is potentially changing pupils' attitudes and perspectives towards Muslims through using her lessons to open spaces for talk and dialogue**. *I think they see it from a different perspective.*** Pang, comments on how teachers can have an important role in supporting all students to learn about religious diversity so that they can become 'open-minded and respectful of differences' (Pang, 2005:2). Zaynab experienced racism when she first started to work in her context...***the very first week, one of the year seven or eight students said to the other students as he***

saw me walking down, say, Allah Ho Akbar as we sought to pass. She feels the school dealt with it well, suspending the pupil in question. She asked for the pupil not to be removed from her class so that she could understand him better. This shows a very proactive approach on her part to build bridges. Zaynab feels more than just integration is required to solve these issues, she refers to the media and educating parents. ***I don't think it's just the integration that's going to solve the issue. I think we need to have something more and I don't know what that something more is because I hear sometimes students saying I wouldn't go into Ashton or I wouldn't go a certain place where there is a majority of ethnic people, whether they're black, Asian, whatever because…From what they've heard in the media or what their parents are saying, it's got to start from the parents first. You've got to educate the parents.*** Perhaps she feels if this generation of pupils are educated in these matters sufficiently it would break the cycle. She sees herself as a representative and as a source of information. ***They ask me questions that they maybe couldn't go to someone else to ask.*** She is clearly very open to consider a range of issues and sees it almost as her duty to inform. This highlights the important role of FMTs in multicultural educational contexts.

Sabah's response to her student's reacting positively about fasting leaves her wondering whether they said that because they know she is a Muslim...***there was a general, "Oh my God, I didn't know the Muslims had to not eat for the whole day." To them that was just sort of, "How can they do that, how is it possible?" And one of my students said, "Miss, I would die if I couldn't eat." But it was more comments in terms of, "Wow, how do they do that, and we wouldn't be able to do that et cetera," as opposed to anything negative. Now, I don't know whether it's because they didn't state anything negative because they already know or assume that I'm Muslim but in the context that I am, I know that if they felt anything negative, they would've said it because of the context that I'm teaching it. But there were shocks and surprises but nothing that I had to discuss with them.*** This shows her hyper awareness of being a Muslim teacher in her context and more importantly the assumption she made about having to explain why

Muslims fast. I felt she was relieved at not having to discuss this with them. Ulvund (2018) points out that a child constructs knowledge and meaning through cultural mediation and the importance of enhancing an individual's ability to reflect. Perhaps if Sabah had been more forthcoming about being a Muslim and her experience of fasting as such it may have positively reinforced students' reflection (Zuckerman, 2003).

Aminah faces curiosity from her students based around displayed Muslim conventions or traits. In the Western world, according to Laurence (2012), our age is denoted by cultural emancipation and by individualism. They are eager to understand why she chooses to pray, fast and wear a hijab etc. ***I think it was fasting or something and they wanted to know more about my religion and why I wear a headscarf and why, you know, do I pray and all these things.*** The questions seem to be based around visible Muslim behaviour and I wonder about the exposure to non-visible attributes of the Muslim way of life and whether these classroom discussions are limited by the teacher satisfying their students' questions to validate and justify their own choices to be accepted as the religious 'other' in a majority non-religious context. Perhaps her students do not see the culturally emancipated woman of the West in their teacher, and this triggers the kind of questions they have. This brings to the forefront 'the paternalism of imperialist feminist theorizing' that casts women in the global South and Muslim women as 'politically immature' (Zine, 2006:17). FMTs who come across as unable to overcome their so-called oppression and inability to make choices about their bodies represent a binary position between the 'fundamentalist' Muslim woman and one that is emancipated by the West.

Zaynab clearly has a good relationship with her students. She felt confident in sharing her experience with her pupils and they responded with empathy. ***He came past me, stuck two fingers up at me, and called me a fuckin' Paki. And at that point, when I told my students, their strength was amazing. They were so***

supportive…oh my God, why did you put up with that? And I was like that because I was driving. What did you want me to do and...and I tried to make them laugh about it but the shock on their face said it all. Do you know what, they are good kids, and they understand. Horsdal (1999) has found the use of life stories to be valuable and endorses the concept of cultural liberation and calls for the reflexivity that cultural liberation requires. Horsdal (1999) recognises:

> We now have multiple, and to some extent competing cultural narratives, and it is up to the individual to select affiliations and see connections.
>
> (Horsdal 1999, cited in Ulvund 2018:59)

Ulvund (2018) concludes that our society requires the exchange of life stories and draws upon Ziehe's (1999) understanding that life-stories are significant and valuable for cultural liberation (Ziehe 1999 as cited in Ulvund 2018). In sharing her experience, Zaynab tells her side of the story and how it made her feel. Is this perhaps something her pupils may not have exposure to otherwise. Their understanding of the situation has a reciprocal effect on how she feels about them; she refers to them as ***good kids***. In sharing her story Zaynab is not necessarily asking her pupils to locate objective truth; it is more about relaying her experience and allowing her story to become discursive with her audience and in this case creates solidarity and community with her pupils. Ulvund (2018:11) describes this as 'embracing diversity from the inside'.

Sabah's reference to not hiding her religion is interesting as she does choose to hold back on outwardly expressing some aspects of this...***I'm a very proud Muslim so it's not like I hide my religion but at the same time, I do have to feel comfortable and confident in that situation to be able to do that, which I'm not in terms of the students at the moment.*** She refers to facing a difficult time in her personal life and uses this to inspire her students as a strong female role model for all her students. ***The only time I've ever voiced it is when I have to give them that pep talk that you know what, if I can do it and if I can come out of that situation***

and look at what I have achieved from my life, then there's no reason why you can't do that. She is proud of her achievements despite adversity and is comfortable sharing this with her pupils. Perhaps her comfort level in sharing this aspect of her life comes from the fact that the reference she infers (drinking alcohol) is one that transcends culture and religion and is a more generic aspect of life that is relatable to all. She reinforces the point here about being comfortable to break some barriers but not others. She is selective about which barriers she is willing to break, for example based on her perception of how she would look praying and the questions it may or may not raise. She says she may feel awkward about that but not about issues that are more 'human level'...***if the students saw me praying, I might be awkward about that. But then, a situation arises where they're discussing something with me or they end up discussing something with me. I think that would break down all of those barriers anyway because then they'll be—I will be speaking to them at a human level as opposed to any other level.*** She has separated the discussion around Muslim traits and human level conversations to suit her comfort levels. Sabah appears to be somewhere in between embracing the role of a contemporary Muslim teacher who wants to ***break down all of those barriers*** but is stuck with expressing her personal religious values; not to impinge on the ***human*** persona she wishes to reflect to her pupils. Shah (2018) draws attention to what he refers to as 'Muslimness' whereby faith is embodied through physical and visible symbols, which can be a source of marginalisation from the 'norm' in a white majority society.

6.3 Religious views and teaching practice

Teachers may have personal views on religion, race and ethnicity and possibly bring their own perspectives into the classroom. Furthermore, the subject areas they teach may naturally lend themselves to allowing a space for teachers to reflect their viewpoints. Subedi (2006) argues that aspects of religious diversity should be addressed as part of teacher training as a culturally relevant approach. My data show a variety of responses with regards to teacher decision-making and teacher thinking and how their values and beliefs encroach on their everyday teaching

practices (Ross et al., 1992). Aminah avoids certain conversations until she knows how to tackle certain topics. She clearly wants to relay the correct information in the right way. ***I just don't talk about it then. I'll just say, listen, we're not going to talk about it today. We'll talk about it another time. Like if I'm not sure about how I'm going to approach a topic, then I'll just choose not to talk about it...Yeah, till I know how to.*** I wonder if her pupils actively try to find the answers to their sometimes-unanswered questions elsewhere? If they do not, then what happens to this space created by a gap in knowledge? Is it revisited or replaced by whatever feeds into that space, whether informed or misinformed information? I analyse spaces for dialogue later in this section. Aminah uses this as an opportunity to offer her pupils an incentive to get their work done. ***I kind of used it as a motive to get to work whilst asking me questions. I said right, we're going to do this first, and then you can ask me a question.*** She clearly is willing to answer their questions but builds it into the lesson, adjusting her practice around the curiosity of her pupils.

Sabah associates being professional with withholding information about her religious lifestyle such as fasting during the Islamic month of Ramadan. ***Actually, I've never done that. I think with me I've always- apart from my work colleagues because they knew I would be fasting, I think I kept it very professional.*** She does then go on to stipulate how it may be a missed opportunity on her part...***of course I could've used that opportunity to discuss and say I'm a Muslim.*** Sabah is very forthright and honest about her shortcomings in her ability to sufficiently address their questions and possibly not having the answers. She does mention that she would tackle misconceptions as part of a healthy relationship built on trust, but also feels she may not have the time to discuss things properly. ***I think I've just always left it to not wanting to discuss politics with them or not wanting to discuss religion with them because of the conversation just taking up too much time.*** She mentions how she would not be concerned around how she would be perceived if she was open about being Muslim. This is something that does concern her as she seems to have given this some thought in combination with not knowing how the pupils would 'react'. ***I don't know whether I am fully equipped in addressing all***

their questions properly and maybe I don't have all the answers. Panjwani (2017) notes that Muslims are not just Muslims and attributes of identity are co-constructed with intersection from other identities. Perhaps Sabah is not as comfortable as some of the other teachers in mobilising her 'Muslimness' (Shah, 2018) as her primary singular identity. Rassool (1999) comments that cultural identities are historical and under continuous transformation. This is supported by the view of Bhabha (1994), who explains how subjectivities are always in the process of becoming. Sabah has spent most of her life in Pakistan, which adds a complexity of experiences when compared to the other FMTs in my study. This illustrates the fact that there are cultural and historical differences amongst immigrant groups in addition to the differences with the host culture. This was Sabah's response to me asking her whether she felt her confidence about tackling questions might increase with time. ***And I think I, at this stage, am not. Because as a PGCE, you're not their teacher anyway, you don't—even though you build a relationship with those few months, it's still not the same and now that this has been my first main year of teaching.*** She feels she would get better with time and that as a relatively new teacher she is more concerned with delivering lesson content. She mentions how pupils may link religion with terrorism and how she does not have the confidence to deal with that. ***So, for me to then talk about aspects such as religion and then everything that's going on around in terms of like terrorism and whatever, they'd link all of that, I don't think that I had actually the confidence to do that.*** She does realise the importance of being a positive role model in representing a minority group. ***I do feel that in another few years of teaching, I would definitely be in that position to do that...it's important for them to see you as a positive model of a certain society also, which is extremely important.*** Sabah is passionate about making a difference to young people but does not specifically mention in what way. ***I wanted to do something that made a difference and impact on a young person's life.***

Religious beliefs impact many societies and inform the actions of individuals, according to Mansour (2011), who goes on to question the impact of this on the

practices of contemporary teachers in the classroom. Fysh & Lucas (1998) note the importance of responding effectively to a science curriculum that engages the science-religion debate. Aminah uses the creation and evolution debate to inform her students about her religious views whilst finding the balance within the parameters of the curriculum...***they'll say to me, Miss how can you believe in God but you're teaching evolution. So, I'll say yeah, but evolution is supporting what I'm saying as well.*** She is comfortable opening up this dialogue as she feels it presents an alternative Islamic view to that portrayed in the media...***it just opens up that discussion so I do get opportunities within my teaching to then talk about these things and in the hope that they get to know a bit more about most things and Islam and what they believe because there's such a negative image of it.*** She uses these opportunities in her teaching to widen their exposure to perceived differences and especially those with negative connotations. Mansour (2011) explores the science-religion relationship in teaching with an Islamic context. He explores the sociocultural perspective of teachers' beliefs and states the model adopted by a teacher relating science and religion is dependent upon their upbringing. Aminah uses spaces in the Science curriculum to engage her students in deeper conversations, sometimes conveying her own religiosity as a means of explaining the unexplainable in science. ***So, I do get opportunities within my teaching to then talk about these things and in the hope that they get to know a bit more about most things and Islam and what they believe because there's such a negative image of it, you know, on social media and stuff like this.*** Clearly this is a strategic tool for her, and it ultimately gives her the desired effect. She conveys a positive view of Islam through her Science teaching which is a powerful way to make 'that' difference. It makes me wonder whether the delivery of the science-religion debate, in practice being at the discretion of the fundamental presuppositions of teachers, shaped by sociocultural contexts (Roth, 1997), leads to an inconsistent approach in classrooms. Disparity in the responses of students to the debate may be explained by the role of socially constructed knowledge (Mansour, 2011). For example, some may perceive a conflict between science and religion, whereas others may not; perhaps the same can be said for educators who may have personal dimensions of religion to varying degrees. In his study, Mansour

(2008) argues that PRB (personal religious belief) was a powerful factor in influencing the performance of science teachers in the classroom.

Factors such as religious beliefs, gender, age, ethnicity, wealth, disability and power are all characteristics within a particular society that cause variation in their conception of the world and scientific understanding according to Reiss (2004). Aminah feels as though answering pupils' questions can disrupt the lesson. ***Like with me...sometimes I feel like it disrupts the whole lesson then because you just start talking and then they ask something else.*** She varies her responses with religious and personal viewpoints. She mentions how she might answer the question differently when asked by colleagues as opposed to pupils. Perhaps she feels she can justify her choices with more ease to colleagues. The study by Mansour (2010), concludes that science teachers should be trained in the orientation of the science-religion debate and should be knowledgeable in the domain of science and religion in the curriculum and classroom. Mansour points to the transformational role teachers have in shaping perceptions.

Zaynab uses the scope offered in the Religious Studies curriculum to give her students a deeper insight into Islam. ***And when I teach Islam, I feel like me and my students get to know each other more. They get to know me more, why I do things.*** She tackles the 'why' questions with ease and a sense of purpose. Perhaps the orientation of any conflicting views are better placed in Religious Studies classrooms. Panjwani and Moulin-Stożek, present religious identity in place of prior categorisations by 'race, ethnicity or nationality' (2017:597), which places importance on Muslim RE (Religious Education) teachers in examining Muslim identities (Vince, 2021).

6.4 Responses towards theological discussions

2.0 Context: 2018, majority white state comprehensive, Tameside

Casey - Miss, have you ever had a hangover at work?

Me- No, I don't drink.

Casey- Why?

Me- Because I'm a Muslim.

Jessica- But you don't look like a Muslim.

Casey - She's too pretty to be a Muslim.

Me- What does a Muslim look like?

Jessica- Like the Asians in Ashton, with that thing on their heads.

Casey- I would never go to Ashton, I'd get jumped and raped by those Asian lads.

Jessica- Cos we're white.

Me- Not all Muslim women wear the hijab.

Casey- Yeah some cover their whole face – they look well scary.

Jessica- Cos they're probably ugly.

Class laughs

Me- People practise religion to different extents and for different reasons and

sometimes in different ways.

Jessica- Yeah well, I couldn't be a Muslim, how would you chill without alcohol?

Me- Let's talk about the risks of alcohol consumption.

Scenario 2.0 is a conversation between me and two Year 10 girls during a biology lesson on the use of drugs. This is a secondary school in a majority white area, the neighbouring town is heavily populated by Muslim Asians. The demographic of the pupils in this school reflects the area. There is strong local support for the English Defence League (a right-wing political group). These pupils are low ability girls with poor attendance; who qualify for Pupil Premium; have behaviour issues; and by their own admission planned to leave education at the age of sixteen with or without qualifications. They disclosed to me on a previous occasion (when I tried to convince them that they did have options) that generations of their families did not have qualifications and that there were ***other*** ways to make money. The conversation brings up a variety of prejudiced views held by Casey and Jessica, directed at Muslims. Firstly, their notions around what a Muslim woman looks like, the behaviour of Muslim men towards white women and that they believe alcohol is a requirement to ***chill***. As a teacher in that classroom, I felt it wasn't the right time to open a further conversation around this area. The group was the lowest ability in their cohort with many pupils displaying behavioural and learning issues. I felt it wasn't the right space for discussion as it would have led to tensions between educational performance and 'real life' stuff that matters. I also realised in my time in this setting that the views highlighted by these girls was to some degree a consensus view. With hindsight, I would have liked to have impacted these pupils by challenging their views, but I feel by portraying an 'alternative 'Muslim women' I may have triggered an opposing view to their established stereotype.

Yasmin (interviewee) refers to the teacher (me) moving the lesson on from Muslims not drinking alcohol to the actual lesson content - the dangers of alcohol consumption. ***I think it's a real shame because I think there was opportunity for additional learning...the teacher could've said, "well actually, why do Muslims not drink?"*** The point here is that justifying the Muslim way of life might have been the right thing to do from a Muslim teacher's point of view, but perhaps professionally the right thing to do was to get back to the lesson. Yasmin mentions ***additional learning,*** but when does this border on preaching? What might the ramifications of

this be on a majority group where drinking alcohol is the accepted norm? Yasmin is right to want to enhance coherent identities by connecting our narratives, as Goodson writes:

> The story, then, provides a starting point for developing further understandings of the social construction of each person's subjectivity.
>
> (Goodson, 2013:30)

Yasmin defends her stance on suggesting the reasons for Muslims not drinking. She refers to this as part of their education and that you cannot separate the curriculum from teaching about wider issues. ***You're not recruiting anyone towards the religion, you are just rectifying a misunderstanding that student has, and isn't that what education is about? When someone is misinformed about something that you know about that you just correct them and you don't need to go chapter and verse and what the five pillars of Islam are, that would be preaching, but if a certain error or misunderstanding has been identified in a class, it is a responsibility if you are aware of it to kind of correct that just as it would be if it was a Christian person or a Jewish person or whatever, I believe that you can't really separate the two.*** From a professional point of view, if this were an observed lesson then moving on would be the right and expected thing to do. Perhaps the context, the pupils in question and the element of 'choosing your battles' sometimes prevails over taking every moment to educate each pupil about everything. In my view, it is important to consider the different ways misunderstandings can be clarified and the appropriate contexts for doing so. sometimes listening to their views says more than the impact of sharing your own views has. As their teacher I left that space open, and it led to a trust relationship building between these pupils and myself. Their acceptance of clearly a minority group teacher later led to one of these girls making a safeguarding disclosure to me. Perhaps that relationship was reinforced by me not coming across as judgemental or preaching my chosen way of life. She could have approached any teacher in the school, but she made the disclosure to me. I argue that there are consequences

professionally and a careful balance must be struck between tackling every interaction that surfaces and performing the role of delivering the curriculum whilst maintaining professional integrity. Perhaps every classroom community is not suited to shaping the social construction of an individual's subjectivity. Goodson refers to a concept of 'reselfing' (2013:129), as a reconstruction of the self as a continuous process driven by telling our narratives. He goes on to say that we tell our stories to not only understand ourselves but use this as a basis to understand others.

Aminah affirms this idea of the continuum of reconstruction suggested by Goodson (2013); she adapts her response depending on the age of the pupil and points out that she does not want to say too much. She judges her response based on the individual...***some of the older students, they like to ask about the fact that why do you have to cover your hair? So, then you, kind of, you want to say a little bit but not too much. It depends on the person.*** This shows her apprehension in how the pupils may react, especially when she says she does not want to say too much - is this because it would lead to more complicated questions that she may not have answers for or that she feels the pupils wouldn't understand her position? Does she feel her justification would not be acceptable to her pupils – and does this trepidation come from insecurity or a lack of confidence in being able to explain her choice? There is a sense of an agenda here. ***I want them to know about different religions and I want them to know about different things.*** Aminah actively wants to educate her students about religious differences. She is thinking about increasing their awareness of this as they are growing up and the importance of having an open mind. Aminah is, however, surprised that the conversation in ***Scenario 2.0*** took place and that pupils would pass comments such as they did. ***Maybe there's a lack of knowledge at this, you know, in their education...obviously that they got the confidence to question you...for them to even think about commenting on certain things...where have these perceptions actually come from...I'm guessing it was probably the media, parents, you know, peers.*** There is a difference in

comfort levels between Aminah and me in the conversations we will permit with our students.

Zaynab has a very open approach with her pupils and encourages them to ask her questions. ***They are so forthcoming, but I'm very open. I'm a very open teacher. I do say to them, ask me as many questions as you like, don't be scared and don't think that I'm going to be offended by what you're going to say.*** This is a contrasting approach to Sabah and Aminah. She is not fazed by her approach in a majority white context and invites inquiry. Projects such as 'The Combating Prejudice in Schools Project' (Skelton & Kerr, 1989) in Australia in the late 1980s provided an opportunity to address negative stereotypes, barriers to accessing education and social injustice. It involved disseminating resources to teachers around the history, culture and religions of people in the Middle East, to provide curriculum support (Clyne, 1998). Teachers who have a limited understanding of Muslim values, beliefs and culture are unable to reflect these factors in the implementation and development of the school curriculum according to Fahlman's (1985) Canadian study. I argue that Muslim teachers feel the burden and pressure to create awareness and educate to remedy negative stereotypes and racially motivated prejudices. They may do this unknowingly, perhaps because of being on the other side as pupils themselves. ***You don't always have to be confrontational. You can say the same thing, but in a calm manner while the other person looks stupid, and you go off.*** Zaynab challenges attitudes without coming across as antagonistic, being in the teaching profession has changed her usual defensive attitude.

Yasmin feels a sense of accountability in explaining the actions of a terrorist. She uses the words ***guilt*** and ***apologise***. ***Why do you compel me to justify or in a way to say actually I'm just a friend that I think it's terrible, I shouldn't need to say that that's terrible because it is terrible." But when you're a Muslim, you feel like the act of an extremist is almost something that you're guilty for and something that***

you need to apologise for and something that you need to explain straightaway, "We're not all like this, we're not all like this." She draws on a distinction between how Muslims and non-Muslims might be expected to react to terrorist attacks. Yasmin offers a more moderate representation of Muslim figures in the media to her pupils and refers to this as 'enlightening' them. She feels they had not been exposed to this type of Muslim. She also offered some teachings from Islam about the ramifications of murder - this is beyond the scope of her subject. ***I named quite a few famous Muslims, celebrities in the media that are a lot more liberal but practising still, and that came as a huge shock to the students because they didn't expect it, they didn't think that that was actually the case, and so in such a way I gave them some of the actual teachings in Islam that if you killed one person it's almost as if you killed the whole of mankind, and in actual fact it really helped them to actually separate the minority from the majority, and I think that it really, really helped.*** I wonder if she felt trepidation with taking this bold approach. She may have risked coming across as preaching elements of Islam in a Psychology lesson. Perhaps her good relationship with her pupils allows her the space to explore and educate outside of her curriculum without any consequences for her professionally. She comments on the instant benefits of doing this as her pupils could now differentiate between minority and majority Muslims.

Yasmin uses famous Muslim role models and teachings from the Quran in her lessons to exemplify Islam in a positive way, but I argue that this also represents a cultural conflict in whose culture should be transmitted. Bullivant (1981) describes this as the pluralist dilemma in education as the conflict between majority and minority groups. ***I never let my own views encroach on what I should be saying to the student so I think although you have those challenges you just learn to keep them to yourself, and I think a part of that is due to...you don't want a disciplinary at the end, you have to deal with them as really, really carefully, and we have guidelines in place so we just need to follow them and I've always done that and that's me doing my job.*** Does the pedagogic action of some Muslim teachers cause turbulence to the ethnic hegemony in pluralist societies, described by Bullivant

(1981)? Yasmin is aware of this dilemma and points out the importance of professionalism and although she has her own viewpoints, she is clear about guidelines and ultimately doing her job.

6.5 Spaces for dialogue: Is the education system failing our young people?

Scenario 1.6 is an exchange I observed between a teacher and pupils when I walked into a Year 9 form time session to collect books from the classroom.

1.6 Context: 2018, This is a secondary school based in a majority white area, in Greater Manchester.

Miss Robinson- What does a terrorist look like?

Mikey- A Muslim man with a beard and rucksack.

Class laughs

Damian- Taliban

Miss Robinson- What about the English Defence League, The Ku Klux Klan, they have radicalised views?

Mikey- Yeah but they don't go around blowing themselves up.

Damian- That's just freedom of speech stuff in it – they're just saying what they think, it's their opinion, someone has to stand up for normal people in this country.

Mikey- It's like that British values thing we did last week.

Damian- I think they should be sent back to where they came from, if they don't like how we live then why do they live here?

Miss Robinson- What about people who have been radicalised in this

	country?
Damian-	Lock them up and throw away the key, that's what I think.
Period 1 bell	

The Form Teacher, Miss Robinson was delivering a Prevent session on radicalisation, see literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.1.7, p26). My initial thoughts on hearing the exchanges between the pupils were of complete shock at the views they were expressing and at the fact that the teacher didn't seem to challenge it. This is an example not individual but systemic racism.

As a government policy the Prevent Agenda is imposed. The content is not co-developed and is prescriptive in nature, shutting down scope for critical engagement (Haynes and Passy 2017). Kundnani (2009) reports on a lack of clarity in its aims and its divisive effects, both between Muslim and other communities and within the different Muslim communities in Britain. I felt uncomfortable as a teacher and as a Muslim listening in on the conversation but later, I was disappointment at the fact that the pupils were allowed to leave without having an informed discussion and their viewpoints appropriately challenged. I wondered if the topic would be re-addressed and asked the Form Tutor about it later. She said she was just presenting the Power Point sent to her each week and didn't have any input into the scheme of learning for form sessions. She felt as though she had done a good job. I felt it was a window of lost opportunity to address the misconceptions held by these young people. ***What does a terrorist look like?...A Muslim man with a beard and rucksack***. I later learnt that the school is in an area with strong support for the English Defence League (right wing political group) (Briggs 2011). The views of the pupils started to make some sense to me as I tried to formulate how and why they think the way they do. ***What about the English Defence League, The Ku Klux Klan, they have radicalised views?...Yeah but they don't go around blowing themselves up...That's just freedom of speech stuff innit***

– they're just saying what they think, it's their opinion, someone has to stand up for normal people in this country. These pupils would have had exposure to strong political views in their domestic settings. ***I think they should be sent back to where they came from, if they don't like how we live then why do they live here?***

The understanding generated is dependent upon the verbal and non-verbal interactive communication that takes place and attitudes or examples we see and listen through, according to Ulvund (2018). An example of this can be seen with the link Yasmin makes with the misrepresentation of Muslims in the media. Following the Manchester Arena Attack in 2017; in the year ending March 2020 the Home office reports that half of religious hate crime offences were targeted against Muslims (UK Government 2020). A report by Ivandic et al (2019), states that hate crime is magnified by the media's coverage and presentation. Their report highlights wider societal issues in the reporting of terror attacks and the extent of sensationalising, and in some cases the inaccurate reporting, of sensitive events. For example, American media strengthened the stereotype of Muslims as terrorists in the prejudicial way the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 was reported. Within minutes of the event, news reporters suggested terrorists were responsible and a news channel even gave the name of Arab suspects being detained for questioning. Despite a subsequent investigation which revealed the culprit was a homegrown citizen and a non-Muslim man, this appeared to have no discernible impact on the widespread belief that terrorists were Muslims (Los Angeles Times, 1995). I use an example from American media as the popularity of 24-hour news channels can have a wider and global impact. Yasmin points how an awareness of other terrorist groups would help in the case of prejudices against Muslims only. ***When the pupil has said they*** (non-Muslim terrorist groups) ***don't go around blowing themselves up, again we're going back to the media rhetoric of what they've been exposed to, so they've not been exposed to other things like racial hatred, torture for instance, they're not aware of other things.*** She commends the lesson for creating awareness and challenging the status quo. She goes on to say that there should be a programme rolled out in schools where these issues are tackled. These are

potentially very valuable discussions for pupils made precarious for the teacher as they are coupled with 'banter' and a sense of playing the issues down, which can be overtly unpleasant and racist in nature. Banks (2004) comments on the challenge faced by multicultural nation-states in balancing unity and diversity to create a...

> ...national identity that incorporates the voices, experiences, and hopes of the diverse groups that compose it. Many ethnic, language, and religious groups have weak identifications with their nation-states because of their marginalized status and because they do not see their hopes, dreams, visions, and possibilities reflected in the nation-state or in the schools, colleges, and universities.
>
> (Banks, 2008:6)

Yasmin feels pupils should be taught how to promote harmony and inclusion regardless of location or context in order to expose all pupils to people of all backgrounds...***if you've got a predominantly white school, it's not something that is really a major issue however it does become a major issue and it is not responsible at all with the student because when they go out in a city area or different working environments with different people, they will have these views of what is a normal person that's a thoroughly offensive comment that student have made normal people in this country suggesting that people of different backgrounds are abnormal which is a serious kind of a complex that this student has, a superior complex.*** Yasmin infers that this might avoid a superiority complex developing with some individuals. Kymlicka (1995) emphasises the need for schools to implement multicultural citizenship, which takes deepening diversity in the world into account. Yasmin feels that there may be a racist culture in the school as the pupils are only able to freely express their views as they are in a classroom culture that allows them to do so...***this is promoting hate because these children, these students wouldn't feel this open to being so hostile if it wasn't encouraged.*** She even goes as far to say it must be encouraged, placing the onus of responsibility on the teacher in the classroom, but more widely she attributes it to the culture in the school. She feels there were no repercussions for the pupils' hostile views and responses. She points out that until their prejudices and stereotypes are pointed

out and dealt with, or until these pupils are offered an alternative view. their negative attitudes will continue.

Yasmin's response to ***Scenario 1.6*** makes me speculate if the dialogue would have taken place if there was a visibly Muslim student in the room. ***I think some of the comments that have been made are bordering on racism, really inappropriate because if I...if there was a hijabi in this room, that student would potentially be in tears as a result of this classroom discussion.*** Clearly, I was in the room, but the students were not aware that I am a Muslim - if I were a hijab wearing teacher would they have been sensitive to this and would they have held back about expressing their views? This makes me question the dialogues that might take place between non-Muslim pupils and non-Muslim teachers. Khan (1998:2) writes about Bhabha's hybridised states 'where dialectic polarities demand the subject's allegiance at the same moment'. I discuss hybrid identities in the literature review (Chapter 2). Khan (1998) draws upon Bhabha's (1994 cited in Khan 1998:464) explanation of the concept of disrupting a homogenous culture and that 'individuals construct their culture from national as well as religious texts'. These can often act as a signifier for 'appropriation' and sites of resistance and negotiation' and as a non-hijab wearing Muslim woman, perhaps, I have shifted the boundary for perceived 'inherent cultural purity' and occupy a 'space of displacement' as Khan (1998:464) puts it.

Zaynab identifies a range of terrorist organisations and people but points out what she feels is the consensus around what a terrorist looks like. ***We came to the conclusion that maybe it has fed us so much that we automatically think…no one thinks of the Ku Klux Klan, no one thinks of the IRA, no one thinks of the EDL, no one thinks of Tommy Robinson. Everyone thinks he's probably brown, he's probably shouting Allah Ho Akbar somewhere.*** Her own children hold this view, which she is quite candid about. She realises there needs to be a change. Zaynab refers to being ready for racism when she is in Bradford...***as he drove off, he went,***

you're now in Bradford now love. So, you know, you do expect it and I think I expect it every time, so I'm almost meant to be ready for that. Perhaps this tolerance of racist attitudes is a norm for people living in areas with concentrations of ethnic minorities. The criminalisation of Muslims by the 'media, politicians, the security services and the criminal justice system' (Poynting and Mason 2006:365) has meant everyday racism is experienced by Muslim communities. Hage (2001 cited in Poynting and Mason 2006) points out that the degree of violent racism is determined by the degree of non-violent racism a government and culture will allow. I discuss anti-Muslim incidents in the literature review (Chapter 2), where I note how exposure to a particular stereotype can become a talking point which can be a positive. For example, the strength in Zaynab's story is the content being shared. By sharing her experience Zaynab is articulating who she is and what matters to her.

> The strength of the life-stories is to give us knowledge of what matters to other people, what they find meaningful and important, good and evil.
>
> (Horsdal, 1999:155)

This links to Zaynab who opens up a relational 'space' as her students are now actively involved as an audience; their ideas will be negotiated as a community and this exemplifies democracy in the classroom society - the results are powerful. Aminah however, feels her pupils are more cautious around her because she wears the hijab (Zaynab also wears the hijab). She mentions how she has had experience of students wanting to ask her something and then they are reluctant as she feels they do not want to offend her...***it ensures that the student can't just say anything or question me, you know, where…like in certain ways. Like I think they think about how they're going to question me. They almost take a step back and think.*** This shows that there are questions that may go unanswered but may be important in shaping pupils' responses to Muslim teachers and Muslims in general...***she might be offended or you can't say it to her like that. Or is that the wrong thing to say. Like they're questioning themselves before they question me whereas I think in***

other cases, they wouldn't. They would just spit it out whatever they thought but because I have the headscarf on, because I am speaking to them in a certain way, they feel like I can't…you can't just ask her like that. It also suggests that they have a level of respect for her where they do not want to overstep the boundary as a matter of courtesy or to not cause offence. The physical attributes of 'Muslimness' (Panjwani, 2017) display 'the intersections of race, gender and racism' (Vince, 2021:9) and are an important consideration in relation to understanding 'self' and individual agency. For Aminah, her 'Muslimness' almost denies her agency over her identification as she is hyper visible as a Muslim woman. She feels her pupils wanted to ask her questions all year and were waiting for the opportunity for her to start the conversation. ***Maybe the fact that they just wanted me to ask them questions throughout the whole year...but they didn't dare and they're now asking.*** She is confident and self-assured in this space and thrives on the discussion driven by her pupils. She also refers to how they did not dare ask earlier in the year - perhaps these conversations require a mutual understanding and a certain affinity between individuals - a 'reflexive space'.

Yasmin feels confident about using the space in the curriculum her subject offers to explore the stereotypes pupils may have around Muslims. ***I asked the students to kind of summarise what they view a Muslim as and quite a few things that came across in this brainstorm was words like extremism, strict, harsh, disciplined, rules, don't treat their women very well. There's a lot of these words that the students were using but they were very synonymous with the media and the way that the media portrays certain things.*** She references the media as a major contributory factor towards negative stereotypes. Kolstrup (2003:10) argues for a 'reflexivity discipline' that endorses a space for discussion of values and opinions to better understand each other and ourselves and to find commonalities. The idea of a democratic space is reinforced by Horsdal (1999), who argues that it exposes a dialogical and relational space to scrutinise attitudes and explore values to equip us better to live with diversity. ***So it doesn't need to be something that happens there and then, and I appreciate that not all teachers can do it off the cuff because***

that's when you might end up like you said going into the whole preaching, you know, because the emotions are involved at that time so I think maybe sometimes it's best to take a step back, reflect on what was said, and then readdress it the following lesson. Yasmin is adamant that an appropriate space is created for the rectification of the prejudices exemplified by the pupils in ***Scenario 1.6.*** Yasmin acknowledges the importance of educational spaces in offering transformation of prejudiced views.

In conclusion, in this chapter I have explored classroom issues around disclosure and the responsibility some Muslim women feel in acting as role models to their pupils. ***Scenario 1.2*** offers a valuable insight to questions pupils have around the identity and image of FMTs. The analysis of this ***Scenario*** allows for the use of life-stories to expose reflexive spaces for dialogue. I look at the autonomy of Muslim teachers in the classroom and how they project their Muslim ideals to act as role models for pupils, for example Yasmin and Aminah. The interview dataset exemplifies the view that FMTs are not a homogenised group and represent different elements of their identity depending on the context, for example Sabah. I have examined whether FMTs are responsible for the socialisation, cultural and theological understanding of their pupils. Finally I discuss the subject-specific spaces for dialogue in education and whether the education system is failing young people by not tackling misconceptions and misrepresentations of Muslims.

Chapter 7:

Discussion of the Identities and Images of Female Muslim Teachers and their implications in Education.

7.1 Section 1: Agency is constructed through relation.

In this chapter I discuss how my data shows that agency is constructed through relation to whiteness, multiculturalism and Britishness. I will be making recommendations about the role of FMTs in schools, practices in school settings and government policies. I discuss racial hierarchies in the classroom setting and how it compels FMTs to question their sense of belonging. I refer to policies such as the Prevent agenda and The Report of the commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. These policies highlight inequities at a structural level and unequal power relations; they impinge on the agency FMTs have. The study shows how FMTs modulate their behaviour in response to surveillance mechanisms in education. Furthermore, my data emphasises the disparity around identity and the 'normal', experienced by FMTs.

7.1.1 Multiculturalism and whiteness in the classroom

In the analysis I explore how the majority group see their identity as normal and that strength is derived from group size and appearance, group discrimination and power as described by Lyubansky and Barter (2011). I explain the unintentional bias of whites and the invisible quality of whiteness. Contrary to this notion is the visible aspect of 'non-whiteness'. I argue if whiteness is invisible, then non-whiteness must be visible - as the binary opposite. If whiteness is an unintentional bias of whites towards non-whites (Croll, 2013) then does being non-white bring with it a natural and socialised awareness of one's visibility and differences in a majority society? Franks (2000:917) explains how British white Muslim women experience a variety of responses from non-Muslims including racial abuse, 'although neither "race" nor racism are fixed, they tend, nevertheless, to shift as rein[sic]ventions of the same phenomena'. Martineau (2012) draws on Fraser's (2001) concepts on how differences and identities and consequently the space for dialogue between agents are shaped by patterns of recognition and misrecognition (Fraser 2001 cited in Martineau 2012). Martineau (2012) acknowledges how multiculturalism as the recognition of identities can itself be part of the problem and can reinforce the

power dynamics that generate misrecognition. She argues that a retreat from multiculturalism in many liberal democracies at both public and policy levels is not conducive for fostering conditions for integration in society. Her article attempts to shift attention from the recognition of peoples' identities and instead focuses on what it might entail to transform the conditions in which misrecognition is produced. I exemplify in ***Scenario 1.1*** how I was made to feel as though I was an imposter in the 'white' classroom, without a sense of belonging and left questioning the 'self'. Perhaps to understand the complexities of racial hierarchies in a community setting of a classroom it is important to acknowledge the recognition of whiteness before we can apply transformative measures to tackle misrecognition (Frankenberg 1993). Malik (2015) defines multiculturalism as both a description of society as a lived experience of diversity and a prescription for managing it. Malik's views on multicultural policies acting to institutionalise diversity and thereby creating division enhances Martineau's views around transformative politics. By refocusing the debate around 'differences' to act as a force for reflection rather than conflict has the potential to form more inclusive social realities. My study shows the complexities around identity in the classroom for FMTs and how they navigate the perceived 'normal'.

7.1.2 Surveillance of Muslims and contemporary hegemonic post-racial politics

The practices of governmentality of Muslims have seen a transformational shift from multiculturalism politics to discourses in education surrounded by rhetoric of assimilation, community cohesion, integration and security (Law and Swann 2011:36). The Muslim subject now embodies a threat, especially since a result of global, national and local events, as discussed in the Literature Review chapter. My data sheds light on the impact of subjecting Muslims to increased scrutiny and systemic forms of regulation. ***Scenario 1.5*** provides an example of the conceptualisation of security and its application by those in authority to achieve essentialization of a dissimilar group. Even in a multigenerational population the 'culture clash' (Sian, 2011:117), highlights the continuous struggle for diasporic

South Asians to adjust to their Western and Asian (and I would argue Muslim) identities. Yasmin points out that she cannot be scrutinised for being a Muslim if she does not look like one. This culture clash discourse denies agency to young Muslims as explained by Shain (2013) and is used as a backdrop to justify and dominate policy frameworks focused on South Asian and Muslim communities from the earliest days of mass settlement. I would argue that it seems the Asian problem is now a Muslim one with Islamic extremism having a cultural or religious essence whereas white extremism does not (Sian 2015), perhaps because it does not have the political factor of immigration associated with it. My data depicts the consequences of negative stereotypes and reductive constructs that result in unequal power relations and represent Muslims as the 'other' and whereby all Muslims embody a 'danger' to Western hegemony. The culture of 'spying' promoted by government initiatives puts Muslims in precarious positions (Khan 2010) and may result in destabilising and undermining the capacity to build networks of cooperation and trust. The monitoring of Muslims through initiatives such as PVE (Sian 2015), is targeted at younger people in the sphere of education, but I argue this surveillance diffuses to impact Muslim teachers to a greater degree than their non-Muslim counterparts.

Surveillance acts to reinforce Islamophobic discourses by generating a climate of fear (Ahmed 2016). Whether it is tighter controls at airports or the banning of the burqa in many European countries (see literature review, chapter 2, section 2.2.6, p36), Muslims have been constructed as religiously, not ethnically, marked bodies and depict 'how post racial logics are coming to hegemonise Britain's ethnoscapes.' (Sian, 2015:16). Surveillance culture through the PVE agenda undermines inclusivity and instead reinforces the negative stereotypes around Muslims. Furthermore, my data shows how the surveillance approach can close the space needed to interrogate structural inequalities that exist throughout educational systems. Historically transmitted patterns of meaning that represent the traditions and culture of a school can serve to strengthen the 'stuck' position I analyse in Chapter 5, with ***Scenario 1.4*** exemplifying this position in the attitude of senior leaders in

the school towards a Muslim teacher. Whether it is Yasmin's comments around feeling the pressure to always be her best as she feels ethnic minorities must work harder to hold their positions, or the burden faced by Sabah when having to make choices around how to socialise with staff without alcohol, my data provides examples of the inequalities and or lack of inclusivity that exist in school structures.

7.1.3 School architecture and surveillance needs

Yasmin finds herself taking a defensive stance when specifically asked by her colleagues about a terrorist attack and thereby experiences pressure from the technology of the panoptic gaze to perform the 'normal'. Foucault (1995) cites schools and hospitals as institutions where mechanisms of social control and discipline associated with the modern prison, penetrate society (Foucault 1995 cited in Piro 2008), as discussed in the Literature Review chapter. Power flows through these institutions in its various regulatory forms. Piro (2008) provides a critique of Foucault's (1995) use of the prison as a model for other institutions by alluding to the focus of control, regulation and discipline as features that contribute to the social fabric of these institutions. Hoy (1986) supports this idea by suggesting that no one is free from subjection to social control and authority and that this is not the same as being in prison. Piro (2008) discusses how rules and traditions in institutions such as schools, and by extension society, may offer benefits to people in the protection they offer. In Chapter 5, I analyse ***Scenario 1.5*** where a teacher self ascribes the role of detective and police in their interpretation and execution of the PVE agenda. Methodologies such as the PVE agenda are discourses that schools continue to implement to ensure their institutions are environments that meet the benchmarks of security procedures. However, I argue that these measures provide a useful and interesting insight into reactive measures and do not promote inclusivity as demonstrated by ***Scenario 1.5***. An example of reactive measures can be seen with the concerns raised in a comprehensive report authored by Connelly et al (2020), which explores the views and experiences of people who live and work

in Greater Manchester, UK in relation to police in schools. The report concludes with:

> The overwhelming evidence presented in this report shows that the people of Greater Manchester harbour grave concerns about the path that has been imposed. This is a path to an increasingly harsh and punitive society, in which our schools are being turned into places of surveillance, criminalisation and punitive authoritarianism – rather than supportive learning environments from which young people prosper.
>
> (Connelly, et al 2020:51)

The report challenges the UK education system and calls for transformation of society through school, within an international stance. I argue that my data highlights a parallel with this in the policing sense represented by a surveillance culture of Muslims, the difference is that the police is not a physical body but runs through policy and a panoptic fear cultivated through scrutiny and modulation of the self (Connelly, et al 2020). Perhaps rather than adopting dominant frameworks of assimilation (Sian, 2015), understanding the needs of Muslims (inclusive of educators and pupils) should not only be encouraged but I argue, should be implemented as remedial to the exclusionary practices in the education system that reinforce rather than challenge negative stereotypes of Muslims.

My data raises questions around how school leaders manage the place and space for agency in an 'education landscape dominated by the discourse of autonomy' (Courtney, 2016:18). The women I interviewed provide examples where schools have tried to accommodate their needs whether it is providing a prayer room or sanctioning pupils who have displayed racist behaviour, but there is an undercurrent of trepidation around declaration of faith and appearing to comply through modulation. Identities are relational and situational as exemplified by socialising with staff when alcohol is involved. Foucault (1977) points to minimising resistance by reducing the visibility of the exercise of power, which is key to compliance. Courtney (2016) comments on how this is no longer necessary when the habits of compliance are entrenched by objects. The conceptualisation Courtney describes builds on a panoptic structure, but the difference is that the

operationalisation of power is explicit and compliance by objects is ingrained in identity formation. Courtney (2016) expands on the relationship between schools, leaders and the state and suggests that school improvement is not the agenda but rather the state's exercise of power over school leaders to achieve certainty of success. I argue that Muslim teachers as objects of compliance are more likely to essentialise the construct of power that filters down from the state to school leaders and then to practitioners.

7.1.4 'Muslimness' and the pressures faced by FMTs.

My data highlights various examples where teacher identity has been called into question; for example, Bengali pupils speculating on ethnicity and whether I belong to the Bengali or Pakistani group (***Scenario 1.1***); or Muslim pupils wondering whether I am a Muslim (***Scenario 1.2***); and non-Muslim white pupils questioning whether I am even an Asian (***Scenario 1.3***). I have witnessed prejudiced conversations with racist undertones when the agents were not aware of my 'Muslimness' (***Scenario 1.6***) and even been asked to deliver Hindu assembly by a senior leader who assumed I must be a Hindu by default as I do not appear to fit his stereotype of a Muslim woman (***Scenario 1.4***).

My interview dataset emphasises the ambivalence around identity experienced by the FMTs I interviewed, see chapter 2, section 2.1.8, p27, Diaspora and identity, where I discuss the context of identity production. This is explored in depth in the analysis; however, what is interesting as a researcher is that the interview process itself and the questions I posed around identity forced participants such as Aminah and Sabah to speculate on how they ascribe self-identity and the hierarchy of multi-layered identities. Huddart (2005) comments on Homi Bhabha's (1994 cited in Huddart 2005:4) 'flux of cultural hybridities'. Bhabha (1994 cited in Huddart 2005) focuses on the in-between of settled cultural forms of identity to create new cultural meaning as described by Huddart (2005). This can be aligned with the ideas

I discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), around identity constructs being between groups.

A common theme that stood out was the affiliation to Pakistan and a desire to maintain cultural capital through this, even though all the participants are British born nationals. The FMTs I interviewed identified as Muslim as their primary marker of identity. My data shows that there is disparity between whether a teacher wishes to disclose whether they are a Muslim or not. This can be seen with Sabah who anticipates an awkwardness and calls it the 'unknown' for her and prefers not to disclose her Muslim identity with pupils. On the other hand, a hijab wearing teacher who locates physicality in her 'Muslimness' such as Zaynab, takes every opportunity to create awareness and explores with a view to challenge responses. The nuances that exist in how FMTs embody their 'Muslimness' is only one aspect of their experience. If a FMT outwardly and physically represents her faith by wearing a hijab then she effectively loses agency over her identification on non-identification as a Muslim on her own terms compared to a teacher who may choose to withhold this information. As a Muslim RE teacher, Zaynab more so than the other FMTs I interviewed acknowledges that her faith is an explicit part of her identity in the classroom and beyond and she sees herself as an advocate of Islam. There is an intimate overlap between Zaynab's professional role as an RE teacher and how she co-constructs this with being a Muslim. My data shows the importance the FMTs in my study place on the ascription of 'Muslim'. Panjwani (2017) who argues that 'No Muslim is just a Muslim' discusses how the 'Muslim' identity is reductive and encourages a view through the lens of 'Muslimness' which encourages theological discourses.

The study by Vince (2021), considers the limitations of the category 'Muslim' in the case of Muslim RE teachers and concludes that the teachers were limited by their multiple configurations of identity as 'Muslim RE teachers' as they struggled to shift from the 'Muslim' aspect of this internal complexity and could not fluidly reflect

their identity as RE teachers within a professional repertoire without the 'Muslim'. I would argue that the FMTs I interviewed do display fluidity (to various degrees) and incorporate their Muslimness in diverse ways in their practice and in ways that offer congruence between their faith and professionalism. Religion plays different roles in the lives of Muslim teachers, as pointed out by Vince (2021), and as my data show, faith manifests in different ways for different teachers based on their ethos and religiosity; their professional experience and confidence; and their self-determined capacity to tackle issues both explicit and implicit to make a positive and transformative change. Examples of this can be seen with Zaynab creating awareness with her pupils around a racist experience she encountered or with Yasmin defending herself to a colleague when asked about her feelings around a terrorist event. Whether the conversations are around fasting, alcohol, evolution, or terrorism, the FMTs in my study in their various capacities have drawn upon their 'Muslimness' to some and varying degrees, at times substantiated via pedagogy and sometimes through being active role-models using personal life experiences as a mechanism for change. The FMTs in my study present 'Muslimness' as more than just ostensible expression through visible and physical manifestations of faith; the demonstrate an awareness that it intersects with discourses of gender and race and transpires in more prevalent ways.

7.1.5 Schools and leaders should be aware of the pressures faced by FMTs and should respond effectively

Yasmin claims that Muslim teachers must work harder to hold their positions and accepts her inference as valid and just. Zaynab is referred to with the name of the other Muslim teacher in the school and accepts this because there are only two of them. I accept racist attitudes of senior members of staff at the lunch table and do not defend myself because there is an ironic truth to their comments. I am asked to supervise Hindu assembly as I do not look like a Muslim, but I am not approached for my services for Muslim assembly. I am forced to question why FMTs are seemingly so accepting and forgiving of these pernicious attitudes? Why is

immediate challenge not instinctive and considered necessary and why do we look to defend school leaders and colleagues?

Does this stem from an inferiority from the legacies of imperialism or is that racial discourses are so endemic and extensive that for some they are not worth challenging? Aminah has concerns around the integration of her own children in British society, as does Zaynab. They both point to generational shifts and that the perceptions and experiences of their immigrant parents are very different to their own as first-generation Muslims living in Britain. This is further compounded by the dynamics that shape hostile outlooks towards Muslims in Europe (Meer and Modood 2011). Meer and Modood (2011) point to the first of this dynamic with roots in contemporary agendas in counterterrorism and the second from an ideological-historical relationship with the Orient and imperialism. They discuss various global studies that point to macro political sentiments where Muslims are seen as hostile. Douglas Murray portrays his anti-Muslim sentiments:

> Conditions for Muslims in Europe must be made harder across the board…Where a person was born in the West, they should be deported to the country of origin of their parent or grandparent.
>
> Douglas Murray, Director of the Centre for social cohesion, Civitas
>
> (Meer and Modood, 2011:69)

I ask a question earlier in this section around the acceptance of prejudice and negative attitudes of the FMTs I interviewed. Perhaps the answer lies in the feelings demonstrated by teachers such as Zaynab and Aminah around their ethnic origins, race and culture and ascertaining where they 'belong'. They seem to overlook their civil and political rights as British citizens, and this transpires into their professional lives. For example,the 1998 Human Rights Act provides for freedom of religion, and the 2006 and 2010 Equality Acts ban discrimination based on religion (UK

Government 2009-17). There seems to be a sociological relevance associated with religion as it is intertwined with commonly held stereotypes around identity and culture (UK Government, 2021b). Commissioned by the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson in 2020, The Report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities highlights several noteworthy points including a statement that claims historic experience of racism still haunts the present. The FMTs in my study challenge this view in that racism is still very much active and prevalent in the workplace and wider society, it is a present-day reality as well as embedded in historic racial discourse. In addition to racism, Muslim women experience multiple forms of discrimination, including gender and religious discrimination. An intersectional approach (Crenshaw 1989) is useful here as it advocates for the integration of other categories of social difference, specifically between women. I discuss the recommendations of this report in the introduction (Chapter 1).

The pressures faced by Muslim teachers, and specifically FMTs as shown by my study, are articulated through the limitations to the category 'Muslim' when identities and the lives of representatives of the Muslim group are explored in education. Leaders in school should be aware of the dichotomy faced by Muslim teachers in identity attribution between whether they ascribe to being a Muslim teacher or a teacher who happens to be a Muslim, and the impact of this categorisation professionally. There are of course in-between spaces and a capacity for teachers to shift in these spaces. Further exploration of Muslims in professional roles, especially where they can have a transformative effect on the pupils and colleagues they interact with, could add significant value and should be given further consideration more widely (Vince, 2021).

7.1.6 Concluding thoughts on section 7.1

In this section I have discussed with reference to the analysis chapters where appropriate, that the agency of FMTs is relational and situational. Identities are constructed against the homogenisation of the category 'Muslim'; with the

backdrop of Islamophobic discourses; unequal power relations reinforced through policy and a surveillance culture that undermines inclusivity and forces FMTs to ingrain compliance.

7.2 Section 2: FMTs have a potentially transformational role in challenging stereotypes with Britain's multicultural youth.

In this section I look at the pressures faced by FMTs in the classroom. I consider Gadamer's (1989) shared horizons as an integrating force to overcome prejudices. I show through discussion of the analysis of the data corpus that FMTs have the power to create rival meanings. I look at the role of initial teacher training programmes in addressing the issues around recruitment, retention and creating an awareness of the prejudices in the UK education system.

7.2.1 Pressure in the classroom

I explored classroom dynamics and whether issues around disclosure and responsibility add an extra pressure for FMTs. ***Scenario 1.2 exemplifies*** dialogues that take place around identity between agents in the classroom. I compared my response to ***Scenario 1.2*** with ***1.1*** and concluded that I am now more confident as a practitioner to deal with the space opened by this type of dialogue. In presenting an alternative viewpoint by using life-stories and lived experiences I challenged the negative stereotypes of my pupils. Yasmin takes a similar approach with her pupils and tries to build a human connection by sharing her own experiences and knowledge beyond the scope of the curriculum. She allows a space for reflection in her classroom by utilising her individualism and acting as a role model for all pupils. Yasmin discusses the pressure she feels to represent her way in the best Muslim way possible and chooses not to wear the hijab. My data reveals that FMTs do question the aspects of religious diversity they wish to impart in the classroom. Zaynab, for example, takes a pragmatic approach and explains how she pursued teaching to change mindsets and as a result has no qualms around exploring the 'differences' she presents. Sabah and Aminah take a more measured approach

based on their personal confidence, values and beliefs and express the pressure they feel around the possible negative impacts professionally.

7.2.2 Gadamer's shared horizons

Gadamer (1989) explains his understandings on prejudices by describing all 'pre-judgements' and preconceptions as vital to precisely interpreting our present concerns. What is crucial about this notion is that to gain objectivity, the interpreter must not seek to leave their concepts aside. According to Gadamer (1989), all interpretation is prejudiced as it is always oriented to our present concerns. What is required is a filtering process between our initial assumptions and that which we are trying to understand as revisions to our conscious awareness, thereby leading to 'rival meanings' emerging. Zaynab executes this approach with ease in her practice. She benefits from the strong rapport she has with her pupils to integrate life stories and lived experiences in her teaching; thereby endorsing cultural liberation and calls for reflexivity. This is a hermeneutical endeavour which is an 'infinite process' that does not have a final meaning. Zaynab does not endeavour to locate objective truth in her dialogue with her pupils but instead allows for the exchange to be discursive in nature. Understanding does not require adopting the viewpoint of the other or subordinating the other person to our standards (Gadamer, 1989), but instead creates a new context of meaning - a new shared horizon. Gadamer (1989)refers to this integration of self and that which we are trying to understand as a successful conversation where both parties are 'bound to one another in a new community' (Gadamer, 1989: 379). Central to this shared horizon, the self and that which we are trying to understand remain unchanged. His insights can help to explain the problems of understanding between parties in multicultural contexts and can offer a way forward to the issue of non-transformative dialogue as described by Malik (2015).

The example provided in ***Scenario 1.1*** exemplifies Muslim pupils questioning my 'Muslimness' as I don't appear to fit their stereotype. This conversation represents nuances and disparities that exist in knowledge and meaning making even within the 'out' group in society. Martineau (2012) utilises the insights found in Gadamer's (1989 cited in Martineau) conception of understanding as a 'fusion of horizons' to argue that the acknowledgement of the differences between the 'horizons' of the other and self are required to address harmful forms of misrecognition. As a non-hijab wearing Muslim woman it was not easy for me to 'share horizons' with Muslim boys who have an established stereotype of what a Muslim woman should look like. I used exposition, a method utilised in teaching to set things out clearly by explaining, modelling and demonstrating. I used an analogy as a tool to help achieve this. Yasmin is very forthright with her pupils in sharing her challenges using personal stories to perhaps achieve the 'shared horizons' status with her pupils through seeking understanding via interpretation. However, my data shows not all teachers are comfortable in doing this as it makes them feel vulnerable, for example, Sabah chooses to conceal her differences and feels she is living a dual life in school. As a hijab-wearing Religious Studies teacher Zaynab uses the space in her curriculum to construct 'shared horizons' and comments on the dynamism in meaning making by saying she learns from her students as much as they learn from her.

Zaynab directly challenges the risks of misrecognition by allowing for connections through common values. Forms of misrecognition play a central role in shaping present and future cross-cultural relations (Fraser 2001), and how differences get converted to incompatibility. Fraser (2001) comments on the injustice of misrecognition in that it harms a person's ability to develop the self-esteem and self-respect that are necessary conditions to hold a healthy identity. This can lead to cultural groups becoming more insular as identities become more narrowly defined, any dialogue that takes place between these cultural groups becomes unhelpful and non-transformative intercultural talk as described by Malik (2015). Martineau (2012) defines this as dialogue that takes place amid conditions of mutual hostility

and mistrust and people talking at 'cross purposes' and serves to harden borders of identity. If inter- and intra-cultural dynamics lead minority groups to feel themselves the subject of suspicion and the embodiment of negative and demeaning stereotypes, they are likely to turn inward and feel 'under threat' (Parekh, 2005). The polarising effect of misrecognition is the shut-down of commonality and can lead to some Muslims reacting by reasserting 'traditional' Islamic values, such as the outward expression of being Muslim, such as the wearing of the hijab as discussed in part two of the Literature Review (Chapter 2, section 2.2.6, p35). A relatively recent example of this in British history is how the Rushdie Affair in 1989 led many Muslims to promote a unitary identity and increased solidarity with being Muslim, according to Afshar et al (2005).

7.2.3 Overlapping horizons as a positively integrating force

Taking an explicit account of difference is crucial to the cultivation of a more open society, according to Martineau (2012), where cross-cultural dialogue between self and others can be positive. Aminah mentions the similarities and overlaps between all cultures and considers human issues. She makes a point about teaching the acceptance of others in her practice. The failure to engage adequately with meanings as perceived by the agents constitutes a form of misrecognition and restricts avenues for effective communication. An example of this is when Sabah is a passive observer of a conversation around fasting. She chooses to not mediate or disrupt the assumptions made by her pupils. In attempting to resolve this, it is important to acknowledge the possibility that the motivating sense of grievance by a cultural or religious group has legitimacy (Horton, 2003). Institutional arrangements are crucial in shaping social realities and importantly where 'horizons' can shift. When Aminah's pupils do not see the culturally emancipated woman of the West in their teacher, it triggers their curiosity.

7.2.4 Spaces in teaching

When we can recognise the separateness of our distinct horizons, only then can we attempt to understand the horizon of others and gain an understanding of the other on their own terms. Our differences are relational and fluid and so our horizons may overlap. Gadamer describes this fluidity, 'Horizons change for a person who is moving' (Gadamer 1989: 304). Recognition of the deep nature of difference and of what we do not know about the other is an important space in teaching. There is scope in a space such as a classroom to address the failure to see the lack of knowledge. ***Scenario 1.6*** offers a clear example of a typical classroom that represents multiple continuums if a classroom is to be appreciated as a microcosm of society. The pupils involved in this exchange have strong prejudiced views and offer an insight to wider perspectives in their community. The platform provided in opening the space for this dialogue is a result of the implementation of the Prevent Agenda in schools; however, there is a lost window of opportunity for building connections and changing horizons. To the contrary, horizons are more distinct and possibly reinforced without relational fluidity as described by Gadamer (1989).

I argue that, without consolidation of potentially important discussions and appropriate training for deliverers of this strategy, the Prevent Agenda can become precariously counter-productive. Yasmin insists there should be a programme rolled out in schools that includes multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka, 1995), where these issues are tackled appropriately. In the case of religious or non-religious outlooks as exemplified by the FMTs I interviewed; these are not different points on the continuum of modernity; rather they exist simultaneously in different but equal spheres (Martineau, 2012). Zaynab provides an example of this when she shares her life experiences of racism with her mostly white Religious Studies class. Her tolerance and internalisation of racist attitudes is vocalised in an educational sphere, the classroom - where Zaynab's pupils offer her respect and empathy through expressing shock at her treatment. The relational space opened by Zaynab demands active membership of all agents where ideas are negotiated, and meaning is constructed; it is a truly democratic space where there is acknowledgement of

individual horizons and a tolerance and desire for shared horizons. The need for dialogue is an ongoing hermeneutic conversation with constant revision between assumptions held by self and those of others. In doing so, horizons that incorporate the voices, experiences and hopes of diverse groups are fused and this opens up new shared horizons that are actively constructed through reflexive purpose.

7.2.5 FMTs have the power to create rival meanings

In the literature review (Chapter 2, section 2.2.5, p33), I discuss cultural representation as a social force. Analysis of the data in my study shows that FMTs do have the capacity to inform and challenge negative views. This is a question I raised in the literature review. McConkey (2004) explains how misrecognition becomes the subject of political justice and a form of oppression when coupled with unequal power structures in society that allow norms to become universalised and representative of everyone in society. In ***Scenario 2.0***, Casey and Jessica directly question my identity and 'what a Muslim woman looks like'. The conversation brings up negative stereotypes around Muslim women and prejudices directed at Muslims. Since the dominant groups' cultural expressions receive propagation, differences are 'reconstructed largely as deviance and inferiority' (Young 1990: 59). This leaves minority groups in society in the paradoxical position where they are subjected to stereotypes such as 'Other' and in addition their perspectives being rendered invisible by dominant cultural expressions (Martineau, 2012).

I triggered an alternative view to that of Casey and Jessica's Muslim woman in challenging their stereotype. This 'epistemic injustice' as termed by Fricker (1998), serves to shut down the 'rhetorical space' in which individuals can have their voices listened to as opposed to just being heard. The rhetorical spaces in teaching and the opportunity they offer pupils to have their voices 'listened' to can serve to be a valuable space to transform the conditions that generate misrecognition and have consequences for individuals and at the level of the community. This is described by

Goodson (2013:129) as our 'narrative capital'; moreover, Goodson suggests that in the new social future of flexible economies our narrative capacities will shape our world. Teachers can directly offer rival meanings to dominant perspectives and cultural expressions that cause harm to minority groups; however, I argue that this is only possible and effective when teachers have the ability to continuously reconstruct the 'self' to allow an understanding of the 'other'. Goodson (2013) refers to this concept as 'reselfing' and explains it is a necessary basis to understand the 'other' and is crucial for the direction the world will take.

My data corpus shows several examples where FMTs face stereotypes not only in the microcosm of the classroom but in the wider school community which has at times transpired through general perspectives and approaches of senior leaders (***Scenarios 1.4, 1.9***) and more acutely with individuals who hold developed and niche views (***Scenarios 1.5, 1.8***). Sayyid suggests an abandonment of the projects around 'social transformation' that point to the structural effects of racism and that the solution lies in 'individual reform' (Sayyid, 2010:5). Furthermore, Sian (2015), discusses the PVE agenda and the structural inequalities in schools that lead to the pathologisation of Muslim subjects, whereby the attraction to extremist views becomes the problem itself rather than the cause of the problem which is more to do with the structural nature of their isolation rather than due to an ideological thread. This is demonstrated by the essentialisation of groups because of securitisation initiatives as demonstrated by the exchanges in ***Scenario 1.5.*** Davies (2016) suggests the notion of dissolving boundaries through encounters with dissimilar people who may hold divergent ideas.

I argue that encounters that result in an exploration to find new narratives of being for self and others, as described by Davies (2016), are vital to transformation in educational outlooks. However, as my data shows these are by-chance interactions that happen almost inadvertently through a teacher stumbling across a racist exchange, for example, Zaynab in Bradford; or Yasmin and terrorism; or the form-

time exchange in ***Scenario 1.6*** around what a terrorist looks like. Mitchell (2003) argues that the ethos of multiculturalism in education has shifted from producing democratic and tolerant citizens to using diversity to compete in the marketplace. The privatisation agenda is reinforced by the entrenchment of neoliberalism (Strand and Winston 2008). in education along with other targeted and group-specific national policies. For example, the Pupil Premium grant for disadvantaged children, raising attainment in numeracy and literacy and a focus on White British boys as an underachieving group (Strand and Winston 2008). At times, a FMT will tackle the issue if the situation allows it. This is inevitably dependent upon her perception of her ability to challenge and successfully reconstruct stereotypical or prejudiced views. The encounters may be left unchallenged which presents a further debate around whether this is an undisclosed and self-ascribed part of the job description for a FMT. I make the case that individual and acute transformation of an individual or a group by a representative of the Muslim faith in education is a small step in the right direction. This is often driven by an emotive and reactionary stance, however when the interventions are government policy, and it is school leaders who satisfy and fulfil the criteria of neoliberal agendas then the responsibility lies with those who have the power to challenge structural inequalities on a larger scale - school leaders.

7.2.6 Concluding thoughts on section 7.2

My study shows that FMTs use life-stories and their lived experience with their pupils in pedagogical spaces, to challenge the stereotypes around FMTs. Sometimes differences are acknowledged in the spaces they construct, and transformation ensues through shifting 'horizons'. FMTs achieve this through the social power they have in occupying rhetorical spaces.

Chapter 8:

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

8.1 Introduction to Chapter 8 (Conclusion)

This chapter revisits, summarises and contextualises the significant themes that have arisen through this research. It is worth reflecting on why these issues are crucially important and identifying any implications for practice and future research. The conclusion chapter is organised in the following way: a summary of chapters 1-3 which provide a context to the study (8.2); a summary of the analysis chapters 4-6 where I consolidate the main threads that run through the study (8.3); a summary of the discussion chapter and implications for practice (8.4); Initial Teacher Training and 'voices' from the classroom (8.5); the contributions to knowledge made by this study (8.6); the limitations of the research (8.7); implications for further research (8.8); and final thoughts (8.9).

8.2 Summary of Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology chapters

In Chapter 1 (Introduction) I provided a background to the study, outlining the purpose of the study. I have contextualised this with my own background as a first-generation migrant and as an FMT. I located myself in the study as a teacher-researcher and rationalised my use of autoethnographic data in the form of ***Scenarios***. I explained why the homogenisation of the identity of Muslim women in education requires interrogation. I justified the title of my thesis 'Miss are you a Muslim?' as a postcolonial subject-practitioner in the field of education. I generated the aim and objectives for this dissertation and identified the main threads that would inform the discussion. I substantiated the theoretical approach best suited to my study and provided an overview of the thesis.

In Chapter 2 (Literature Review) I set out the background to topics that underpin the study including Orientalism; whiteness; South Asian migration to Britain; identity markers such as race, ethnicity and religion; race issues in contemporary Britain; Islamophobia and PVE; diaspora; and identity. I reviewed literature around

the stereotypes of British Muslim women and how these are dealt with. I looked at the role of the media in intensifying these stereotypes. Following this I discussed why I employ a critical feminist framework drawing on Islamic feminism. I then discussed the application of the Foucauldian perspective to conceptualise the idea of institutional surveillance and its impact within education, particularly for FMTs. I discussed the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (Foucault 1975; see also Foucault and Sheridan 1991), and how it can be applied to conceptualise the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education; I compared panopticism to post-panopticism; I discussed how Muslim women challenge stereotypes as ambassadors. Finally, in this chapter I identified gaps in current literature and used this to ascertain the specific issues that inform my inquiry.

In Chapter 3 (Methodology) I explored and justified my research design, addressing key themes and gaps that emerged from the previous chapter. I outlined why a feminist approach was appropriate to this study as it draws upon the lived experience of an under-represented group to unearth knowledge and disrupt the status quo. I examined the implications of being an insider-researcher and how this lends itself to my study as I use autoethnographic data as a prompt in the semi-structured interviews. I clarified the background to and the use of the autoethnographic data as a methodological research tool, with an example ***Scenario***. This, in combination with the personal voices of the FMT's interview data, allowed for a data corpus which examined identity construction within education. I discussed ethics and explained participant selection and the interview process; presenting the questions used in the semi-structured interviews. Following this I provided a researcher and interviewee profile and post interview reflection. I described how the data was transcribed and why I employed thematic analysis as a method for qualitative data analysis. I detailed the initial generation of broad themes and how these were refined into sub themes by physically arranging and manoeuvring the data extracts into a map (*Figure 1*).

8.3 Summary of Analysis Chapters 4-6 (Objectives 1-3)

I have achieved the aim of my study through fulfilling the following objectives:

Objective 1: To investigate how female Muslim teachers (FMTs) manage the challenges of homogenisation and stereotyping in an educational context.

Objective 2: To demonstrate how the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) helps to conceptualise the surveillance faced by Muslim women in education.

Objective 3: To identify the significant transactions for FMTs in educational contexts that have implications for teaching practice.

In this research I have focussed FMTs' experiences as subject-agents of systemic prejudices and unearned disadvantages. Addressing these issues is not up to individuals, but rather needs change in the system in which we live and work. In section 7.2.5, I discuss how teachers can directly offer rival meanings to dominant perspectives and that this is only possible and effective when teachers are able to 'reself' Goodson (2013). However, agency becomes problematic when conditions of relations are framed and contested by policies such as the PVE agenda; tropes such as Orientalism and whiteness; and Islamophobia as a concept and construct of the West to fuel and justify hate. See reference to the recommendations from: *The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities* (UK Government, 2021), (Chapter 1). The 'microcosm' concept (Dewey 1899, cited in Collins et al., 2019), when applied to educational institutions, involves creating democratic spaces where 'teachers actualize a model of the collective society' (Collins et al., 2019:9). It is important to understand the distinctions between school and state policies and an 'educator's democratic practice' (Collins et al., 2019:9). Why should FMTs (I specifically refer to this group as my study is niche to this demographic) 'remedy' the issues that are external to any job description I have ever come across in education? I argue that the issues are at times created by the prejudices in the system itself and are structural and intrinsic in nature. Whilst it is apparent that teachers such as Zaynab and Yasmin may have pursued the teaching profession to

directly challenge negative stereotypes, this is also a result of their experiences growing up in a society where they have experienced inequalities and prejudice from multiple groups. The FMTs in my study have shown that Muslim feminism is relative and subjective; the bodies of Muslim women are not only controlled by Muslim patriarchy but by the regulatory control of the state. Muslim feminism is not against Islam but against Muslim patriarchy and non-Muslim patriarchy. Nyhagen (2019:7) explains that the 'religious' and the 'secular' are 'intertwined' rather than dichotomous and that further studies are needed to explore 'the relationship between feminism, secularism and religion' (2019:24). My study adds to the voice of the 'ordinary' (Nyhagen, 2019:3), Muslim woman and shows that her agency is constructed through relations and that there are multiple ways of being.

The Report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (UK Government, 2021b) challenges the term 'institutional racism' and its general application to any 'microaggression' (UK Government, 2021b:9). Anti-racism policies exist in many societies, according to Breen and Meer (2019); they normalise what should be considered extreme forms of racism and adopt a 'business as usual' approach (Delgado, 2003). The purpose here feels like a whitewash to the problems of racism in Britain. The issue, I feel as a practitioner at grassroot levels in education, is not what we call racism and how it is 'dressed up' to make everyone feel okay but the fact that it is a reality for some and that is not necessarily, as the report states, because of the following:

> It becomes much harder if people from ethnic minority backgrounds absorb a fatalistic narrative that says the deck is permanently stacked against them.
>
> (UK Government, 2021b:9)

The report says that 'communities could help themselves' in an 'era of participation' (UK Government, 2021b:8) which is an unexplored approach. I would argue this course of action is about individual agency, which is almost inevitably a limiting factor for some individuals. Could it be that 'whiteness' as a notion itself

and its repercussions should somehow be addressed? According to Rhodes (2013:52), whiteness was once seen as both invisible and normative, a state of 'racelessness'. When racism becomes an ingrained feature of societal landscapes it becomes desensitised to people in that culture (Breen and Meer 2019). My study shows that the relationality of whiteness is controlled by questions of race and power, which exist in educational contexts as they do elsewhere. Muslim women are at the forefront of identity formation. My study shows that some FMTs will choose to look like a Muslim (in the stereotypical sense) and others will choose not to. Franks (2000) argues the significance of wearing the hijab does not fulfil its function in making the wearer invisible but rather makes the wearer visible and brings attention to the power relations invested in it. Some FMTs will self-identify as Muslim and sometimes emphasize a different aspect of identity. Not wearing the hijab in a majority non-Muslim society does not make one 'normal'. This is significant as it could represent the equivalent of trying to look white and 'blend in' in a majority white society.

A further question my data raises is around whether the hostility towards Muslims is about the religion itself, or is about indications of culture, race and belonging. Is it about the differences Muslims present when compared to white, non-Muslim people living in Western countries? The limiting assumptions made about me in a professional context demonstrate that widespread ignorance and discrimination is normalised in educational settings. I have sat at a dining table in the school canteen early in my career and been taunted for eating 'free' food and the assumption that I had been 'let out' of the house by my Pakistani husband whom I acquired via a forced marriage. I do not present as an obvious Muslim woman and the stereotypical assumptions here are about perceived cultural traditions that have little to do with Islam. I have been told by a white senior member of staff that Muslim boys will not respect me because of my image and that is due to the way they have been brought up and the values instilled in them. Again, there are many cultures where women are considered the inferior citizens in the home, and we do not have to look far to see gender inequality embedded in many aspects of Western

life and society. I have witnessed conversations where teachers have not challenged highly racialised views offered by pupils as this is the consensus and perhaps therefore does not warrant challenge, or perhaps they don't know how to challenge it. I have been employed under the assumption that I must be a Hindu as I do not look Muslim enough, much to the shock of senior leaders in a school that is historically and to the present day highly under-represented by ethnic minority teachers when compared to the pupil demographics. The examples I refer to in my study convey the pressure FMTs are under and the responsibility they undertake to tackle racial stereotypes and prejudice in educational settings. For example, Yasmin defends her stance on terrorism in the staffroom after a local terrorist atrocity. Sabah battles against her ideals as a Muslim in the workplace by praying in a locked room, not wishing to disclose whether she is fasting and even questioning whether her surname gives away her 'Muslimness'. Aminah conveys trepidation around wanting to always 'look' professional as a visible Muslim woman, but discreetly slips in snippets of her faith into pedagogy as if she is afraid of being caught out. Zaynab has made it her mission to educate every person she meets about how 'normal' she is as a visible Muslim woman, expressing her lived experience to inform and challenge. My study exemplifies the battles FMTs face around image, identity and systemic injustices in the workplace and beyond. Furthermore, my study shows that FMTs have an undervalued but potentially transformational role in challenging the stereotypes of Muslims with Britain's multicultural youth in educational contexts.

8.4 Implications from Chapter 7 (Discussion)

There are many voices and spaces in education that deserve and require acknowledgement. I recommend a forum and peer support for 'voices' which should be set up by settings such as schools. The issues I explore in my study have been brought to light through myself, as a FMT and researcher, engaging in discussion with other FMTs about their experiences and probing their views through the presentation of ethnographic data in the form of ***Scenarios.*** There is much scope and a need for probing the experiences and views of FMTs, particularly in relation to the implications of this professionally. A more longitudinal approach,

through a potential series of interviews would enhance and reflect cultural and professional shifts over time. This would form a natural extension of this study as the interview process itself went some way to sensitise and transform mindsets in the case of Aminah and Sabah respectively. Schools should be doing more at the pupil level to create awareness around diversity. The education system is failing our young people if it cannot offer spaces for important conversations. If these discussions are not 'managed' with clear rules around respect, language, expectations and acceptable boundaries they may inevitably lead to reinforcing stereotypes, promoting prejudices and fuelling hate in some cases. The biases and negative stereotypes around Muslims portrayed in the media should be addressed in education, as a whole school issue, to reduce the pressure on Muslim teachers.

Schools or groups of schools could set up a peer-group forum as an approach to manage such issues. As a wider societal issue this would help to alleviate the unconscious underlying agenda which in some cases draws FMTs to the teaching profession. There are professional tensions for Muslim women in education and they do experience pressure to conduct themselves in a particular way. My study uses feminist methodologies and epistemologies of experience to underpin knowledge. For this knowledge to construct meaning in educational settings an understanding of Muslim women and in particular Muslim women who wear the hijab, is important. My study has shown that FMTs find themselves dealing with societal issues in the classroom because of their 'Muslimness'. Some FMTs feel they are placed under unsolicited scrutiny by pupils and colleagues which leads to unjustified professional tension in the workplace. FMTs feel an added pressure to be their best and that they must work harder to gain professional integrity. The FMTs in my study, as individual actors, modulate their behaviour which effectively reduces, or in some cases erases, their Muslim visibility. They face pressure to represent a depoliticised and secular 'Islam'. The They construct identities by virtue of exclusion and in doing so contradict democratic values, the foundations of which are equality and acceptable difference. Senior leaders need to show cultural awareness to avoid resentment amongst Muslim staff. The ethos in schools should

be more inclusive, positive and respectful to avoid the pressure felt by FMTs to explain, defend and blend in. sharing of personal life stories in the classroom, by FMTs supports the pupil-teacher relationship and helps to create the 'human connection'. However, there is a risk of 'othering' themselves on further grounds when explaining their choices. There is an underlying pressure here. My data shows that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils may be at the discretion of the individual teacher, does this lead to an inconsistent approach? Where are the spaces in education to open important debates around holistic issues if teachers are confined to curriculum and time limitations? Training in this area as a whole school agenda would help to address this. Many of the issues I have described can, and should, be addressed at the initial teacher training level as a starting point, discussed below in the next section (8.5).

8.5 Initial Teacher Training and 'voices' from the classroom

My study highlights FMTs such as Sabah and Aminah sometimes lack the confidence and adeptness to deal with patterns of a discriminatory nature or related to race issues in their settings and go out of their way to avoid them. This exemplifies those teachers that may be unprepared to meet the needs of the diverse student body in British classrooms and more broadly in their settings. This may present a barrier to working with pupils and colleagues that represent cultural and racial diversity. Bell (2002) recommends that teacher educators should:

> ...explore the implicit knowledge about race and racial hierarchy that lies beneath the surface, so as to challenge and change racial attitudes and feelings that block race cognizance and clarity about racism.
>
> (Bell 2002, cited in Subedi 2006:228).

Subedi (2006) points to the fact there is limited research in teachers' practices with students in the classroom and how the discourse of religion functions in schools. Clyne (1998) supports the view of Subedi (2006), in that if teachers have limited understanding of Muslim culture, beliefs and values then they are restricted in

developing and implementing this into the curriculum. In the literature review (Chapter 2), I discuss literature that highlights the purpose of political frameworks, such as multiculturalism. I question whether they serve the agendas they are designed for throughout the study. Sian (2015) examines how young Muslims have been increasingly subject to scrutiny in educational systems along with systemic forms of regulation and discipline whilst the development of race equality and diversity is marginal.

Subedi (2006) comments on the need to prepare teachers for diverse settings especially when the majority of teachers are white, middle class and may not be well connected to the ethnic communities and their lives and therefore their experiences and histories. Around 90% of teachers and 97% of headteachers are white representing a clear under-representation of black and ethnic minorities in the teaching workforce and school leadership according to the 2011 UK Census (UK Government, 2021a). The remedy to this would be greater recruitment and retention of black and ethnic minority teachers, but there is perhaps a case for creating awareness for all in training programmes, regardless of background. Therefore, there is perhaps justification for having a programme in place in Initial Teacher Training courses that goes beyond the current citizenship and British Values angle and delves deeper into what multicultural education in Britain looks like from the vantage point of the classroom. I am not advocating for an Islamic ethos in British education, but for one that starts with educators who have the awareness to permeate cultural and religious sensitivity with all agents. As my study shows, there is a place for 'voices' in education, whether they are those of educators or pupils, Muslim or not, or any other denomination and there is a space for dialogue that can shape and reshape constructions through meaning making. If all trainee teachers had some exposure to the lived experiences and the narratives in school settings then perhaps, they would have more empathetic, sensitive and inclusive outlooks as practitioners and eventual leaders who go on to embed policy; particularly with regards to post-racial discourse. Training would also account for the differences in interpretations, perceptions and biases as demonstrated by the

inconsistent implementation of the strands of the PVE Agenda in schools (***Scenario 1.5***). Addressing the inconsistencies and imbalance of priorities would allow for a school culture more encompassing of diversity.

8.6 Implications for teacher training

Teacher training and development can play an important role in decolonising the curriculum. In education decolonisation is an iterative process that is ongoing (Runnymede Trust, 2021). It interrogates assumptions and biases that underpin current educational philosophies and knowledge systems. My study shows that change needs to happen at a wider sense and beyond decolonising the formal curriculum. The FMTs in my study contend with the 'hidden curriculum', which is learning through 'unstructured socialisation' (Hibbert and Wright 2022:2) and 'always has a normative or "moral" component' (Greene 1983 cited in Hibbert and Wright 2022:2). Attention is needed to address the approach teachers take and the inclusive nature of education. Teacher training has the potential to disrupt Eurocentric educational narratives, at a key point of influence in higher education. The disruption of the cultural reproduction of colonial narratives at this level has the potential to train and inform prospective practitioners to make the greatest difference at the classroom level. This may require structural change in teacher training programmes to allow for teaching of migration and empire (Runnymede Trust, 2021). There should be a space for reflexive understandings of lived experiences and critical reflections of one's own positionality on worldviews. The Report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities reports findings from UNESCO suggest teacher diversity allows for children of a variety of backgrounds to have access to a role model and have someone from a similar background to look up to (UK Government, 2021b). The report highlights the fact that the evidence for the impact of teachers from ethnic minorities is scarce and that factors such as equipping schools with high quality teacher training and investing in a wider school improvement agenda can help to raise the achievement of ethnic minority pupils. I argue these factors would support teachers from all backgrounds and place value on the lived experiences of ethnic minority teachers.

8.7 Contributions to knowledge

The aim of my study was to explore the role of image and identity on the agency of FMTs and the implications of this in educational contexts. There are two broad themes that thread through my study:

Theme 1: Agency is constructed through relation.

Theme 2: FMTs have a potentially transformational role in challenging the stereotypes of Muslims with Britain's multicultural youth.

- My study contributes to feminist methodology in education, using Islamic feminism in a faith-centred feminist framework. The research in this area is scarce, especially in the UK, and internationally the research is not recent, for example, studies by Mir (2009) in the US, Zine (2008) in Canada and Clyne (1998) in Australia.
- FMTs play an undervalued and potentially transformative role in Britain's multicultural education system and, therefore, society. My study shows that FMTs intervene in oppressive, sexist and racist views of Muslim women. There should be practical implications for this in the educational system.
- As subject-agents, FMTs must navigate systemic prejudices and unearned disadvantages to become self-determined. FMTs generate self-regard in complicated ways that cannot be narrowly contained or easily explained by Western or orthodox ways of being and knowing. My study shows that more needs to be done for FMTs in the education system.
- My study contributes to how surveillance in educational systems functions as a mechanism to modulate control of FMTs. FMTs negotiate relations with senior leaders, colleagues and pupils from a variety of backgrounds. The research in this area, specifically related to FMTs is limited.
- My study provides a heterogeneous view of FMTs. The data shows there is more than one way to be a FMT and that the definition of feminism evolves for these teachers. These teachers offer an opposing view to the homogenised Muslim woman I discuss in the literature review.

- Through the narrative context in the ***Scenarios***, my study presents the transformational experiences that take place in educational contexts. The result of the transactions that involve FMTs, modify the views of agents such as staff/pupils. In this way FMTs offer an important and unique opportunity in the British education system.

8.8 Limitations of this research

The range of new data collection is small scale with only four participants. I understand and appreciate that expanding the scope would allow for a bigger range of data and add to the robustness of the claims presented in the thesis. Within the FMT group there are individuals who are older and younger and display various forms of interpretation and expression of faith. Some are migrants and others first generation. Others are newer and some more experienced in the profession. They represent the Muslim diaspora with various ethnic backgrounds. My aim here was to not achieve saturation of data but rather analyse and evaluate the nuances presented by the data corpus, including the responses of the participants to the ethnographic data in the form of ***Scenarios*** I present. Based on the questions I posed emanating from my own lived experience as a FMT and my interactions with those of the same demographic, I strongly anticipated the collection of rich and varied data. If this was not the case after I had interviewed the four participants, I may have adapted my plan and re-interviewed the teachers after a period had passed to gauge their new experiences post initial interview. My interviews are limited to teachers practising in Manchester contexts. This is because they are professionals in my existing network and allow for data collection in terms of logistics. The professional development aspect of the Doctorate in Education allows the scope to explore teachers in contexts similar to those I have held posts in.

8.9 Implications for further research

My study has focused on FMTs' experiences in education; however, my data sometimes directly and at times indirectly raises questions for further inquiry. My study shows that there are alternative representations of Muslim women that challenge common stereotypes. This prompts the question: should the Muslim community do more to accept these representations and have a discussion around identity politics in the workplace? The study could be widened to include the experiences of male Muslim teachers; experiences of female Muslims in other roles in educational settings; experiences of female Muslims in other workplaces. What can be done to reduce the pressure Muslim teachers experience to modulate their behaviour? I argue that there should be further research in the impact of top-down initiatives and government reports on ethnic minority groups. When government reports conclude 'we no longer see a Britain where the system is deliberately rigged against ethnic minorities' and very few of the impediments and disparities 'are directly to do with racism'(UK Government 2022:online), what are the implications for this in multicultural educational settings? What happens with the spaces created by discussion in classrooms that may lead to gaps in knowledge or misinformation? If teachers leave difficult questions unanswered do pupils try to find the answers on their own? What stipulates and determines the levels of freedom that educators have in these spaces. What are the personal and professional boundaries here? A practical outcome of further research could be to set up a forum or organisation for Muslim women in British workplaces to share, exhibit and voice their experiences.

8.10 Final thoughts

In addition to satisfying the objectives to achieve the aim of my study, I have found new questions that interrogate commonly held perceptions of FMTs. The autoethnographic narrative I present offers an insight to my own lived experience as a FMT in the UK. Through conducting interviews with four FMTs, I highlight their potentially transformative role in the British education system; the challenges they face around negatively held stereotypes; and the issue of identity and belonging in multicultural Britain. I have explored the feminist praxis for Muslim women in a

British educational context and whether this contemporary western discourse empowers them to regain and claim the rights already present in the religion, lost historically and traditionally to men. My data shows how FMTs navigate stereotypes and competing norms to generate self-regard and more complicated understandings of being Muslim and British. Therefore, the study contributes to a context-based and culturally sensitive British version of Islamic feminism in education, that uses an intersectional approach and gives British Muslim women a place at the academic table, to reflect their unique experiences. In addition, I have drawn upon the Foucauldian notion of the panopticon (1975) to demonstrate surveillance culture in education and to conceptualise the scrutiny faced by FMTs. Historically freedom has been denied to women in sites of power such as the field of education (Seale 2007). The FMTs I present in my study find themselves questioning power relations to disrupt hierarchical structures to seek freedom through and within education.

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Appendix 1: Summary of methodological approach

Main areas considered for methodology	**Description**	**How this was applied to the study**
Purpose of research	The overall research question	To explore the implications of image and identity of FMTs and their transformative role in educational contexts
Research philosophy	Belief around how knowledge is developed	Interpretive/critical
Research approach	How knowledge is captured	Inductive
Research strategy	Choice of research method	Qualitative ● semi-structured interviews ● autoethnographic data
Research planning	Background data gathering Prompts for interview Participant selection	Literature review Autoethnographic data (***Scenarios***) Networking to secure interviewees
Collection of data	Formulating interview questions Prompts for interview Interview data collection	Questions emerged from the literature review Writing ***Scenarios*** Recording of interviews
Analysis and presentation of data	Data reduction Analysis method	Data was transcribed and coded Use of thematic analysis to generate themes from combined datasets (interviews and ***Scenarios***)
Rigour	Ethics	Approved Ethos application (2019)

Appendix 2: *Scenarios*

1.1 Context: 2007, Oldham, Majority Bangladeshi Secondary school 11-16. My first classroom experience.

Ghulam- Are you Bangladeshi Miss?

Me- No, why do you ask?

Ghulam- I can't tell

Mahmood- Bet she's Pakistani

Ghulam- You can't teach here if you're Pakistani Miss

Mahmood- You need to teach at Hillcrest Miss, that's where all the Pakis are

Ghulam- Yeah, only Bengalis here

Me- I am Bengali

Ghulam- She's lying, look she's smiling…say something in Bengali

Me- I only speak English

Ghulam and Mahmood laugh

Ghulam- She's defo Paki

Me- You shouldn't use that term, it's offensive

Ghulam and Mahmood converse in Bengali and laugh

Me- It's also rude to speak in a language I don't understand

Ghulam- Well you are definitely a coconut Miss

Me- What does that mean?

Mahmood- Brown on the outside and white on the inside

Ghulam and Mahmood laugh

1.2 Context: 2020, Year 10 boys, in a South Manchester high school with a high percentage of BAME pupils

Mohamad - Just ask her…

Yusuf - Nah

Me - Ask me what?

Yusuf - It doesn't matter Miss, I don't want to offend you

Mohamad - Basically Miss…

Yusuf - Miss are you a Muslim?

Me - Interesting…why would I be offended by that? (To Yusuf) What I would like to know is what made you wonder that?

Yusuf - It's just that he (gestures to Mohamad) thinks you are, but I think you're not.

Me - Why would you think I'm not a Muslim?

Yusuf - Because I'm Somalian and all the Muslim women I know wear a hijab and you don't

Me - Tell me something (to Yusuf) did you get up at 5am to offer your Fajr prayers?

Yusuf - No I didn't

Me - I did

Yusuf - Oh

Me - So the answer to your question is yes, I am a Muslim and I pray my

five a day or at least try to.

Mohamad - That's really good Miss

Me - Let me ask you both something, do all the hijab wearing women you know perform their five salahs a day?

Mohamad and Yusuf - No

Me - Let me tell you something which might get you thinking…I watched a documentary a while ago about the treatment of women in Afghanistan under Taliban rule. The thing that struck me the most was that sex workers would wear the full veil. So, let me ask you a question, is religion something that is outwardly expressed or can it be a personal thing?

Mohamad - I've never thought about it like that Miss

Yusuf - True, but in Somalian culture women have to wear it, there isn't a choice.

Me - So when I was your age, so we're talking about the 1990s in my high school there was a huge influx of Somalian refugees. When I drive through Moss Side and Hulme I notice that first and second generation Somalian women present themselves in a more modern way to their refugee past generations. In a few decades time we could be having a very different conversation.

Yusuf - Miss you've really got me thinking

Mohamad - Yes me too

Me - Me too (all laugh) let's get on with our work.

1.3 Context: 2007, Tameside, Majority white Secondary school 11-16.

Katie- Looks like Shilpa Shetty

Ella- Oh yeah that Asian woman who just won Big Brother

Katie- Miss, are you Shilpa Shetty?

Ella laughs

Katie- Are you her sister Miss?

Ashton- Have you never seen an Asian woman before?

Ella- They don't look like that

Katie and Y laugh

Me- I'm not Shilpa Shetty and she's not my sister but thank you for the compliment.

Ella- She sounds dead posh…Miss are you from London?

Me- I'm from Manchester

Katie- She's one of them training ones, Miss we're the good kids, be nice to us otherwise we can make you leave like the others

Katie and Ella laugh

1.4 Context: 2010, Secondary, Independent Girls school in Manchester.

Mr Nixon- Hello, how would you feel about being the supervisor of Hindu Assembly every Thursday morning?

Me- Okay, do I need to be Hindu to do that?

Mr Nixon- Are you not Hindu? The principal said you are.

Me- No, I'm a Muslim.

At this point the staff near us stopped their conversation and looked my way.

Mr Nixon- Oh…I will let the Head know.

Me- Thanks for the offer, though. I can help with Muslim Assembly.

Mr Nixon- No, that's a job for the Director of Studies.

Me- Oh, is he a Muslim?

Mr Nixon- No.

Bell for end of break.

1.5 Context: 2013, A seminar about the Prevent Agenda at Manchester Metropolitan University, as part of the Masters degree in Education.

Nick - Well in my school there is only one Muslim student, she wears a headscarf so stands out even more. We have the Prevent number printed on our staff badges so in case of an emergency we know exactly what to do.

Louise - Have you ever needed to call it?

Nick - Well I teach this girl RS, I set the class an assignment on the troubles in Israel and Palestine, you know to see her response….

Louise-That's not on the curriculum

Nick- Well I knew she would have interesting viewpoints, best to get it out there and dealt with

Louise- Sounds like you set her up

Nick- She openly expresses her religion by dressing as a Muslim so no I didn't set her up, I gave her an opportunity to share her views

Louise- She's allowed to dress any way she should please, without being set up so you can use your hotline…outrageous

1.6 Context: 2018, This is a secondary school based in a majority white area, in Greater Manchester.

Miss Robinson- What does a terrorist look like?

Mikey- A Muslim man with a beard and rucksack.

Class laughs

Damian- Taliban

Miss Robinson- What about the English Defence League, The Ku Klux Klan, they have radicalised views?

Mikey- Yeah but they don't go around blowing themselves up.

Damian- That's just freedom of speech stuff in it – they're just saying what they think, it's their opinion, someone has to stand up for normal people in this country.

Mikey- It's like that British values thing we did last week.

Damian- I think they should be sent back to where they came from, if they don't like how we live then why do they live here?

Miss Robinson- What about people who have been radicalised in this country?

Damian- Lock them up and throw away the key, that's what I think.

Period 1 bell

1.7 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18. In conversation with my subject mentor.

Miss Khan - So the school organises an Eid do Uzma, you should come. I get proper dressed up in Eid clothes, the kids love it. They ask loads of questions though.

Me - About what?

Miss Khan - Well they know I don't fast during Ramadan and stuff.

Me- Why don't you fast?

Miss Khan - I can't give up the fags (laughs) I like a drink now and then too, only with my fella though.

Me - Are you married to a non-Muslim?

Miss Khan- Oh he's Muslim, but we're not married yet, we live together. It's a long story…I was forced to marry my cousin in Pakistan, I didn't want to call him over when I got back to the UK, fell out with my parents and moved in with my boyfriend.

Me - Wow

Miss Khan- Yeah the kids in the school know my story, everyone knows someone who knows someone in this town, can't really keep it

	quiet…and look at me, I dress how I want to, if I want to show my body and go to a nightclub with my man I will, gives people more to talk about.
Me -	Do the kids in the school ever say anything to you?
Miss Khan-	They wouldn't dare, my boyfriend does security at the Tesco near school, kids know him, they know they would get their heads smashed in by him if they ever dared to say anything to me.
Me -	What about the Muslim teachers in the school?
Miss Khan-	(Laughs) Well the women live in their own little backward world, and I couldn't give a shit and the men are just men, Muslim or not, I keep them sweet have a little banter and a flirt, they love it. They know my story and what I've been through, if you want to get ahead you need to keep the white crowd sweet, have you noticed SLT in the school are all white? All the Asians are just classroom teachers and TAs. SLT have sympathy for me and that's what matters. You will learn, you're new to this.
Me -	I didn't realise it was like this in schools, Manchester schools are more multicultural.
Miss Khan-	Yes but racism exists everywhere. You will get used to it.

1.8 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school.	
Mr Sharston -	You sure you have enough food there?
Me-	Love fish and chips, it's Friday, think I deserve it

Mr Hirst- She probably doesn't get fed at home

Mr Sharston and Mr Hirst laugh

Me- What do you mean by that?

Mr Hirst- You know with your Pakistani husband, surprised he lets you out of the house, arranged marriage, was it?

1.9 Context: 2009, Manchester, Mixed comprehensive Secondary school 11-18.

Me- I'm having a few issues with Abdul. If I make any suggestions during our weekly meets, he ignores me…it's as though I'm not in the room

Mr Roberts- Hmm, he's from a very traditional Muslim background.

Me- What does that have to do with it?

Mr Roberts- He has mentioned a few things….

Me- Such as?

Mr Roberts- Look it's my fault for suggesting you supervise the Muslim Committee, it's run by lads obviously and some of them may think you're not the right fit…

Me- Because I don't wear a hijab?

Mr Roberts- Look, don't take it personally but these kids don't really respect Asian women, it's the culture. You're young and yes you look a certain way, in your culture women don't really have strong

positions. These lads don't even listen to their mothers, you know this already, they respond better to men. You don't have to do it anymore if you don't want to.

2.0 Context: 2018, majority white state comprehensive, Tameside

Casey - Miss, have you ever had a hangover at work?

Me- No, I don't drink.

Casey- Why?

Me- Because I'm a Muslim.

Jessica- But you don't look like a Muslim.

Casey - She's too pretty to be a Muslim.

Me- What does a Muslim look like?

Jessica- Like the Asians in Ashton, with that thing on their heads.

Casey- I would never go to Ashton, I'd get jumped and raped by those Asian lads.

Jessica- Cos we're white.

Me- Not all Muslim women wear the hijab.

Casey- Yeah some cover their whole face – they look well scary.

Jessica- Cos they're probably ugly.

Class laughs

Me- People practise religion to different extents and for different reasons and sometimes in different ways.

Jessica- Yeah well, I couldn't be a Muslim, how would you chill without alcohol?

Me- Let's talk about the risks of alcohol consumption.

Appendix 3: Post-interview reflections

Sabah: During the interview, I could not help but contrast my classroom experiences as an NQT and the way I would have reacted or dealt with questions from my students. I acknowledge her point in refraining from tackling difficult questions until she feels more confident as a practitioner; however, I took a different approach as an NQT and felt the issues needed to be dealt with if the situation allowed. My feelings towards our different approaches as teachers may have impacted further lines of questioning in the interview. For example, I started to wonder during the interview with Sabah what the triggers to such disparities may be. One of the main themes I have identified arises from this difference in approach, 'Why do teachers have varying ways of dealing with questions?' Even though Sabah is a British born citizen she spent most of her childhood in Pakistan and started to reside in the UK permanently after the age of eighteen. She speaks English fluently but has a strong accent from being educated in an international school in Pakistan. I could not help but feel that there might be a cultural barrier in her classroom persona and whether she deflects difficult questions because she is aware of this. She came across as passionate about her job and wanting to make a difference, an aspiration that was inspired by her mother to go into teaching.

Yasmin: During the interview I felt a lot of commonalities with Yasmin in her approach to young people and teaching in general. Yasmin is a British born Muslim woman who I connected with on a personal level. We have a very similar background in that our families belong to common social networks as we are both from South Manchester, UK. I met Yasmin when I held a post at a sixth form college in Manchester. I found Yasmin fascinating as she held on to cultural (Pakistani) traditions defended the Muslim way of life yet exhibited a Western outlook in many ways, in how she dressed for example. Yasmin is ten years younger than me, and I saw in her a more evolved and pragmatic version of myself perhaps. I could not help but compare how submissive I was to my family compared to Yasmin and attributed this difference to a generational shift.

Aminah: My experience growing up in urban Manchester is more multicultural than that of Aminah. Aminah's upbringing was more traditional and insular in nature than mine. Although we share a Pakistani background and are both first generation immigrants, Aminah exemplifies this as an adult more than I do. An example of this is in our spoken English. When I first met her, Aminah commented on how well spoken she thought I was, and I noticed how she stood out as someone for whom English was an additional language.

Zaynab: I connected with Zaynab on a personal level due to having some similar life experiences. Zaynab has a very pragmatic outlook on life and comes across as someone who is willing to challenge and disrupt the views of others. She is very engaging and carries herself with a great sense of pride and confidence.

Appendix 4: Ethos Application

Have you completed relevant training?

Thank you for visiting the Ethics Online System (EthOS)

The University seeks to lead the sector in ensuring that the decisions we make concerning research ethics align with our values as an institution as well as meeting all regulatory requirements. (Manchester Metropolitan University, Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2017).

EthOS is an important part of our efforts to achieve "beyond compliance" status in research ethics and governance.

All members of staff and students who are about to undertake a project or investigation in the broad area of research are required to use EthOS to determine what form of ethical approval, if any is required.

This system will guide you through the process of determining what form of ethical approval is required for your project.

The questions within EthOS will be automatically generated based on your previous answers to ensure that only relevant sections are displayed.

The RKE Strategy can be found by clicking the following link: http://www2.mmu.ac.uk/rke-strategy/

A1 The University is committed to adhering to the principles of the Concordat for Research Integrity and we expect all staff and students to complete the relevant online training. Have you completed the Manchester Metropolitan University Research Integrity training course?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

A2 Health and Safety

Every member of staff and students have a responsibility for their own health, safety, and wellbeing, and those around them who may be affected by their acts and omissions. Have you completed any University Health and Safety training?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

A3 Data Protection

The University is responsible for complying with the General Data Protection Regulation whenever personal data is processed. Under the Data Protection Policy, all staff and students have a responsibility to comply with the regulation in their day-to-day activities. The first step you can take to understand these responsibilities is to complete the University's Mandatory Data Protection Training. The Data Protection Training can be accessed from the web page https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/data-protection/. To make sure your knowledge up to date, all staff and students must complete the training annually.

Have you completed the Data Protection Training?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

Applicant

Page 1 of 22

A4 Applicant Details

Title	First Name	Surname
	Uzma	Asim

Email: uzma.asim@stu.mmu.ac.uk

A4.1 Manchester Metropolitan University ID number

06745949

Applicant Status

A5 In what capacity are you carrying out your project? (see information button for guidance)

As a postgraduate research student

A6 Which Faculty is responsible for the project?

Education

A6.1 Which University Centre for Research and Knowledge Exchange (UCRKE) is responsible for the project?

If you are unsure, please select "Not aligned to any Research Centre").

Ed: Education & Social Research

A6.2 Is your project in its entirety a literature review?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Project Information

Page 2 of 22

A7 Your Full Project Title is

'Miss are you a Muslim?' An exploration of identity, image and agency of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

A8 Project Short Title

This is the title by which your project will be known

'Miss are you a Muslim' An exploration of identity and image of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

A9 Do you propose to commence your data collection within the next 31 days?

- ○ Yes
- ○ Yes - but I have confirmation from my FHREG to proceed with the application
- ○ Yes - but I have ethical approval in place
- ◉ No

A9.1 What is the proposed start date of your data collection?

01/12/2019

A10 Is there any funding attached to this project?

- ○ Yes - I have a Worktribe project ID
- ◉ No
- ○ Yes - but I do not have a Worktribe project ID

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Does your project require ethical approval?

Page 3 of 22

A11 Please select any statements that apply for your project, relating to previously obtained or required approvals (select all that apply):

- ☐ You want Manchester Metropolitan University to certificate an existing approval you hold from a recognised body
- ☐ You need to apply for ethical approval from a particular recognised approving body or are in the process of being reviewed for ethical approval by such a body
- ☐ You are using ionising radiation as part of your research for medical, biomedical, diagnostic or treatment purposes
- ☐ You want Manchester Metropolitan University to certificate an existing ethical approval you hold from another University?
- ☐ You want to submit an amendment to a project which was approved via the Manchester Metropolitan University paper-based process
- ☐ The project being undertaken within a larger research study for which an application for Manchester Metropolitan University ethical approval has already been submitted
- ☐ You are a member of staff who is applying to do research involving Manchester Metropolitan University staff and/or students, as part of a research degree/qualification with another Institution.
- ☑ This is a new application for ethical approval at Manchester Metropolitan University

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

A11 Please select any statements that apply for your project, relating to previously obtained or required approvals (select all that apply):

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- ☑ This is a new application for ethical approval at Manchester Metropolitan University

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

A13 Although it is not possible to provide exhaustive criteria which determine whether or not a proposed project needs ethical review, the following can be used as guidance. Please tick the boxes below for all statements that apply to your project.

- ☐ The generation of new ideas, images, performances or artefacts. This also applies for projects that are purely conceptual, or consist only of a literature review, or only use fully anonymised human participant data sourced from 3rd parties
- ☑ Primary data collection from human participants (including, but not limited to interviews, questionnaires, images, artefacts and digital data)
- ☐ Further analysis of identifiable, pre-existing data obtained from human participants
- ☐ Privileged access to personal or clinical records
- ☐ Activities or materials related to terrorism
- ☐ Observation of human participants or the collection of their data without their consent
- ☐ Vulnerable individuals (children, adults who lack the capacity to consent or are temporarily vulnerable within the context of the project)
- ☐ Access to individuals who may pose a safety risk to the researcher
- ☐ Any form of physical and/or psychological risk, damage or distress to the human participant
- ☐ Recompense other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time to the human participant
- ☐ Clinical procedures with human participants
- ☐ The use of novel techniques, even where apparently non-invasive, whose safety may be open to question with human participants

- ☐ The ingestion of any substance by human participants, by any means of delivery
- ☐ The administration of drugs to human participants, by whatever means of delivery
- ☐ The use of ionising radiation or exposure to radioactive materials
- ☐ New human tissue samples or other human biological samples
- ☐ Existing human tissue samples or other human biological samples
- ☐ The use of equipment which may be a medical device, or is a known medical device, but will be used outside its intended purpose and be tested on human participants
- ☐ Biological agents or toxins
- ☐ The design or production of new or substantially improved materials, devices, products or processes
- ☐ Animals, their tissue or their remains
- ☐ Plants or plant matter
- ☐ None of the above

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Short Description

This section aims to capture the basic project information.

Begin section

B1 Please provide an abstract for your project

In this research, I will explore how notions of 'recognition' and 'misrecognition' (see below) have implications for the image, identity and agency of female Muslim teachers through investigating contemporary stereotypes of female Muslim teachers (and Muslim women more generally as appropriate).

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B2 Please provide key words for the project

muslim, teacher, identity, agency, women,

Project team details

B3 Supervisor Details

Title	First Name	Surname
dr	sarah	mcnicol

Organisation	mmu
Faculty	Education
Telephone	01612472104
Email	s.mcnicol@mmu.ac.uk

B4a Are you the Principal Investigator for the project?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

Please enter your details in the Principal Investigator question below

B4 Principal Investigator

Title	First Name	Surname
mrs	uzma	Asim

Organisation	mmu
Faculty	Education
Telephone	07852174361
Email	uzmaasim@hotmail.co.uk

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B5 Are other investigators involved in the project?

- ( ) Yes
- (•) No

Timescales

B6 What is the end date of your project?

31/08/2021

Location

B7 Is data collection only taking place on Manchester Metropolitan University sites?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B7.1 Which country will the data collection take place?

United Kingdom

B7.2 Data collection will take place at the following

- ☑ Public location(s)
- ☐ Private location(s)
- ☐ Isolated location(s)
- ☐ Manchester Metropolitan University approved location(s)
- ☐ On the internet

B7.3 Do you have or need any special security clearances for this project?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Purpose and Design of the Project

This section aims to identify the purpose and design of the project. The information provided should be clear and concise, to allow the reviewer to understand the reasons why and how the project is being done.

- ◉ Begin section

B8 What is the rationale for your project?

B8 What is the rationale for your project?

My initial experience of being required to question my identity was as a primary school student. Since then there have been numerous examples in my life where I have found myself in a similar predicament, including in my current educational context as a teacher-researcher. My experiences in education have affected me on a personal and professional level and have compelled me to question the mobilisation of Muslim identity and political agency, with a focus on belonging in educational contexts.An example of this is the implementation of the Prevent Agenda in schools and the resulting marginalisation of cultural freedoms and the public expression of Muslim pupils' identities. In conversation with other Muslim teachers, I feel there is scope and a need for exploring the stereotypes that pupils and colleagues may have and how and whether these are tackled, can have variable implications for a cohort of pupils in a relevant context, for example, the racialisation of Muslims depends on the particular national context and can depend on visual indicators such as the female headscarf.
The interactions of Muslim teachers with pupils, parents and colleagues may strive to strengthen or weaken the media stereotypes of Muslim women. The stereotypes around Muslim women are diverse and widely held, they include the perception that Muslim women are oppressed to specific misperceptions around marital rights, education and freedom. These stereotypes are often reinforced by various forms of media.The homogenisation of the category 'Muslim women' has implications in education – not all Muslim women project the same image and Muslim women practise their religion in different ways. At times this label is constructed widely and at times narrowly – in each case it usually works as a disadvantage to women. The negative impact of this can sometimes be exemplified in educational contexts. As a Muslim woman and an educator, I feel it is necessary to explore the negative impacts and act as a progressive force in initiating a pro-active discussion with other women in similar contexts. I hope to contribute to the wider debates around increasing attention around discriminatory discourses with regards to Muslims.

B9 What is the aim of your project?

• To investigate teachers' perceptions of the stereotypes held by pupils about Muslims (and especially Muslim women).
• To explore how these stereotypes, reflect recognition/misrecognition experienced by female Muslim teachers.
• To identify practical implications of such experiences (positive and negative) for teachers' classroom practice.

B10 What are your project objectives/questions?

What are teachers' perceptions of the stereotypes held by pupils about Muslims (and especially Muslim women).
How do these stereotypes, reflect recognition/misrecognition experienced by female Muslim teachers.
What are the practical implications of such experiences (positive and negative) for teachers' classroom practice.

B11 Please describe the methodology

I will critically explore the wider cultural, political, social and educational discourses that frame identity and belonging with regards to Muslim practitioners in education. I will discuss how the concept of 'recognition' is crucial to our ability to become full human agents. This claim stems from the elaborations of Taylor (1989, p32-36) - 'one can become a self, capable of self-understanding and achieving 'self-definition' only in relation to other conversation partners, within webs of interlocution'. Our identity is founded in part by our association to a particular cultural group and an individual's sense of worth is entwined with the value that others attach to this group. Implications of recognition theory point to modern democratic politics, with inevitable bias towards the majority culture. Misrecognition is an inversion of recognition theory and can be described as 'the withdrawal of social recognition, in the phenomena of humiliation and disrespect' (Fraser and Honneth, 2003, p134). Misrecognition can also be seen as epistemic injustice, for example, when 'cultural imperialism' (Taylor, 1989), manifests as the representation of reality by powerful social groups achieving hegemonic status.

To date, the application of misrecognition theory in educational sociology is limited, particularly with regards to female, British Muslim insights (Thomson, 2014). By exploring the challenges of hierarchical registers on the notion of power, culture, identity and social distribution, I will contribute to knowledge production in this field and explore the potential for the application of this theory.

My approach in discussing literature, critical 'problem awareness', will be based around identifying the nature of the problem, outlining its parameters and establishing the contextual relevance for researching it. This approach will allow for the exploration of wide-ranging views around Muslim identities, agency and belonging with a focus on the politicisation of these factors.

The epistemological and methodological focus in much feminist research draws on the importance of women's lived experiences to unearth knowledge (Devault & Gross, 2012). Drawing on feminist research methods, I will conduct open ended interviews with 4-5 female Muslim teachers based in or around Manchester, UK. I will select participants from a variety of ethnicities and using my own judgement, will select participants who appear to exemplify a range of religious/cultural outlooks, for example, whether they wear the hijab or not. I will not limit participation selection by other factors such as age, practitioner experience, migrant generation, primary or secondary sector and subject taught, but will endeavour to cover as many variations as possible. Over the years, I have encountered various women who would fit the participant profile and will use my network of contacts to approach potential participants. I have already approached interested interviewees informally and received positive responses from several women. As someone who belongs to this demographic, I feel I have a level of relevant insight and contextual applicability that will give my research a multi-faceted depth. In this context, the interview can be seen as 'an encounter between women with common interests, who will share knowledge' (Devault & Gross, 2012) - I will critically explore the implications of this as part of my research.

The use of feminist methods in the context of my research is relevant as my study places the lives of a group of people (Muslim women) at the centre of analyses, who may be otherwise considered marginalised in society. This study will create an opportunity for Muslim women to share their experiences, thereby uncovering the often hidden experiences of participants, allowing researchers to access the voices of underrepresented populations.hh

References

DeVault, M & Gross, G 2012, 'Feminist qualitative interviewing: experience, talk, and knowledge', in Handbook of feminist research: theory and praxis, 2nd edn, SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA, pp. 206-236

Fraser, N. & Honneth, A. 2001, Redistribution or recognition?: a philosophical exchange, Verso, London.

Taylor, C. (1989). Sources of the self: the making of identity. Boston: Harvard University Press.

B12 Please describe the methods of data collection

Initially I will meet with the interviewee, explain my research aims and give each participant 'scenarios' I have written, based on my own experience. In order to equalise the hierarchical disparity between researcher and participant, I will share my own experiences in Education with the interviewees as part of the interview in the form of scenarios posed to them, taken from my autoethnographical journal entries. This may help to alleviate the researcher-participant barrier and establish a common ground. These are to be taken away by the interviewees, I will ask them to look at these and have some thoughts or written points ready for the interview after about six weeks. I anticipate the interview to also last around an hour for each interviewee but may be longer depending upon the depth of the responses given by the participants. The interviews will be conducted in English and then transcribed.

In addition to the interviews with other teachers, I will use narrative enquiry to analyse autoethnographic data in the form of my own personal journal entries. The nature of the narrative will be journal entries made over twelve years' experience as a practitioner, teaching Science in several secondary schools in Manchester. The entries I will include will be based around interactions I have had with colleagues/parents/pupils over the years which have in some way led me to conducting this current research. These educational contexts are quite distinctive in their demographic and socio-economic positions which will provide a range of useful data to interrogate. Using my own contextual biography will allow me the space to operate both relationally and reflexively. Using the personal voices of interviewees combined with my own autoethnographic account, I will examine how identity constructs meaning in education.

My study is situated around the critical research paradigm as from an epistemological viewpoint the realities of my participants are likely to be socially constructed and influenced by power relations from within society. It lends itself to social justice and achieving social change, especially that which improves the lives of women and girls.

B13 Please describe your methods of data analysis

The use of feminist methods in the context of my research is relevant as my study places the lives of a group of people (Muslim women) at the centre of analyses, who may be otherwise considered marginalised in society. This study will create an opportunity for Muslim women to share their experiences, thereby uncovering the often hidden experiences of participants, allowing researchers to access the voices of underrepresented populations.

Initially I will meet with the interviewee, explain my research aims and give each participant 'scenarios' from my own journal to take away with them and to note (written or mental) any relevant examples, within the six-week period between the first and second interview. I anticipate the interview to last around an hour for each interviewee but may be longer depending upon the depth of the responses given by the participants. The interviews will be conducted in English and then transcribed.
The themes that will be explored through the interviews will be based around the experiences of the women in schools, for example Muslim women and stereotypes and teacher-pupil dynamics where image or identity is an issue. I will then explore through further questioning, how the women feel about the stereotypes and in particular if it has an impact in their professional context, for example, the practical implications of positive and/or negative experiences in the classroom. I would like to probe, through questioning, the pupil-teacher dynamic in tackling such instances where identity, agency and the image of Muslim teachers is explored.

In order to analyse the narrative data I will process it by trying to reduce it to themes through coding (selecting words/short phrases), recoding (find relations between similar codes ad form categories) and identifying emerging patterns and themes. The data will be represented in tables, figures if appropriate ad the narrative in a final research text. Polinghorne's analysis of narratives does fit this method of data analysis where; it describes the categories of particular themes while paying attention to relationships among categories; it uncovers the commonalities that exist across the multiple sources of data; it aims to produce knowledge from a set of evidence or particulars found in a collection of stories. The problem with this method of narrative analysis is that it underplays the unique aspect of each story. Polinghorne's narrative analysis method may be more fitting to my data as it; focuses on the events, actions, happenings, and other data elements to put them together in a plot; it uses to-and-fro, recursive movement from parts to whole or from whole to parts; it fills in the gaps between events and actions using a narrative smoothing process; it maintains that narrative analysis is not just data transcription but shows the significance of the lived experience; it makes the range of disconnected data elements coherent. This method of data analysis will be appliicable to both my own narrative in the form of journal entries and the emerging 'stories' the interviews will bring.

B14 Please upload your project protocol

Documents

Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Project Protocol	RD1 010	RD1 010.docx	25/10/2019	1	18.6 KB

This is the end of the page.

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Demographics

Are you using human participants in your project?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

B15 How many participants will take part in the project?

4-5

B16 Participant gender

female

B17 Lower age limit

21 Years

B18 Is there an upper age limit?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

Eligibility and Identification

B19 Inclusion criteria

The participants in my study will be female, Muslim teachers in secondary education with permanent positions. They may be post holders for example with a TLR (teaching and learning responsibility), Heads of Department, Newly Qualified Teachers, Recently Qualified Teachers or classroom teachers with variable experience. The teachers subject area will not be a limiting factor. Participants should be available between August- October 2019 and must work in schools in or around Manchester, UK

B20 Exclusion criteria

Non Muslim
Male
Non-secondary teachers
Trainee teachers
Supply teachers
Temporary teachers
Do not work in schools in or around Manchester, UK
Are not available during August-October 2019

B21 How will potential participants or samples be identified?

There are a number of practical and mehodological questions in involving participant selection in my research. In consideration of research design the selection of participants came down to the following criteria:

• They are willing to participate
• They are in or around Manchester, UK at the time of the interview between August-October 2019
(school holidays may be a factor here).
• They are able to dedicate the time needed for the research to take place
(teachers have busy schedules during term-time)
• They are female and Muslim
• They have permanent teaching contracts in schools in or around Manchester, UK
(experienced teachers/newly qualified teachers/recently qualified teachers/teachers with a teaching and learning responsibility/heads of department).

Participants will be recruited based on voluntary participation and taking the above factors in to consideration. The main reason I am including participants in my research is to stimulate conversations and to enrich the content of my own self-narrative in the form of auto-ethnographic journal accounts. I did not consider random sampling from the public, as it is less time consuming and easier to use relevant contacts I have through professional networks, especially since I work full-time and am Head of Department, which brings many time constraints. During the planning and designing phase of my research project, a number of acquaintances expressed an interest in my study and mentioned they would be willing to help if I needed to recruit participants. I have considered the dominant values in academic research and have pondered with the problem of achieving an unbiased view in the researcher keeping a distance from the subject of then research, however I feel by employing a self-narrative approach, I have already challenged this positivist stance in a way. Narrative inquiry relies on representation of lived experience rather than analyses of controllable variants, in my study I hope to explore the experiences of a very particular group of people. Whilst the sample may be quite similar with reference to the criteria set out, I feel there will be enough measures of diversity and variability contextually within this niche group of women. I know this from the various interactions I have on a daily basis and through my thirteen years of experience as a practitioner. I therefore took the decision to tackle the risks and challenges that accompany the decision to use my acquaintances.

B22 Will any participants be identified through posters, leaflets, adverts, social media or websites?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B23 Will you have privileged access to personal records?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B24 Will you have privileged access to clinical records?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

Participant recruitment and consent

B25 How and by whom will potential participants first be approached?

by me via email

B26 Will you obtain written consent from or on behalf of participants?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

B27 If you are using audio / video recording or photography, will you explicitly obtain the participants consent for this?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Not Applicable

Please enclose a copy of the information sheet(s) and consent form(s) at the end of the section.

B28 Will any participants be aged under 16?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B29 Will any participants be from vulnerable groups (excluding children under 16)?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B30 Will any participants lack legal capacity to provide consent?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B31 Please outline how the consent process will vary according to participants age and understanding.

Participants will be of a similar age and understanding

B32 What arrangements have been made for participants who may not understand verbal or written information in English, or who have special communication needs?

n/a

B33 How long will you allow potential participants to decide whether or not to take part?

1 week

B34 Will participants be included in the study with their consent but without full knowledge of the details? (deceptive research)

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B36 Could your past or present relationship with the potential participants give rise to a perceived pressure to participate?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

B36.1 What steps will you take to mitigate this risk?

By explaining that there is no pressure to participate, it is completely voluntary and they may withdraw at any time during the process.

B37 Could the recruitment method give rise to a perceived peer-pressure to participate?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

B38 What is the process by which participants may withdraw from the project?

Participants may withdraw at any time by contacting the following:

Researcher
Uzma Asim
07852174361
U.Asim@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Supervisor:
Dr Sarah McNicol
01612475104
S.McNicol@mmu.ac.uk

Supervisor:
Dr Jim Dobson
01612475037
J.Dobson@mmu.ac.uk

Provisions will be made to securely delete any data (written and/or audio recorded) if participants wish to withdraw

Please upload consent form(s)

Documents

Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Consent Form	Consent-Form 2	Consent-Form 2.docx	27/07/2019	2	59.3 KB

Please upload information sheet(s) and any other relevant participant facing documentation

Documents

Type	Document Name	File Name	Version Date	Version	Size
Information Sheet	Participant Information Sheet 5	Participant Information Sheet 5.docx	10/07/2019	3	58.4 KB

Incentives and payments

B39 Will participants receive any payments, reimbursement of expenses, or any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this project?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

This is the end of the page.

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Risk

C1 Are there any Health and Safety risks to the researcher and/or human participants?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Data Access and Transmission

D1 This section aims to identify the access and management of the data within the project.

- (•) Begin section

D2 Is this data sourced from the internet or third party storage?

- ( ) Yes
- (•) No

D3 Have you verified the use of this data does not infringe on any copyright, trademark, or patent?

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- (•) N/A

D4 Will you be using personal data or sensitive personal data?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

D4.1 How will you ensure the confidentiality of personal data?

Interview data will be recorded on my phone, which is password protected. After it has been transcribed the files will be stored on my computer, the documents will be password protected. Pseudonyms to be assigned and a key created after transcription. The key will be saved as a separate document and protected with a password. If the data/key documents are sent to my supervisors then they will be sent in separate emails with the password information sent in separate emails.

D5 Will you transfer personal data outside the European Union?

- ( ) Yes
- (•) No

Anonymisation and Identification Keys

D6 Will you be sharing personal data with external sources?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

D7 Will you be using audio and/or visual recording devices?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

D8 Who will have access to participants' personal data during the project?

me and supervision team

D9 Will you be publishing data from which participants could be identified?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

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D9.1 Will you be publishing quotes that are directly attributed to participants?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

D10 How will you ensure that anonymity will be maintained when publishing the results?

I will ensure any data that allows participants to be identified in any way, for example identifying details of names of schools and specific stories about themselves or their lives etc is removed and/or anonymised from data when publishing the results.

D11 Will participant identifiers be stored separately from identifiable personal data?

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

D11.1 At what point will the separation occur?

Once the data has been transcribed and the participant identifiers added, I will delete the non-anonymised data from my computer and the recorded interviews from my phone. I will ensure that the pseudonyms and the real names to which they refer is saved as a password protected document on my computer. This device is password protected and only used by me.

D11.2 How will you link the participant identifiers to the identifiable personal data during the project?

I will create a key in a separate document, both documents will be encrypted and never saved or sent to supervisors together.

Storage and Dissemination

D12 Who will have control, and act as custodian of the data generated during the project? (include name, role in the study, contact details)

Uzma Asim
Researcher
U.Asim@stu.mmu.ac.uk
07852174361

D13 Please describe what physical security arrangements are in place for the storage of identifiable personal data during the project.

password protected storage device

D14 Will you be storing personal data electronically?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

D15 Where will the data generated by the project be analysed, and by whom?

me, at mmu, at home

D16 How long will identifiable personal data be stored after the project has ended?

Less than 3 months

D17 How long will you store pseudo anonymised data generated by the project?

3

Years

D18 At the end of your project, will the data be made available on an open access repository?

- Yes
- No

D19 Have you planned for archiving data when the project has ended?

- Yes
- No

End of Project Data section

This is the end of the page.

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Publication and dissemination

E1 How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of this project? (Tick all that apply)

- [x] Peer reviewed journals
- [ ] Internal report
- [x] Conference presentation
- [ ] Publication on website
- [ ] Submission to regulatory authorities
- [ ] Publication to funder
- [ ] Access to raw data and right to publish freely by all investigators in the study or by Independent Steering committees on behalf of all investigators
- [ ] No plans to report or disseminate the results
- [x] Other

E1.1 Please specify

thesis

E2 Will you be informing participants of the results?

- (•) Yes
- ( ) No

E2.2 Please give details of how you will be informing participants, and at what time point.

When thesis is deposited in MMU library I will send the participants a link

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Funding

F1 Has internal funding for the project been secured?

- ( ) Yes
- (•) No

F2 Has external funding for the project been secured?

- ( ) Yes

◉ No

F2.2 Please indicate why no external funding has been secured?

○ External funding application to one or more funders in progress
◉ No application for external funding will/has been made

F3 What type of project is this?

☑ Standalone project
☐ Project that is part of a programme grant
☐ Programme that is part of a centre grant
☐ Project that is part of a fellowship/personal award/research training award
☐ Other

This is the end of the page

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Insurance and Indemnity

G1 This section aims identify there are any risks relating to insurance and indemnity.

◉ Begin section

G2 Will you be travelling outside the UK as part of this project?

○ Yes
◉ No

Techniques, Testing and Interventions

G3 Does your project involve any of the following techniques, tests or interventions (Please tick all that apply):

- ☐ Physically invasive techniques
- ☐ Ingestion of food stuffs or drugs
- ☐ Physical testing
- ☐ Psychological intervention
- ☑ None of the above

Other Hazards and Additional Information

G4 Are you working with a medical device manufacturer and/or a clinician to develop the product for commercialisation?

- ☐ Working with Hepatitis, Human T-Cell Lymphotropic Virus Type iii (HTLV iii), or Lymphadenopathy Associated Virus (LAV) or the mutants, derivatives or variations thereof or other viruses such as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or any syndrome or condition of a similar kind
- ☐ Working with Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE), Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD), variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) or new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (nvCJD)
- ☐ Working in hazardous areas
- ☐ Working with hazardous substances outside of a controlled environment
- ☐ Working with persons with a known history of violence, substance abuse or a criminal record
- ☑ None of the above

G5 I confirm that if Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearing is required for my project, this will be obtained before the commencement of data collection.

- ◉ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Not Applicable

G6 Will the project be conducted in line with a specific licence?

- ○ Yes
- ◉ No

This is the end of the page.

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Additional Information

This section allows you to include any further information, sign and submit the application for review

◉ Begin section

L1 Do you have any additional information or comments which have not been covered in the form?

○ Yes
◉ No

L2 Do you have any additional documentation or forms which you would like to upload in support of your application?

○ Yes
◉ No

This is the end the page.

Once you have answered all the questions, please click "Next" or "Navigate" on the sidebar to proceed with the application.

Declaration

M1 Please notify your supervisor that this application is complete and ready to be submitted by clicking "Request" below. This application will not be processed until your supervisor has provided their signature - it is your responsibility to ensure that they do this.

Signed: This form was signed by Sarah McNicol (S.McNicol@mmu.ac.uk) on 06/11/2019 14:49

M3 By signing this application you are confirming that all details included in the form have been completed accurately and truthfully.

Signed: This form was signed by Uzma Asif (UZMA.ASIF@stu.mmu.ac.uk) on 06/11/2019 14:20

Appendix 5: Consent Form

Manchester Metropolitan University

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project:

'Miss are you a Muslim' An exploration of identity and image of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

Name of Researcher: Uzma Asim

Please initial all boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 05.07.19 (version 2) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected. ☐

3. I agree to interviews being audio recorded and later transcribed by the researcher. ☐

4. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Person taking consent.	Date	Signature

Consent form date of issue: 06.07.19
Consent form version number: 2

Page 1 of 1

Appendix 6: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

'Miss, are you a Muslim?' An exploration of identity, image and agency of female Muslim teachers and their implications in education.

1. Invitation to research

I would like to invite you to take part in research I am carrying out for my thesis as part of the Doctorate in Education course at Manchester Metropolitan University. My name is Uzma Asim and I am Head of Biology at a secondary school in Manchester. My research project is based around exploring the implications of image, identity and agency on female Muslim teachers and the relationships they form with pupils. I will be investigating contemporary stereotypes of female Muslim teachers and the impact of these in education.

2. Why have I been invited?

You have been chosen to participate in the research as you are female, Muslim and teach in Secondary education either in or around Manchester. My research is based on 4-5 female Muslim teachers based in or around Manchester, UK. I have selected participants from a variety of ethnicities and cultural outlooks. I will interview female, Muslim teachers and use their experiences to ascertain approaches that can act to bridge any differences and create an inclusive atmosphere.

3. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide. I will describe the study and go through the information sheet, which I will give to you. I will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

4. What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to sign a consent form before the first interview proceeds. The information about the research will be sent to you prior to the interview so that you can make an informed decision. You will be interviewed on two occasions. In the first interview I will explain my research aims and pose questions based around your experiences in education as a female Muslim teacher. I anticipate that the first interview will last around an hour. I will give you a list of themes to take away with you and to note (written or mental) any relevant examples, within the six-week period between the first and second interview. You will not be required to

change or adapt your practice in any way. The themes will be based around the dynamics between teacher and pupil, however if you cannot note any relevant examples from your own practice, that is fine. The second interview will be conducted around six weeks after the first and I anticipate it will also last around an hour. The interviews will be conducted in English, recorded on an audio device, then transcribed and will take place on the MMU campus or a public venue such as a coffee shop local to you.

5. Are there any risks if I participate?

You may disclose information sometimes considered to be sensitive. The questions that ensue from this may bring about a change in the way you approach or present situations in your practice. Other than this there is no potential risk to you in participation.

6. Are there any advantages if I participate?

There are no direct advantages or rewards to you in participating, however your contribution, by agreeing to the interviews will be very valuable in formulating part of the research data for my thesis. It is an area which I feel needs researching, particularly in Manchester where schools represent a multicultural microcosm of society.

7. What will happen with the data I provide?

When you agree to participate in this research, I will collect from you personally-identifiable information.

The Manchester Metropolitan University ('the University') is the Data Controller in respect of this research and any personal data that you provide as a research participant.

The University is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's Data Protection Policy.

We collect personal data as part of this research (such as name, telephone numbers or age). As a public authority acting in the public interest we rely upon the 'public task' lawful basis. When we collect special category data (such as medical information or ethnicity) we rely upon the research and archiving purposes in the public interest lawful basis.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as I need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, I will keep the information about you that we have already obtained.

I will not share your personal data collected in this form with any third parties.

If your data is shared this will be under the terms of a Research Collaboration Agreement which defines use, and agrees confidentiality and information security provisions. It is the University's policy to only publish anonymised data unless you have given your explicit written consent to be identified in the research. **The University never sells personal data to third parties.**

I will only retain your personal data for as long as is necessary to achieve the research purpose. The interviews will be recorded on a device, they will be transcribed with pseudonyms used for all names of participants. The recorded interviews will be kept until the duration of the course and then subsequently deleted.

For further information about use of your personal data and your data protection rights please see the University's Data Protection Pages.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be published in my thesis which will be publicly accessible through Manchester Metropolitan University.

Who has reviewed this research project?

This project has been reviewed by my supervisors and the Faculty of Education ethics committee at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

Position	Researcher	Supervisors	Head of Faculty Ethics Committee	DPO/ICO
Name	Uzma Asim	Dr Sarah McNicol Dr Jim Dobson	Professor Ricardo Nemirovsky	The Data Protection Officer
Email	U.Asim@stu.mmu.ac.uk	S.Mcnicol@mmu.ac.uk J.Dobson@mmu.ac.uk	r.nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk	dataprotection@mmu.ac.uk
Telephone number	0161 247 6969	0161 247 5104 0161 247 5037	0161 247 2023	0161 247 2000
Address	Faculty of Education Manchester Metropolitan University Brooks Building 53 Bonsall Street Manchester M15 6GX	Faculty of Education Manchester Metropolitan University Brooks Building 53 Bonsall Street Manchester M15 6GX	Head of Faculty Ethics committee Manchester Metropolitan University Brooks Building 53 Bonsall Street Manchester M15 6GX	Manchester Metropolitan University, Legal Services, All Saints Building, M15 6BH

If you have any concerns regarding the personal data collected from you, our Data Protection Officer can be contacted using the legal@mmu.ac.uk e-mail address, by

calling 0161 247 3331 or in writing to: Data Protection Officer, Legal Services, All Saints Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH. You also have a right to lodge a complaint in respect of the processing of your personal data with the Information

Commissioner's Office as the supervisory authority. Please see: https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT