



The University of St Mark & St John

**British Multiculturalism Policies and Muslim Parents'
School Choices in Northern England:
Culturally Sensitive Schooling and Moments of Choice**

Muhammad Naeem

**Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Institute of Education

September 2022

Abstract

This study explores British Pakistani Muslim parents' school choices in Northern England by establishing an understanding of their perceptions of multicultural mixing, culturally sensitive schooling and 'moments' of choice. Multiculturalism policy development is examined to provide the context for parents' perceptions and choices. It investigated how parents' concerns towards aspects of culturally sensitive schooling such as the teaching of religious education, relationships and sex education, language education and single-sex education determine their 'moments' of choice. The study also highlights the implications of school choice in accommodating the cultural and religious needs of Muslim pupils in no-religion state schools.

Parental choice has been one of the keystones of education reform policy in the UK since the 1980s. The policy envisaged to bring choice and competition among schools to raise the educational attainments of pupils. However, it remains debatable and does not seem to favour parents from low socio-economic backgrounds. It has resulted in segregation among schools alongside segregation in residential neighbourhoods, especially in Blackburn, which is a town in North of England with ethnic Muslim residential concentration. Blackburn is one of the most segregated towns in the UK (Cantle, 2001), presenting an interesting canvas for Muslim parental school choice in a segregated setting. It is a segregated town where White British and Asian Muslims live 'parallel lives'. This study claims its originality by filling the gap of lack of research in Blackburn in the context of the ongoing discussion around the official 'death' of multiculturalism and the corresponding 'community cohesion' debates in the UK. Therefore, the research was conducted in the North of England in a post-industrial area, Blackburn, where there is a high presence of Muslims who came to the country during the middle of the twentieth century.

This study employed a case study approach, drawing data from documentary materials and in-depth semi-structured interviews of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. The participants were recruited through the Blackburn business community, a religious organisation, and the local council. A qualitative methodology was employed through social constructionism, which provided the epistemological basis for the study. The researcher used both insider-outsider positions simultaneously during interviews, which helped to get maximum variations in the data. A thematic analysis supported the researcher's interpretivist approach to understanding participants' experiences, behaviour, and opinions. The in-depth semi-structured interviews helped generate 'thick descriptions' of participants' viewpoints on educational challenges Muslims face in a segregated northern town such as Blackburn. The 'quantitizing' of qualitative data: the counting of participant statements gave precision to data analysis and improved the transparency of key findings of the study.

The participants utilised their social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources to navigate England's education system. It has resulted in the typology of

choosers such as informed, constrained, and semi-skilled choosers in Blackburn (Gewirtz et al., 1995). Informed choosers had resources and were more confident about their choices; constrained choosers lacked resources and chose the closest schools, while semi-skilled choosers had a strong inclination but limited capacity to engage with England's education system. This typology of choosers preferred four types of schools, such as community/Church schools, Muslim schools, 'mixed' schools, and Asian-majority schools, for multiple reasons. The choice of a particular school, Muslim, or no-religion state may be due to both reasons for making the child a faithful Muslim and for 'good results'. Gujarati Muslim schools exercise a 'strict' faith-based admission policy. A minority of parents secured admissions into Gujarati Muslim schools which exhibited *Wahabi* ethos. However, the parents did not convert to *Wahabism* but accepted the philosophy of a different sect temporarily for better educational attainments for their children. Similarly, there were reasons for choosing a 'mixed' school if a parent thought Islamic religious education was better reserved for a supplementary school or home.

Participants ascribed different meanings to the notions of 'mixing' such as mixing with different ethnicities, White British, Gujarati Indians or mixing of genders or religions. It showed a lack of clear official language when talking about multiculturalism and diversity in the UK. Despite parents' desire to 'mix', most of the children's 'mixing' takes place within the school premises. Some parents educate their children at schools with an Asian Muslim majority, as they feel safe in the numbers. This has resulted in the 'Asia-isation' of state schools in Blackburn.

The findings indicated that parental opinions on issues such as 'mixing', 'criteria for a good school', 'single-sex schooling' and 'good education', showed variations depending on their preference for choices. In this way, the study illustrated the ideological power of faith and described that 'good education' is the ultimate goal of parents. It would give children the knowledge of *deen-o-dunya* (meaning religion and the world): a combination of secular and religious education, which would help them succeed in the world and the hereafter. The findings also suggest that Muslim parents are not a homogeneous group, and there is significant diversity in what Muslim parents want. However, sending the children to the state school (community/church) during the day and supplementary school in the evening has developed as a dominant pattern for the education of Muslim children in England.

The study is both significant and timely, given recent debates revealing the tensions surrounding Muslim parents' school choices within segregated settings in a post-multicultural context. This is the first study exploring the school choice of Pakistani Muslim parents through multiculturalism policies and culturally sensitive schooling in Blackburn, Northern England.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	vii
Declaration of Authorship	viii
Acknowledgements	ix
Abbreviations	xi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Blackburn: A segregated town	2
1.2.1 Ethnic and religious segregation.....	4
1.3 School provision in Blackburn	6
1.4 Secondary schools in Blackburn	9
1.4.1 Muslim Secondary Schools.....	9
1.4.2 Church of England and Roman Catholic schools.....	11
1.5 Primary schools in Blackburn	12
1.5.1 Muslim free primary school	12
1.5.2 Church of England and Roman Catholic primary schools	13
1.5.3 Independent schools	15
1.6 Conclusion	17
Chapter 2: Research aims and objectives	18
2.1 Introduction	18
2.2 Purpose of the study	18
2.3 Research gap	21
2.4 Research questions and overview of methodology	23
2.5 Structure of thesis	26
Chapter 3: Literature Review	28
3.1 introduction	28
3.2 Parental school choice	28
3.2.1 UK's choice policy since the 1980s	28
3.2.2 School admission policies.....	31

3.2.3 Pupil sorting by schools	32
3.2.4 Pupils' educational attainments	34
3.2.5 Housing demand near performing schools.....	35
3.2.6 School segregation and residential segregation.....	36
3.3 Multiculturalism policy developments and community cohesion	38
3.3.1 From multiculturalism to 'community cohesion'	38
3.3.2 'Death' of multiculturalism	41
3.3.3 Towards multicultural education.....	42
3.3.4 Language education.....	44
3.3.5 Faith-based schools	45
3.3.6 Muslim faith schools.....	46
3.3.7 Supplementary schools	47
3.4 Culturally sensitive schooling and segregated education	49
3.4.1 Religion in state schools.....	49
3.4.2 Religious education.....	49
3.4.3 Relationships and sex education	51
3.4.4 Moments of choice.....	51
3.4.5 Typology of choosers.....	53
3.5 Chapter summary	55
Chapter 4: Methodology.....	57
4.1 Introduction	57
4.2 Methodological perspective	58
4.3 Research paradigm: Ontology and epistemology	59
4.4 Case study as a research strategy.....	61
4.5 Research methods	63
4.5.1 Documentary analysis.....	64
4.5.2 Population and sampling.....	66
4.5.3 Semi-structured interviews.....	69
4.5.4 Interview guide	70
4.5.5. Interview languages.....	72
4.6 Positionality: Insider-outsider status	73
4.7 Reflexivity	76
4.8 Thematic analysis (TA)	78
4.9 'Quantitizing' the qualitative data	79
4.10 Coding framework	80
4.11 Conclusion.....	83
Chapter 5: Findings - Multiculturalism.....	84

5.1 Introduction	84
5.2 Demographics of study participants	85
5.3 Multicultural mixing and school choice	92
5.4 Parents favouring Asian majority schools	96
5.5 Muslim children’s mixing with different communities	98
5.6 Children’s hectic daily routine and mixing	102
5.7 Multicultural competence	104
5.8 Multiculturalism re-defined	111
5.9 Conclusion	115
Chapter 6: Findings - Culturally Sensitive Schooling.....	117
6.1 Introduction	117
6.2 Religious education.....	117
6.3 Relationships and sex education	123
6.4 Language education	129
6.5 Single-sex schooling	135
6.6 Muslim schools: The sites of contestations	138
6.7 Combination of state schooling and supplementary schooling	149
6.8 Conclusion	153
Chapter 7: Findings – ‘Moments’ of Choice.....	155
7.1 Introduction	155
7.2 Moments of choice	155
7.3 School nomination and school allocation	161
7.4 Criteria for a ‘good school’	165
7.5 The ‘Asia-isation’ of state schools	172
7.6 Typology of school choosers	179
7.6.1 Informed choosers.....	181
7.6.2 Constrained choosers.....	183
7.6.3 Semi-skilled choosers	184
7.7 Conclusion	185
Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations	188
8.1 Introduction	188
8.2 Summary of findings	188
8.3 Implications of study	195
8.4 Contribution to knowledge.....	197

8.5 Limitations of and further research	200
8.6 Conclusion	202
References	205
Appendices	231
Appendix A: Definitions of terms	232
Appendix B: Interview guide	235
Appendix C: Participant information sheet	237
Appendix D: Consent form	240
Appendix E: Interview transcript	242
Appendix F: Ethics approval	251
Appendix G: Permission letter from BYPAC Coordinator	253
Appendix H: Coding framework.....	254
Appendix I: Educational needs of Muslim children in state schools	257
Appendix J: Secondary schools in Blackburn as of 2021	259
Appendix K: Primary schools in Blackburn as of 2021	260
Appendix L: Key religious concepts	265

List of Figures

Figure 1: Ward map of Blackburn (Census 2011)	4
Figure 2: Ethnic segregation in Blackburn	5
Figure 3: Religious segregation in Blackburn.....	5
Figure 4: Classification of schooling options for parents.....	52
Figure 5: Reasons for diverse school choices of Muslim parents in Blackburn	187

List of Tables

Table 1: Secondary schools in Blackburn.....	7
Table 2: Primary schools in Blackburn	7
Table 3: What Ofsted inspection judgements mean	8
Table 4: Allocation of places - TIGHS	9
Table 5: Allocation of places – TIBHS	10
Table 6: Allocation of places – the Olive Primary School.....	13
Table 7: Typology of school choosers (Gewirtz et al., 1995).....	53
Table 8: Phases of thematic analysis.....	81
Table 9: Summary of Participants' views on school and after-school choices	86
Table 10: Typology of school choosers in Blackburn.....	181

Declaration of Authorship

I, MUHAMMAD NAEEM

declare that the thesis entitled

'British Multiculturalism Policies and Muslim Parents' School Choices in Northern England: Culturally Sensitive Schooling and Moments of Choice'

and the work presented in the thesis are both my own, and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research. I confirm that:

this work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;

where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;

where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;

where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;

I have acknowledged all main sources of help;

where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;

none of this work has been published before submission.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Muhammad Naeem', written in a cursive style with a horizontal line through it.

Date: 07-09-2022

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr David Lundie for the dedicated attention to my work– as my supervisor, his mentorship and support remained unmatched. He has been helpful in this study, from its initial stages to the final ones. He not only provided essential academic guidance and help at all times but also offered continuous encouragement to complete the task. For his selfless support, I will always be indebted to him.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr Susan Cooper, my Director of Studies and Dr Tanya Ovenden-Hope, my supervisor, for their extensive support and encouragement. Their sharing of wisdom and lending encouragement helped me grow intellectually. They believed in me through all stages and encouraged me to discover my potential of becoming a researcher. I learnt from them how to approach knowledge.

I am also grateful to my Marjon family for their support and care, particularly Prof Michelle Jones, Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Dr Ian Luke, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic; Prof Debby Cotton, Director of Academic Practice and PGR Coordinator for Education; Hellen Goodall for helping me to become an Associate Fellow of The Higher Education Academy; Dr Lystra Hagley-Dickinson, my ex-director of studies; Steve Gunard, User Education Librarian; Jennifer McAuley, Research and Knowledge Exchange Support Manager; Mercedes Farjad, Digital Skills Manager, for her help in formatting this thesis, and; Johanna Holford, Research and Knowledge Exchange Support Officer for their readiness to support. Thanks to the fellow students, and all friends – old and new.

It would be unfair to thank my knowledgeable friends who helped me at every stage of my PhD: Dr Irfan Rind, Associate Professor of Education, Sukkur IBA University, Pakistan; Dr Muhammad Ashraf, PhD (Education), University of Glasgow; Dr Sufyan Ahmad, PhD (Anthropology), University of Sussex; Dr Amna Ansari, PhD (Education), University of Cambridge, and Dr Reza Gholami, Reader in Sociology of Education, University of Birmingham. My special thanks to Prof Dr Aamir Hashmi, Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, for his unconditional academic and emotional support.

I would also thank Mr Abdul Qadeer, Mr Amjad Raza, Dr Qaisar Chishty and Mr Nasir Zaman for their support during data collection in Blackburn. I am also thankful

to Mr Fazal-ur-Rehman who introduced me to some key contacts in Blackburn. I am forever indebted to the Blackburn parents who participated in my study.

This PhD would not have been possible without financial support from the University of St Mark & St John in the form of the Mayflower Doctoral Scholarship. Later on, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Marjon University's Covid Hardship Grants was very beneficial. I am also grateful to other sources, including the Charles Wallace Pakistan Trust, Churches Commission's CTBI Hardship Grant, and the Gilchrist Educational Trust, for their financial help, in the form of small grants.

I would like to dedicate this work to my parents, without whom I would never have come this far. This PhD is for my late father, whose encouragement and persistence helped me to reach this level, and for my mother whose love and prayers helped me overcome every obstacle with ease – not a day went by in these five years that her warmth did not reach me; for my brother Zeshan Majeed, a historian and a researcher, who always took pride in my achievements and showed unconditional support; for my sister Afshan Kanwal; my nephews Faizan, Numan and Ahmad who had been a great support; and for my lovable sons Haris, Irteza and Sheharyar who became my smile in times of despair; and finally, for Marjon and its people to whom it belongs.

Muhammad Naeem

07 September 2022

Abbreviations

AMS	Association of Muslim Schools
BAME	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BYPAC	Blackburn Young Pakistanis Achievements Commission
CA	Conversation Analysis
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CMEB	The Commission on Multi-Ethnic Britain
CRE	The Commission for Racial Equality
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DfE	Department for Education
EAL	English as an Additional Language
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IoD	indices of Deprivation
LAs	Local Authorities
MCB	The Muslim Council of Britain
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NALDIC	National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PLASC	Pupil Level Annual School Census
RE	Religious Education
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education
SMSC	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development
TA	Thematic Analysis

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study is about school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn, North of England. It explores the educational challenges Muslim parents face in such northern towns and education provision segregating the communities on social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic lines (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles & Wilson, 2014). Through multiculturalism policies, the researcher seeks to complicate the binary between school choice and culturally sensitive schooling by considering its relationship to the evolution of multiculturalism policies in the UK. Multiculturalism is considered as 'living with difference' (Butler-Sloss, 2015); 'mixing'¹ of Pakistani Muslims with non-Muslims; how they negotiate a range of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic differences in relation to other communities, especially from the perspective of religious differences (Byrne & De Tona, 2014).

In the UK, parental choice is the foundation of current education policy (Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz, 1996). Burgess, McConnel, Propper and Wilson (2004) argue that there has been great emphasis on extending school choice to parents since the 1980s.

However, the choice policy is facing challenges such as school admission criteria and pupil sorting by schools. Resultantly, school and residential segregation is growing in terms of the ethnicity and religion of pupils and the socio-economic status of parents. Therefore, this study considers school a 'critical site' for mixing and accommodating the religious and cultural needs of Muslim children (Lundie, 2018, p. 2). It provides evidence about the types of schools available for Pakistani Muslim parents and the factors that influence their choice. To choose 'good' schools, parents utilise their social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources, which has resulted in various typologies of school choosers (Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1995). Secondly, this study generates knowledge about how Muslim parents' school choice is influenced by policies such as 'community cohesion' and the educational challenges faced by them to get their children educated at segregated schools.

This study adopted a case study approach, drawing data from documentary materials and in-depth semi-structured interviews of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. Blackburn is selected for its size and diversity; it is a small town that can

¹ The terms of 'mixing', 'mix' and 'mixed' are the key terms reputedly used in this thesis; therefore, they will be used without commas or Italics from now onwards in most of the text.

be studied with the available resources and time. It was described as one of the most segregated towns in the whole of the UK (Cantle, 2001). To my knowledge, this is the first study carried out in Blackburn on how Pakistani Muslim parents choose schools for their children within the segregated setting of the town.

1.2 Blackburn: A segregated town

Blackburn with Darwen is a unitary authority in East Lancashire, North of England. Various censuses and survey reports have shown northern England's ethnic, residential and religious segregation, signposting Muslim concentration in Blackburn town. It is small enough to study with the resources available for a doctoral study but large enough to display a diverse range of schooling options for parents: with a population of 148,900 in 2018, Blackburn is a segregated and multi-faith town, with a school sector reflecting a segregated profile (Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council, 2019)².

The area around the North of England had witnessed disturbances that resulted in violence between Muslim minorities and mainstream groups in 2001 after the 9/11 attacks. Several riots took place in the Muslim-majority towns near Blackburn, such as Bradford, Burnley and Oldham (Thomas, 2011). Following these riots, several reports were issued by the government highlighting the ethnic divide in Bradford, Oldham, Burnley and Blackburn. The reports made comments about the specific educational needs of the Muslim community. For example, the report on 'Community Cohesion' by Ted Cantle reviewed the situation and inquired about the causes of disturbances. Cantle (2001) diagnosed that a lack of understanding between the Muslim and White British communities led to mistrust that intensified into violence. He argued that both communities are living 'parallel lives', and resultantly, segregation is increasing in every walk of life, such as socially, residentially, and in education.

Baldwin (2017) described Blackburn as a 'struggling northern town coping with residential and ethnic segregation. From the 1950s, Blackburn experienced a flow of Muslim immigrants, mainly from India (the state of Gujarat) and Pakistan (the Mirpur region of Kashmir). A majority of Pakistani Muslims adhere to the *Sunni* sect³, while

² Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (hereafter, Blackburn Council).

³ A sect is a religious sub-group. There are different sects in Muslims such as Sunni, Wahabi, Shia, Deobandi, Barelvi, Salafi, Hanbali, Maliki, Ash'ari etc. They have different interpretations of Islamic Shariah law.

most Gujarati Indian Muslims follow the *Wahabi* school of thought of Islamic laws. Blackburn has been pushed into 'ghettoisation' in the last few decades, becoming a two-tier town exhibiting a 'neo-apartheid' between Asians and White British (Johnston, Manley, & Jones, 2016, p. 23). There is segregation on the streets of Blackburn as some areas of the town have nearly all Asian population, such as Whalley Range, which has almost no White, Christian residents (Seabrook, 2018).

In recent years, the migration of Pakistanis from Europe has also increased due to Islamic education opportunities. In the UK, the Muslim community is supported through the establishment of Muslim schools according to the specific educational needs of their children (Musharraf, 2015). This policy has resulted in the growth of 'secondary migration', 'secondary movements' or 'secondary movements of migrants' (European Commission, 2021, pp. 1-8). The secondary migrants are those Pakistanis who are coming to the UK after having spent some years in a country different from Pakistan. This study included 5 participants who were 'secondary migrants' from mainland Europe such as Italy and Spain.

In Blackburn, the White British and Asian Muslim communities (Pakistanis and Gujarati Indians) live in separate neighbourhoods. Siddiq (2018), in the BBC programme entitled 'White Fright', tracked the differences between Asian Muslims and White British residents. It was revealed that Muslim Asians only live in areas/wards around central Blackburn, while the White British residents dominate the other parts. The two communities had separate lives, and White residents were leaving Blackburn in sizeable numbers. She found that residential segregation is on the rise in Blackburn, which is resulting in social deprivation. Blackburn is considered one of the most deprived areas in England. According to the English Indices of Deprivation (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019), the north of England and Blackburn is one of England's income-deprived areas. According to this index, the level of deprivation in northern England is around 30%. Blackburn is ranked along with Oldham, Walsall, Halton, and Burnley as one of the local authority districts with the highest levels of deprivation in England. Figure 1 shows the ward map of Blackburn, indicating that a majority of the Asian Muslim population lives in the northern part of the Borough.



Figure 1: Ward map of Blackburn (Census 2011)

Blackburn is appropriately self-contained in terms of schooling, as a majority of children attend local schools (Johnston et al., 2016). Mapping of the school landscape was essential for this research and, given the ready availability of information online as part of the legal requirements on schools, proved useful in this study. The information presented here is drawn from the local authority, individual school websites, inspection reports, examination results and other school data published annually by the government on Gov.uk website.

1.2.1 Ethnic and religious segregation

The population of 148,900 in 2018 makes Blackburn the largest Borough in the wider Lancashire area and is more diverse and younger than England as a whole. It is a multicultural borough, home to many people with diverse ethnicities and religious identities. According to the 2011 Census, 66% of residents are White British (which was 78% in 2001), 28% are Asian, and 0.6% are Black. Among Asian residents, there are Indian (13%) and Pakistani (12%) (Blackburn Council, 2019). The Pakistani

population has risen from 12,020 (8.7% in census 2001) to 17,801 (12% in census 2011). The Asian populations (Indians and Pakistanis) live in segregated neighbourhoods described by Bhatti (1999, p. 6) as an ‘encapsulation’ of communities (Figure 2).

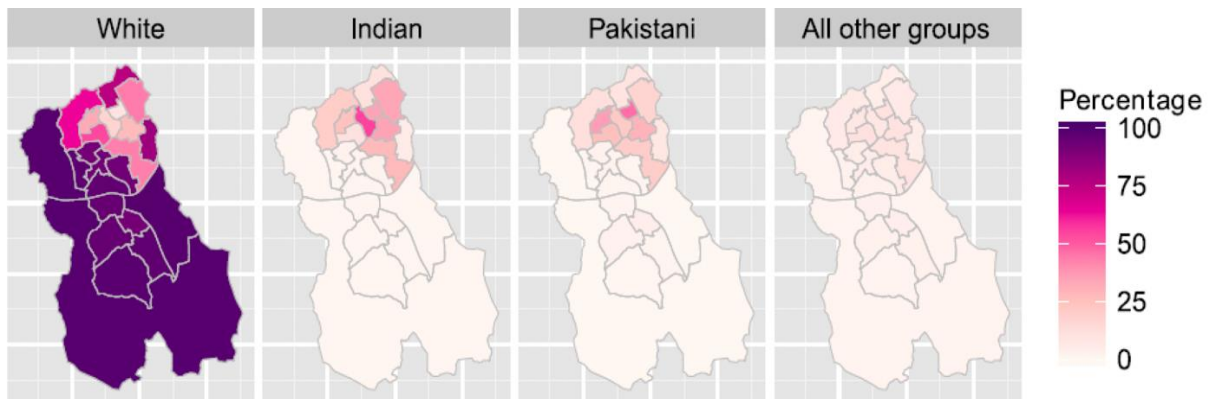


Figure 2: Ethnic segregation in Blackburn

Source: Census (2011).

The religious make-up of the population of Blackburn, according to the 2011 census, was 52.6% Christian (declined from 63.3% in 2001 Census) and 27.0% Muslim. In England, Blackburn is number three among the Local Authority Districts in terms of the Muslim majority population, after the London Boroughs of Tower Hamlets (34.5%) and Newham (32.0%) (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015). People with ‘no-religion’ was 13.8% (risen from 8.0% in 2001 Census) (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Religious segregation in Blackburn

Source: Census (2011).

According to Census (2011), there are also other religious minority residents in Blackburn, such as Hindus (574), Buddhists (306), Sikhs (161), and Jews (54). Some neighbourhoods of Blackburn, such as Whalley Range, Blackburn Central, Audley, Little Harwood and Wensley Fold, are only lived in by Muslim Asians, and other areas such as Whitehall and Livesey are almost entirely inhabited by White

residents. The percentage of ethnic minorities in Blackburn is well above the national average of around 15%. Across northern England, this proportion of ethnic Muslim population is three times greater than the average.

Due to the overwhelming presence of Muslims, Blackburn has a diversity of schools designated as community schools, Church of England, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Grammar, no-religion and independent schools. They have varied levels of segregation and educational attainments. The majority of Blackburn's schools have been reported as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted in recent years (Lancashire County Council, 2020). Within the Lancashire boroughs, Blackburn's secondary schools' progress 8 attainment is above England's average and the percentage gaining grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSEs⁴ is on a par with the average for England's state-funded schools⁵. During 2018/19, the average GCSE score in Blackburn with Darwen was 46.4, slightly below Lancashire's score of 46.7 (Lancashire County Council, 2020).

1.3 School provision in Blackburn

The Blackburn local authority aims 'to provide children and young people of the Borough with education and learning opportunities...support parents and carers when it comes to schooling'. Parents can choose from 11 secondary schools of different types and religious denominations. The breakdown of the secondary schools is as follows in Table 1. Full details of secondary schools are provided in Appendix J.

Of 11 secondary schools, there are 6 schools that have no religious character, while 5 schools are faith-based. Out of the 5 schools, 3 schools are affiliated with Churches; 2 schools are Roman Catholic, and 1 school is of Church of England. They are operated by the Diocese of Blackburn and the Diocese of Salford. The

⁴ GCSE stand for General Certificate of Secondary Education: is an academic qualification in a particular subject, taken in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, Progress 8 benchmark metric is calculated on the results of 8 GCSEs subjects including English, Maths and Science. Studies for GCSE examinations take place over a period of two or three academic years (depending upon the subject, school, and exam board), starting in Year 9 or Year 10 for the majority of students, with examinations being sat at the end of Year 11 in England and Wales (Department for Education, 2019).

⁵ England state-funded schools, commonly known as state schools, provide education to pupils between the ages of 3 and 18 without charge. Since 1998, there have been various types of state-funded school such as community schools, academy schools, free schools, faith schools, foundation schools, voluntary-aided schools, and voluntary controlled schools (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008).

remaining 2 schools are Muslim schools belonging to Star Academies Trust: *Tauheedul* Islam Girls' High School and *Tauheedul* Islam Boys' High School. There are no Hindu, Sikh or Jewish faith schools due to their negligible population in Blackburn. Moreover, there are 3 nursery schools and 4 special schools. The number of community junior schools is 4, which provide schooling to children from 7-11 years of age. None of the community junior schools is oversubscribed.

Table 1: Secondary schools in Blackburn

Type of school	Number of schools	Religious designation
Academy	6	4 No-religion 1 Muslim 1 Church of England
Free	2	1 Muslim 1 No-religion
Voluntary Aided	2	2 Roman Catholic
Trust	1	No-religion
Total	11	

The website of the Blackburn local authority indicates that there are 52 state-funded schools for primary-age children of various religious designations, including those designated as voluntary aided (VA), voluntary controlled (VC), academies, community schools and 1 free school (see Table 2).

Table 2: Primary schools in Blackburn

Religious designation	Number of schools	Type of school
Church of England	22	13 Voluntary aided schools 5 Academy schools 4 Voluntary controlled schools
No-religion	18	18 Community schools
Roman Catholic	11	11 Voluntary aided Schools
Muslim	1	1 Free school
Total	52	

Blackburn has a complex educational landscape with various types of schools such as community schools, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, trust schools, free schools, academies, and independent schools. Independent schools are fee-charging schools, some endowed and governed by a board of governors and some in private ownership, independent of many of the regulations and conditions that apply to state-funded schools (Coldron, Cripps & Shipton, 2010) (see Appendix A). Full details of Blackburn primary schools are provided in Appendix K.

There are two types of school inspections according to the Education Act 2005. Section 5 deals with the Ofsted whole school Inspection⁶, and Section 48 is about the RE and religious ethos inspection that is carried out in schools with a religious character⁷. Ofsted has no remit to inspect the RE provision in a school designated as having a religious character. Ofsted designates the schools as ‘outstanding’, ‘good’, ‘requires improvement’ and ‘inadequate’, based on the judgments as shown in Table 3 (Ofsted, 2016):

Table 3: What Ofsted inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils’ needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils’ needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires Improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement, but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors

In maintained Muslim schools, the Association of Muslim Schools inspects the distinctiveness of religious education and the school’s contribution to a child’s spiritual development under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (Association of Muslim Schools, 2021).

⁶ The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) is a UK government's department. Ofsted is responsible for inspection of a range of state-funded schools. A full Ofsted report is administered under Section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

⁷ If a school has a designated religious character, it is responsible for organising section 48 inspections on denominational education, religious education and collective worship. These are conducted in addition to Ofsted inspections.

1.4 Secondary schools in Blackburn

1.4.1 Muslim Secondary Schools

Star Academies is a not-for-profit multi-academy trust that runs a diverse network of primary and secondary schools in northern England, including *Tauheedul* Islam Girls' High School (TIGHS) and *Tauheedul* Islam Boys' High School (TIBHS), among other schools (Gov. UK, 2020). Both are single-sex schools. TIGHS has got an Academy status, while TIBHS is a free school, and both have an Ofsted rating of 'outstanding'. TIGHS was started in 1984 as an independent Muslim school. In 2005, it got a new funded status and became the first voluntary-aided Muslim school in the North West of England. It has one of the highest examination results of all the schools in Blackburn: 83% of the girls achieved grade 5 or more A-C GCSEs, including English and maths, in 2019, while the local authority average was 38%, and the England average stood at 40% in that year. The results for boys' school (TIBHS) were 67% for that year (Gov.uk, 2019). TIGHS, an 11-18 years outstanding Muslim faith school, welcomes applications from families of other faiths and non-faiths. The mission statement of both schools reads as follows:

To promote a culture of educational excellence, from within a caring and secure Islamic environment enriched with the values of discipline, mutual care and respect, which extends beyond the school into the wider community.

TIGHS mostly follows a religion-based admission criterion. For example, for the allocation of places (2022/23) for Year 7, there were 124 published places, and 429 applications were received. Out of 124 places, 93 places (75%) were allocated to the mosques associated with TIGHS and the girls attending the Olive Primary School – a free school being run by the Star Academies (see Table 4):

Table 4: Allocation of places - TIGHS

Category	Children offered places
Children whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives the membership benefits of, <i>Masjid-al-Hidayah</i> , <i>Masjid-e-Irfan</i> and <i>Masjid-e-Anisul Islam</i> ⁸	42
Children whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives the membership benefits of, <i>Masjid-e-Tauheedul Islam</i>	40

⁸ *Masjid* is a Mosque: Islamic place of worship.

Children attending the Olive Primary School, Blackburn, at the time of both application and offer of a place	11
Total	93 (75%)

Only 1 place is available for the Muslim girls who live nearest to the school, and the distance from home to school of the last child to be offered a place was 0.22 miles.

Tauheedul Islam Boys' High School Blackburn, established in 2012, has nearly all pupils of Asian heritage, mainly Gujarati Indians and a minority of Pakistani. It is an oversubscribed school, and the admission criteria include the parents having membership of the *Tauheedul* mosques. For the year 2022/23 admissions, a total of 355 preferences were received against 124 allocated places for Year 7.

Table 5: Allocation of places – TIBHS

Category	Children offered places
Muslim boys whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives the membership benefits of, <i>Masjid-e-Tauheedul Islam</i>	26
Muslim boys whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives the membership benefits of, <i>Masjid al Hidayah, Masjid-e-Irfan and Masjid-e-Anisul Islam</i>	24
Boys attending the Olive Primary School, Blackburn	20
Muslim boys with a sibling	2
Looked after Muslim child or previously looked after	2
Sons of Muslim staff	1
Total	75 (60%)

Only 4 places are available for the Muslim boys who live nearest to the school, and the distance from home to school of the last child to be offered a place was 0.479 miles. Out of the 124 places, 75 places were allocated on the basis of faith affiliation, constituting 60% of the total places (see Table 5).

Some Muslim parents prefer TIGHS and TIBHS. Therefore, these schools are over-subscribed. The over-subscription criteria prescribed by the local authority are as follows (Blackburn Council, 2021):

A secondary school is defined as being oversubscribed if at least one on-time applicant was refused a place and the applicant did not receive an offer from any higher preference school. The oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered and the furthest distance are only provided for schools that were 'oversubscribed' in 2021.

The admission criteria prefer the families practising the Muslim faith and having membership of one of their four mosques in Blackburn: *Masjid-e-Tauheedul Islam*, *Masjid-al-Hidayah*, *Masjid-e-Irfan*, and *Masjid-e-Anisul Islam*. These mosques are established by Gujarati Muslims and follow the principles of *Wahabism*. Further, priority is also given to the boys and girls graduating from the Olive Primary School, Blackburn. The place allocation criteria reveal that the Muslim community is more protective of their daughters as 75% of TIGHS places are offered to Muslim girls; however, 60% of places of TIBHS are reserved for Muslim boys on the grounds of religion.

1.4.2 Church of England and Roman Catholic schools

Out of the rest of the 9 secondary schools in Blackburn, 3 schools are oversubscribed: Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy, and St Bede's Roman Catholic High School. The Church schools are affiliated with the Diocese of Blackburn or the Diocese of Salford. Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education emphasises the acquisition of knowledge while aiming to 'Serve Christ, Share the Gospel, Support, Equip and Educate'. The Board believes that Church schools have the potential to transform the lives of children through academic excellence and personal development through religious values (Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education, 2021).

According to the schools' websites in 2021, St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy is a Church of England secondary school affiliated with the Diocese of Blackburn. It is an Asian-majority school, with children from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. In 2018, Ofsted designated this school as 'good'. Students achieve well in English. Following a dip in results in 2012, the more-able students performed well in 2013, and the proportion of pupils gaining A* and A grades increased considerably. While the White-majority St Bede's Roman Catholic High School is a voluntary aided school. It is an over-subscribed school as 11066 pupils are enrolled against an approved capacity of 1050 pupils in 2020. The school was judged as 'good' by Ofsted in 2018. However, in 2014, results indicate that the proportion of students gaining at least 5 GCSE passes at grade C or above, including in English and mathematics, and their attainment in English rose further. Attainments in mathematics fell slightly, although it remains well-above national levels.

Blackburn has one Grammar school: Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School (QEGS), a free school. It is a co-educational, non-denominational, mixed-sex day school serving

local and regional communities. The school has existed since 1509 as a private school and used to be a White-majority school. However, when it changed its status to a free school in 2014, it became an Asian-majority school. In October 2019, the report from Ofsted recognised the school as 'good'. The school has a strong track record of academic success, with nearly all pupils achieving the nationally recognised benchmark of at least 5 passes at GCSE grades A*-C, including English and mathematics. Over 70% of A-level candidates typically obtain a place in their first-choice course at their first-choice university. In August 2011, the school achieved a 100% passing rate in the A Levels during 2011. It is one of the few schools which offers both GCSE and A Level. Pupils have several languages on offer to study, including Latin, French, Spanish and German (Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School website, 2021).

An overview of the secondary school landscape of Blackburn indicates that out of the 11 schools, 5 are oversubscribed. Among other secondary schools, Pleckgate High School was rated as 'outstanding' in 2019. The 2 other schools: Darwen Vale High School and Our Lady and St John Catholic College, were designated as schools that 'require improvement' in 2021 by Ofsted. Our Lady and St John Catholic College was advised to enable pupils to benefit from the curriculum in Key Stage 3 by ensuring that they can deepen their learning and therefore know more and remember more over time. It is revealed that most secondary schools are segregated, deliver good quality education and provide a diversity of choices to parents.

1.5 Primary schools in Blackburn

1.5.1 Muslim free primary school

Blackburn has one Muslim primary - the Olive Primary School, which is 'outstanding', and a part of Star Academy trust. It is a free school set up in 2013 in response to demand from the local Muslim community. It is a mixed-sex school catering to pupils of 4-11 years of age. The mission statement of the school is the same as that of TIGHS and TIBHS, emphasising the promotion of the culture of education within an Islamic environment. It is an oversubscribed school; so far as allocation of places for 2022/23 is concerned, there was 90 published admission number. However, 299 preferences were received by the school. The oversubscription criteria have two priority groups. Group A stipulates that a maximum of 50% of the places will be allocated to children who are of the Muslim faith. Group B indicates that the

remaining places will be allocated to other applicants, including those refused admissions in Priority Group A, equally and without reference to faith (see Table 6).

Table 6: Allocation of places – the Olive Primary School

Category	Children offered places
Pupils whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives membership benefits of <i>Tauheedul Islam Mosque</i>	24
Pupils whose parent is a member of, or a woman who receives membership benefits of, <i>Masjid-e-Hidayah, Masjid-e-Irfan and Masjid-e-Anisul Islam</i>	17
Distance (All other Muslim boys who live nearest to the school)	3
Looked after Muslim Pupils or pupils previously looked after or Muslim pupils who appear to have been in state care outside of England	1
Total	45 (50%)

If oversubscribed, it is mandatory for free schools to ensure that at least 50% of the pupils are given admission on the basis of faith affiliation (Long & Bolton, 2018).

It is therefore, at Olive Primary School, 50% of places are reserved for Muslim pupils. However, all pupils were reported to belong to the Muslim faith according to the 2017 Ofsted inspection, and over half of them speak English as an additional language (Olive School, 2019). The school has established good links with the community. For example, a link and a visit to a Church of England Primary school in another local authority allow pupils to learn about the festivals of Christianity, such as Christmas and Easter. A reciprocal visit from that Church school to the Olive Primary School allows teachers and pupils to celebrate their own Muslim faith and share knowledge of the Muslim festival of *Ramadan*⁹.

1.5.2 Church of England and Roman Catholic primary schools

The Church schools in Blackburn range from ‘outstanding’ to ‘requires improvement’ in their most recent Ofsted reports, all were ethnically diverse, and some were more diverse than the local population as a whole. Out of 52 primary schools, 13 schools were designated as oversubscribed. Among them, 6 were Church of England schools (they are all voluntary aided schools), and 1 was a Roman Catholic school. In case of an oversubscription of a Catholic school, the selection criteria come into play if there are more admission applications than pupils’ places. In the case of oversubscription,

⁹ *Ramadan* is the month of fasting for Muslims all over the world.

the selection criteria applied in all 11 Catholic primary schools in Blackburn. The set of criteria used will give priority to:

A Baptised Roman Catholic 'looked after child' or a Baptised Roman Catholic child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order, including those baptised Roman Catholic children who appear to this admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

St Paul's Roman Catholic School is the only over-subscribed Roman Catholic primary in Blackburn. It was declared a 'good' school by Ofsted in 2020. It has 215 pupils, and almost all pupils are of White British heritage because the school is located in Livesey ward, which is a White-majority area. The school has got good results. In 2019 pupils' meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths was 69% against the local authority average of 66% and England's average of 65%. The school's location in a White-majority area, along with a faith-based admission criterion, makes it a less favoured choice for Muslim parents.

The Church of England primary schools are also segregated and ethnically diverse, with various levels of quality of education. They are whether Asian majority or White majority schools. Due to residential segregation in Blackburn, there is a shortage of ethnically mixed Church of England schools. For example, there are 6 oversubscribed Church of England schools in Blackburn, 3 of them are Asian-majority schools, and another 3 are White-majority schools. This is due to their location as the White-majority schools are located outside of central Blackburn: in the White majority neighbourhoods.

A White-majority, St Gabriel's Church of England School was designated 'outstanding' by Ofsted in 2014. The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage, though there are a small number of minority ethnic backgrounds represented at the school. Similarly, Blackburn the Redeemer Church of England School was also an outstanding school in 2013 with 420 pupils, most of whom are of White British heritage. The school's score in 2019 met the pupils' expected standard in reading, writing and maths of 85% against the local authority average of 66% and England's average of 65%. The third White-majority primary school, St Paul's Church of England School, was also an 'outstanding' school in the Ofsted report of 2013.

Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. All 3 schools are 'outstanding', are located in White neighbourhoods and have White-majority children.

Out of 3 Asian-majority oversubscribed CofE schools, 2 are 'good' schools, and 1 is 'outstanding'. They are located in Asian-majority neighbourhoods of the town. The Muslim community prefers St James' Church of England School despite its biblically rooted Christian vision, which reads as:

Guided by our Christian values, we endeavour to inspire, cherish and serve our school community. We strive to be exceptional in all we do. We will nurture a love of all God's children. We seek to build respect of all faiths and beliefs

St. James' is a 'good' school according to Ofsted's report of 2019. The pupils' achievement is consistently very good by the end of Key Stage 2. Many pupils make well above average progress. The school's score in 2019 met pupils' expected standard in reading, writing and maths of 53% against the local authority average of 66% and England's average of 65%.

Almost all pupils at St Matthew's Church of England School are second and third-generation Asians. Most pupils have English as an additional language, and it was termed a 'good' school in 2019. However, St Barnabas & St Paul's Church of England School is an 'outstanding' Asian-majority school. There are high numbers of pupils from Asian backgrounds and a high proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school's score in 2019 in reading, writing and maths was 91% against the local authority average of 66% and England's average of 65%. Being located in a Muslim-majority area, the proportion of Asian-heritage pupils is much higher in the school enrolment, which has transformed most of the Church schools into Asian-majority schools in Blackburn.

1.5.3 Independent schools

The availability of independent fee-paying day schools increases the choices available for parents with high socio-economic status. The individual school websites provide information about admission criteria, religious ethos, staffing and fee charged by the independent schools. There are Muslim primary schools such as *Dar Ul Madinah Blackburn* and *Rawdhatul Uloom Islamic Primary School Blackburn*. The senior and all-through schools include *Al Islah Girls' High School*, *Islamiyah School*, *Jamiatul Ilm Wal Huda*, *Markazul Uloom* and *Noorul Uloom*. The Westholme school

Blackburn has a Christian affiliation to provide education to boys and girls aged 4-18 years.

The demand for Muslim independent schools is on the rise due to the continuous influx of Muslim immigrants in Blackburn. Most Muslim schools opened due to government support for establishing independent faith schools. *Al Islah* Girls' High School was opened in 1995 to provide education for girls aged 11 to 16. There are currently 58 pupils on roll. It is run by the Indian Gujrati administration. The mission of the school is:

To provide a quality inclusive academic education which promotes British values for all our pupils regardless of ability with the individual needs of each pupil at the heart of the Islamic ethos of the school.

The Islamiyah School was established in 2000 due to demand from the local community. The establishment of the school was initiated by a mosque, namely *Masjid-E Sajedeen Islaymiah*. In the Ofsted inspection of 2017, the school was rated as 'good'. *Markazul Uloom* School was opened in 2001. Boys and girls are taught in separate buildings on the school campus, and they are of mainly Asian heritage. *Darul Uloom* prepares male students to become *Imams*¹⁰ or Islamic theologians. *Jamiatul Ilm Wal Huda* Blackburn, also known as 'The College of Knowledge and Guidance', is an independent college for Muslim boys of age 11 and over. The College also contains *Jamiatul Ilm Wal Huda* school. It was established in 1997 with the purpose of serving the Islamic community with Islamic knowledge as well as modern education. The college also imparts *Tabligh*, which is the act of propagating the message of Islam, which is an obligatory duty of the Muslim community (Effendi, 2020).

It is worth mentioning that some independent Muslim schools are not working to their full potential. For example, the school capacity of *Markazul Uloom* School is 217; however, the number of pupils is only 33. Similarly, at *Al Islah* Girls' High School, only 87 pupils are enrolled against the approved capacity of 245 pupils (Gov.uk, 2020). The low enrolment may be due to the factor that both schools charge a fee from every pupil. The amount of fees charged by the independent Muslim schools does not make them accessible to a wider group of parents, considering the level of

¹⁰ A prayer leader at the mosque: an Islamic leadership position.

deprivation in the area (Homan, 2013). With respect to fees, the affordability of parents varies for different socio-economic backgrounds.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown the complex school choice landscape in Blackburn, along with a little consistency between schools. Regarding those parents who affiliate with the Muslim faith in Blackburn, the schools available for them are in a great under-supply. The chapter has also illustrated how 'strict' religion and active religious practice are given greater weight in Gujarati faith school admissions. They are outstanding and over-subscribed. Therefore, Muslim parents send their children to no-religion community schools and Church of England schools. For parents who do not consider their local school to be good enough, the chances are that a preferred school will be popular and oversubscribed. Not surprisingly, some schools with the highest percentage achieving 5+ GCSEs, including English and maths at grade C or above, were the most oversubscribed and located both in the White-majority and Asian-majority neighbourhoods of Blackburn. Therefore, the performance of schools may not be negatively correlated with a socio-economic and residential concentration in the neighbourhood.

At the primary level in Blackburn, the choice is available to parents as out of 52 schools, only 14 schools are oversubscribed. The presence of Muslim free schools is increasing the choice along with Church of England and Roman Catholic schools. At the secondary level, faith schools, both Muslim and Church schools, do better. Both schools of Star Academies Trust: TIGHS and TIBHS provide quality educational services. However, their admission criterion favours Muslim children whose parents are members of the Indian Gujarati mosques in the town. Therefore, Pakistani Muslim parents feel disadvantaged due to their sectarian affiliation. The independent Muslim schools are fee-paying, hence are less accessible to Muslim parents.

In general, the growing number of Muslim faith schools in Blackburn appears to give Muslims somewhat more choice, but it depends upon your faith and ability to meet the complex admission criteria. However, in practice, Muslim schools are not open to non-Muslim parents, so they do not enhance choice more widely.

Chapter 2: Research aims and objectives

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the aims and objectives of the study. The chapter begins by describing the purpose of the study by narrating the justifications for undertaking the study. It will state the reasons why the researcher chooses to focus on the topic in question, including the significance of the study. This study intends to fill the gap regarding Muslim parents' secondary school choices in Blackburn, a segregated town in the North of England, with reference to ethnic segregation in schools, residential segregation and the extent to which the schools are culturally sensitive towards religious education, relationships and sex education, languages and single-sex schooling. Then the research questions are discussed along with an overview of the research methodology. This study adopts a case study approach, drawing data from documentary materials and semi-structured interviews of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. The chapter concludes by outlining the structure of the thesis.

2.2 Purpose of the study

This study explores the factors that influence Pakistani Muslim parents' choice of secondary school for their children using a qualitative methods approach. It is often said that the attitudes of individuals are shaped by the influences of their school days. Therefore, schooling is considered significant for social cohesion and moulding individual perspectives about society (Green & Preston, 2001). There are various reasons for this: first, schools are the earliest social institutions where young people mix with society, and a school ethos and its attitude towards diversity influence them. Second, educational achievement is a crucial factor for success in future life in terms of successful careers and better life choices. Third, school offers an opportunity to make friends across different ethnic and faith groups, and the school curriculum is an instrument to develop understanding and life-long friendships among students from different groups within their community (Burgess, Wilson, & Lupton, 2005).

Since the late 1980s, the school choice policy in England has become a popular education reform strategy of the government (Burgess et al., 2004). The supporters of the choice policy argue that allowing parents to choose a school for their children will promote greater parental participation in education. Further, the expanded choice will create competition among schools for students, which will force the schools to improve their performance, retain current students and attract new students (Martin,

Ranson, & Vincent, 2000). The critics of choice maintain that unpopular schools will neither improve nor close due to a lack of resources, but the pupils in those schools will have access to fewer resources, and their educational attainments will suffer (Brasington & Hite, 2014). This controversy has resulted in school segregation and residential segregation in towns with an ethnic concentration of Muslims, such as Blackburn in northern England.

Generally, parents are motivated by two main things in their school choice process. They have aspirations for their children for a successful life and careers outside of school through academic attainments. Therefore, they have anxieties about getting them to good schools for a successful future (Campbell, Proctor & Sherington, 2009). Secondly, they have anxieties about choosing schools with academic quality and discipline for successful careers for their children (English, 2009). Moreover, Muslim parents have ambitious about the cultural dimensions of the curriculum taught in secondary schools under the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) aspects of pupils' development (Halstead, 1994). School choice is, therefore, a parental attempt to maximise aspirations and minimise anxieties associated with school choices.

The purpose of this study is also to highlight the anxieties Muslim parents have about the system of educational provision in England. Hawe (1994) enlisted the anxieties of Muslim parents around four inter-related dimensions:

1. The lack of policy towards teaching subjects in a culturally sensitive way for Muslim children's spiritual and moral education.
2. The declining educational attainments of Muslim children.
3. The lack of policies to accommodate the specific educational needs and visions to support Muslim children's cultural and religious identity.
4. The rise of Islamophobia and racist bullying in schools and the failure of schools to overcome these issues.

Therefore, education remains a major concern on the agenda for Muslims in England (Nielsen, 1991). They consider themselves isolated in no-religion state schools as the secular school curriculum does not appreciate their religious values and family culture (Meer, 2010). Parents want their children to retain their Islamic faith and develop a Muslim identity in Western societies (Musharraf, 2015). However, developing and maintaining a Muslim identity is not an easy task in the UK, which is a common problem faced by the global Muslim community (Meer, 2009; Musharraf &

Nabeel, 2015). According to Ansari (2004, p. 298), education is a matter of concern for Muslims as it is considered a forerunner of equality:

Education represents for British Muslims a major area of struggle for equality of opportunity and assertion of identity. It was over education that Muslims became increasingly vocal in raising their demands in the early 1980s, and it is where they have succeeded best in having many of their needs recognised in the face of controversy and opposition from broad sections of British society.

England remains a host country for immigrants, and the migrant communities are very diverse with regard to ethnicity, religion and cultural backgrounds (Meer & Modood, 2009). Accommodating diversity in English state schools is a big challenge for the government. Ideally, every child needs to be accommodated in the school community; however, in practice, that is not always easy (Smit, Driessen, Slegers & Hoop, 2004; Klaassen, Driessen & Vroom, 2005). A majority of British Muslims migrated from predominantly Muslim majority countries (Musharraf, 2015).

Immigration is considered by the immigrants and others to gain social freedom in a new society, and this is an opportunity to educate their children for better life choices and successful futures (Goodman, 2004; Adams & Kirova, 2007; Li, 2001; Noguera, 2004). However, Muslim parents feel alienated in British society through their experiences of displacement and marginalisation as a racialised group, which frustrates their efforts to educate their children (Phoenix, 2019). It seems that the middle and affluent class is better placed in the education system but not the racial and ethnic minorities, as they feel disadvantaged and disempowered (Burgess et al., 2005; Barnardos, 2010; Shepherd, 2010; Weekes-Bernard, 2007; Reay, 2008; Byrne, 2009).

The low educational attainments of ethnic minority children remain a significant cause of anxiety among parents from ethnic backgrounds (Crozier & Davies, 2006). It is also a subject of debate for policymakers (Archer & Francis, 2006; Platt, 2005). These variations in educational attainments among Muslims were first identified by Modood, Berthoud, Lakey, Nazroo, Smith, Virdee and Beishon (1997), and then subsequent studies acknowledged the findings. Therefore, Muslim parents exhibit anxieties about their children's education, which is evident from different 'moments'¹¹

¹¹ The term 'moments' (of choice) is one of key term reputedly used in this thesis; therefore, it will be used without commas or Italics from now onwards in most of the text.

of choice throughout the schooling life of a child (Ball, 2003). Ball (2003, p. 3) identifies key decision points, 'moments of transition and differentiation at which times key class resources are brought into play'. Then, Gewirtz et al. (1995) describe the process of conversion of resources by parents during these moments to help navigate the education system ahead and secure an advantage in school choice. The researcher draws on this concept of moments to identify moments of choice in the lives of participants in Blackburn, wherein the influence of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources is evident in the decision-making process during Key Stage 2 of a child's schooling. Key Stage 2, spanning from Years 3 to Year 6, is an important stage in the life of pupils when they are 7-11 years of age (Richardson & Wood, 2004). From seven years old, a child will develop more independence, resilience, and identity as a learner and a young person (Richardson & Wood, 2004). Therefore, Muslim parents show anxieties about choosing 'good' secondary schools.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of this study explores the Muslim parents' secondary school choices in Blackburn and how the concerns about multicultural mixing influence their choices. Further, what are the characteristics associated with choosing diverse schools in a segregated town and to what extent the individual needs of Muslim people are appreciated and accommodated in the state schools?

2.3 Research gap

The ongoing debates on the schooling of Muslim children and multiculturalism policies in England show that it is a current affair, making this study timely. There has been considerable research on the school choices of Muslim parents in England. However, most of the recent research is concerned with the school choices of white middle-class parents and ethnic minorities such as BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) in a racialised context (Shah, 2008; Archer, 2010; Reay, 2002). The literature contains studies with different dimensions, such as Muslim parents' educational aspirations of their school-going daughters (Basit, 2012; Haw, 1998; Shain, 2003; Bhatti, 1999). Geographically speaking, the choice literature has also primarily focused on London, Birmingham, and other urban centres. There is a research gap regarding the school choice of Pakistani Muslim parents in ethnically segregated northern towns of England, such as Blackburn.

This study will make contributions in several areas. The findings of this study would support and strengthen the findings of previous studies (such as the studies by Burgess et al., 2014; Burgess et al., 2004; Burgess et al., 2005; Levitt & Woodhead,

2018; Gewirtz et al., 1995; Ball, 2003; Vincent, 2001; Vincent & Martin, 2002; Gholami, 2017; Iqbal, 2017; Byrne & De Tona, 2014; Abbas, 2000; Weldon, 2017; Shah, 1998, 2012; Shah & Conchar, 2009). This study would add to the previous studies by providing additional evidence regarding parental school choice with relevance to school and residential segregation. Furthermore, a clear picture of parents' moments of school choice will be presented in combination with the after-school choice of supplementary schools based on their perceptions about the Islamic religious education needs of Muslim pupils.

As already noted, most of the existing studies are limited to the major urban cities of England, such as London, Birmingham, and Manchester. For example, Gewirtz et al. (1995) examined this question of social class when doing a study on class differences in parental choice. The study involved parents and school teachers in London secondary schools. Similarly, Vincent (2001) studied the various levels of parental intervention in London schools based on their social class, gender and ethnic identities. Further, Vincent and Martin (2002) provide three categories of issues based on their research in schools in London that parents raise with schools: welfare issues (bullying, discipline), achievement issues (progress), and systemic issues (concerning school organisation). Gholami (2017) presented a case study of the two Iranian supplementary schools in London, drawing on educational practices in the Muslim communities in London.

Similar studies were conducted in Birmingham and Manchester. Iqbal (2017) investigated the educational achievement of British Pakistani boys showing that Pakistani children are now close to becoming the largest ethnic group in Birmingham schools. Similarly, Abbas (2000) conducted a comparative study of Bangladeshi, Indians and Pakistanis in Birmingham schools and colleges, showing how South Asians achieve in education. In Manchester, Byrne and De Tona (2014) researched school choice of diverse parents in different areas. The participants were chosen from Muslim as well as non-Muslim backgrounds.

A few small cities were also chosen as a place of inquiry. For example, Levitt and Woodhead (2018) conducted research in Leicester regarding the issues involved in choosing a faith school with respect to diversity and admission criteria. There was one such research that covered Blackburn partially. It was done by Weldon (2017) regarding school choice, competition, and ethnic segregation in Lancashire. However, this research was conducted from an economic perspective and covered

the northern towns of Blackburn, Oldham, and Preston. The educational issues of Blackburn were covered partially; however, Blackburn was not the focus of this study.

There is a lack of studies focusing on the actual experiences of Pakistani Muslim parents in segregated northern towns such as Blackburn, offering a relationship between school choice and multiculturalism policies amidst ethnic and residential segregation. This study will present how the resources such as social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic influence the typology of parents as diverse school choosers and how the British multiculturalism policies support Muslim parents to preserve their Muslim culture and religious beliefs. Following Gardner's advice (2011), the researcher will attempt to make their study accessible, relevant, persuasive and credible to get their message across. The researcher will contribute to the new knowledge to help raise further questions.

The methodological contribution of the study to the area of school choice and multicultural mixing is very significant. The qualitative methodology, along with semi-structured interviews and a case study approach, are central to understanding how participants mix and negotiate their place in the segregated setting of Blackburn. In this qualitative study, the role of the researcher is perceived in relation to the contextual identities (Angrosino, 2005), exploring the narratives about contemporary forms of mixing; based on ethnicity, race and class. Parents have an overwhelming desire to mix, but this desire is constrained in a segregated context. Therefore, the interview is an effective instrument to explore the issues such as ethnicity, religion and culture, which are held sensitive by Muslims while mixing. As a result, nuances of mixing can influence parents' choice of secondary schools. In this study, parents conceived multiculturalism as day-to-day mixing with non-Muslims as well as Muslims. Their notion of mixing differs from government policy and scholarly literature considering multiculturalism as the issues of diversity, pluralism, social integration and 'community cohesion'.

2.4 Research questions and overview of methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore Pakistani Muslim parents' school choices through British multiculturalism policies in a segregated setting. The study is guided by one overarching question: How do British multiculturalism policies affect the school choice of Muslim parents? The extent to which schools are culturally sensitive towards religious education, relationships and sex education, languages and single-sex schooling? In order to explore this question fully, school choice is

studied through various moments where social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources are utilised to choose 'good' schools, which results in various typologies of school choosers. Therefore, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn: a town in northern England with ethnic and residential segregation?
2. How do the British multiculturalism policy developments impact parents' school choices?
3. What are the characteristics associated with various types of school choosers?

The research strategy employed to answer the research questions is the case study method. A case study is one of the various research approaches for conducting social science research (Yin, 2009). Generally, it is a recommended approach to give the answers to 'how' and 'why' questions when the researcher has not much command over incidents as well as when the emphasis is on a real-life setting to be investigated in detail (Thomas, 2011; Yin, 2014, 2018). While this study has several specific purposes and research questions, the general objective is to study the case of school choices of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn in as much depth as possible. For this purpose, the data collection methods such as semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis are used.

My qualitative methodological position and case study approach are compatible since both stress the importance of social realities constructed by the participants (Dooley, 2002). Case studies assume that social reality is created through social interaction and is situated in particular contexts (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Stark & Torrance, 2005). This is a multiple case study of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn, recruited through purposive sampling. The participants had different demographics. They belonged to different generations, employment statuses, gender, education level, Blackburn wards, and family backgrounds. They were contacted through the Blackburn business community, a religious organisation, and the local council. However, they were all residents of Blackburn, and their children were studying in different years of Key Stage 2 in different schools (see Chapter 4 for detailed discussion).

The case study method permitted the researcher to keep the complete and significant features of real-life incidents such as the behaviour and life experiences (e.g., migration, mixing, social networks), administrative procedures (e.g., schools'

admission policies, quality differentials among schools through Ofsted and League Tables, and accommodation of individual needs of Muslim children in no-religion state schools), specific location type (e.g., segregated education, pupil sorting by schools, and educational challenges faced by Muslim parents in segregated towns such as Blackburn), and specific time (this study was conducted during one year between October 2018 and September 2019) (Yin, 2014, 2018; Andrade, 2009; Robson, 2011). Against this backdrop, this case study explored a range of perspectives and experiences of 33 diverse Pakistani Muslim participants in Blackburn. The case study method helped to explore the reality of school choice considering the different demographics of Muslim parents resulting in various typologies of choosers.

Walford (2008, pp. 7-11) recommends qualitative study over other research methods, as it helps to study the perspective of 'those who inhabit that culture', with an acknowledgement that 'participants hold knowledge about themselves which nobody else has'. The researcher's selection of qualitative approach helped extract data from documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. A wide range of literature was selected and reviewed thoroughly from electronic and printed sources. The researcher also consulted a wide range of reports published by the various governments from time to time on Muslim education, multiculturalism, 'community cohesion' and social integration.

In the socially and culturally segregated domain of Blackburn, the researcher aimed to establish their role as an insider as well as an outsider (Pole & Morrison, 2003). In a way, the researcher held a position of an 'outsider' to the study participants. A Pakistan-born Muslim male who has been educated and lived in Pakistan and currently researching British Pakistani Muslims, most of whom are British-born. The researcher has not been subject to British schooling, multicultural mixing and identity construction like that of study participants. Therefore, the researcher may be unaware of the manifestations of multicultural living that influence participants' moments of school choice. Conversely, the researcher is also an 'insider' as they share their heritage and religion with the participants, being Pakistani and Muslim. The perceptions about the researcher's insider-outsider position are subjective. A brief background of the researcher, covering the personal, professional and academic aspects, is included in the discussion on methodology (Chapter 4).

2.5 Structure of thesis

This study progressed through several stages to address the research questions. These stages involved developing a set of themes and research questions through documentary analysis, semi-structured interviews, data analysis, and presentation of findings of the study. The sequence of the thesis chapters is as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction – has introduced the study. It presented the setting of Blackburn: ethnic residential concentration and school segregation in the area, the diversity of schooling options, faith-based schools, admission criteria, pupil sorting and the pupils' educational attainments.

Chapter 2: Research aims and objectives - presented the aims and objectives of the study and the need for adopting a case study approach. It also presented the knowledge gap in the area and research questions along with an overview of methodology and outlined the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 3: Literature review - discusses the available literature, which reviews and contains details of previous studies in the field. It draws upon three main areas of study: the discussion of current knowledge around parental choice of schools in the UK and the relationship between ethnic residential concentration and school rolls; multiculturalism policy developments previously around the recognition and accommodation of religion within state schools, especially for Muslims, and; what 'community cohesion' debates have had to say about parental choice of schools, educational challenges in Blackburn, a northern English segregated town.

Chapter 4: Methodology - focuses on the research methodology and methods adopted for the study. It presents the purpose behind selecting a qualitative research paradigm along with a case study approach. It focuses on documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews as the research method selected for this study. Then the role of the researcher is discussed in the context of insider and outsider positions. The coding framework, 'quantitizing' of data, and the thematic analysis approach are addressed towards the end of the chapter.

The next three chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7) present and analyse findings of this study. Each of the chapters considers the research themes that emerged from the interviews.

Chapter 5: Multiculturalism – is about multicultural mixing in the social and religious environment of Blackburn. It focused on the 17 parents who chose Asian-majority

schools in comparison to 16 parents who chose mixed schools. A key finding is around what mixing means, and how this is different from the policy and scholarly literature on multiculturalism.

Chapter 6: Culturally sensitive schooling - focused on the 5 parents who chose Muslim schools as compared to the other parents who chose Asian-majority state schools along with supplementary schools. The flashpoints here are the extent to which schools are culturally sensitive towards religious education, relationships and sex education, languages and single-sex schooling concerns of Muslims. A key finding here is the way that supplementary schools frame the life world of Muslim parents (day school, supplementary school, homework, and then going to bed) and the challenges that a hectic routine brings for parents and children. In addition, this chapter draws attention to certain aspects of supplementary schools wherein they struggle to synchronise with the no-religion state primary schools.

Chapter 7: Moments of choice - focuses on the school choice landscape in Blackburn and how all of the factors identified in chapters 5 and 6 (parents' multicultural competence, institutions like the supplementary school, and social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources) frame, enable or constrain the realities of school choice, and how this nuance the typology of school choosers provided by Gewirtz et al. (1995).

Chapter 8: Conclusions and recommendations – this final chapter brings the main findings together to better understand the reality of school choice. The participants utilise their social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources to navigate the England's education system. It has resulted in various typologies of choosers such as informed, constrained and semi-skilled choosers. The Blackburn parents are classified as choosers of community/Church schools, Muslim schools, mixed schools and Asian-majority schools for various reasons. The chapter also presents the implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research. This chapter closes the thesis with a conclusion and some reflections on the study.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1 introduction

This chapter reviews the literature around school choice and multiculturalism policies in the UK and provides three important perspectives in this thesis. Firstly, it offers insight into the current knowledge around parental choice of schools and the relationship between school segregation and ethnic residential concentration. Secondly, the chapter traces the multiculturalism policy developments and the government's policy rationale behind a shift away from multiculturalism to 'community cohesion' strategy. The issues of school choice and multiculturalism have been theorised to accommodate educational needs of Muslim children in state schools. Finally, the insights offered by the chapter present an analysis of various policy reports on 'community cohesion' reporting educational challenges for Muslim parents in segregated towns such as Blackburn in northern England.

The school choice review draws on existing scholarship from three areas that have contributed to the understanding of choice and competition: school segregation, ethnic residential segregation, school admissions and pupil sorting by schools, from the literature on policies aiming to extend parental choice. The review also demonstrates choice constraints for families from low socio-economic status. The support for faith-based schools in one section of the Muslim community is because, generally, religion is not appreciated in state schools. However, Muslim parents send their children to all types of schools, as discussed by Musharraf and Nabeel (2015) in their classification of schooling options available for Muslim parents. The chapter also introduces Gewirtz et al. (1995) typology of choosers and demonstrates how parents use their cultural and economic capital to navigate England's education system ahead. This model is discussed as part of the findings of this study in greater detail in Chapter 7.

3.2 Parental school choice

3.2.1 UK's choice policy since the 1980s

School choice is fundamental to the UK's system of school admissions and has been a major element of government policy since the 1980s (Burgess et al., 2004). The term 'school choice' denotes parental right to express a school preference for their children (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2011). Although the notion of parental choice had been established since the Education Act of 1944 in the UK (Croft, 2004); however, since the 1980s education reform strategy, parents have

been encouraged to make a choice for their children's schooling (Adler, 1997; Education Act, 1980; Education Reform Act, 1988). The Education and Skills Act (2008) specifies that LAs should make efforts to expand the school choice for parents¹². There has been extensive research on the process of choosing schools since the policy reforms of the 1980s, and it is perhaps one of the most ardently discussed issues in the current education policy debate in the UK (Byrne & De Tona, 2012). Education policy has, since then, emphasized the importance of parents' roles within education as choosers of schools and supporters of their children's academic progress (Vincent, 2001).

The Department for Education in the UK developed policies in the 1980s and 1990s aimed at increasing parental choice and giving schools greater autonomy (Bauch, 2000). All parents are allowed to express their preferences for state schools. Nonetheless, the policy of school choice highlights the role and capacities of parents to make the right choice for their children (Byrne & De Tona, 2012). Thus, schools have become the objects of intense anxiety regarding the education and socialisation of children. Since then, there has been an explosion of literature on school choice. The 1980 Education Act included the requirement for LAs to meet parental preferences (Byrne, 2009).

Modood and May (2001) note another reason for expanded choice based on the argument that the British discourse on education, race and cultural diversity began to evolve in the 1960s in response to the post-war Muslim migration to the UK. By the 1980s, the discourse of assimilation had become fractured, and the theories of multicultural and antiracist education cropped up. Ethnic and residential segregation became a feature of the educational landscape of many European countries, including the UK. The immigrant parents started exercising their choice based on their culture, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic backgrounds. Therefore, the various governments in Europe decided to expand parental choice to accommodate immigrant communities in mainstream state schools.

Several studies (such as Burgess et al., 2011) found that the factors such as segregation patterns in community and ethnic composition of schools play an important role in school admissions. As a result, extending parental school choice

¹² Section 5(e) of the Education and Skills Act (2008) stipulates that 'In performing the duty imposed on it by subsection (1), the Council must act with a view to increasing opportunities for individuals to exercise choice'. In this study, the word 'choice' has been adopted from this piece of legislation.

became a popular public policy debate, and some forms of parental choice of school have been a feature of England's education system (Burgess, Propper & Wilson, 2007). In the UK, school choice has been supported by both the Conservatives and Labour administrations for more than three decades. Education Reform Act 1988 gave parents the right to express school preferences for their children. Afterwards, the ambitious Education and Inspections Act 2006 strengthened the role of parental choice and appointed 'choice advisors' in order to discourage the hidden selection of pupils by schools (Burgess, Briggs, McConnell & Slater, 2006). Parents are conceived as 'consumers' of education and encouraged to 'good parenting' in relation to the 'responsibilities' of choice (The Parents Charter: Department for Education, 1992). However, parental choice of school is not open to one conclusive analysis. Various kinds of choice analyses highlight different aspects of and patterns of parental choice (Burgess et al., 2007). Therefore, the school choice policy has attracted opponents as well as supporters.

The supporters of school choice (Tomlinson, 1991; Fine, 1993; Vincent, 1996; Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998; Crozier, 2000; Martin et al., 2000) have advocated that increased choice allows equal access to performing schools for all parents. Moreover, school choice introduces competition for schools and forces them to improve their management and educational standards, which will expand the supply of innovative and more efficient schools (Feinberg & Lubienski, 2008). The parents are considered 'consumers', and it is thought that the consumer choice will create competitive pressure, which acts as a significant driver for efficiency (Feinberg & Lubienski, 2008).

In the quasi-market in education, there have been two main challenges for choice policy: the impact of parental choice on improving pupils' educational attainments by creating competition among schools and the impact of choice on the segregation or pupil sorting across schools. The choice policy was adopted with the purpose of reducing the links between home postcodes and the sought-after schools which are accessible by parents (Burgess et al., 2014). In the context of the UK, schooling is nested with the complex forces of choice and competition through community governance and quasi-market public choice (Lundie, 2017).

In contrast, the opponents of the school choice policy advance the idea that expanded choice can increase social inequalities (Brasington & Hite, 2014). The choice intensifies the differences between various socio-economic groups as the

schools do the sorting of pupils. Resultantly, sharp quality differences emerge between schools (Brasington & Hite, 2014). Amid this debate, in the opinion of Croft (2004), the notion of parental choice had been rolled out on an *ad hoc* basis in the UK, which does not give freedom to parents to choose. The critics of school choice policy, such as Burgess et al. (2007), postulate that the key challenge is whether these policies are instrumental in the extension of choice, improvement in the educational outcomes of the pupils and if so, in what circumstances? After reviewing the theoretical and empirical evidence on the choice policies of various governments in the UK, they have drawn three conclusions: first, the extension of choice will result in losers as well as winners; second, the choice policy should be made flexible in terms of availability of school places, and; third, among other factors, the role of peer groups (ethnic, social, religious and class) may not be neglected which partially determines the school choice. They concluded that the choice policy is working partially in the UK as there is a combination of neighbourhood- and choice-based schooling, and the school admission policies do not favour parents from low socio-economic status.

3.2.2 School admission policies

Burgess et al. (2014) denotes that there are various types of schools within an LA. Most of the schools are bound to follow the admission criteria set by the LA. However, the schools that are out of the control of an LA follow their own criteria. The LAs control the admissions in almost three-quarters of primary schools in England under an assignment mechanism and published guidelines. Parents are entitled to apply to all types of schools, except private schools, through a common application form. The admission criteria give priority to pupils with certain characteristics: children with a statement of special educational needs; children who are looked after by the state (LA), and children with siblings who already attend the school.

School admissions is an inter-play between three stakeholders – parents, schools and local authorities. The researchers such as Burgess and Slater (2006) find little evidence to support the claims made in favour of raising the educational attainment levels of schools across the board by generating competitive forces. This is difficult to comprehend empirically because the degree of competition is influenced by the endogenous choices factors between parents and schools (such as admission criteria, quality of teaching, peer groups, gender, and single-sex education) and the exogenous changes in the education system brought about by the effect of

competition (such as Ofsted reports, league tables, student performances, pupil premium, budgeting policies). In this equation, parental choice and school sorting play an important role. However, the analysis of choice and sorting is complex. Burgess, McConnell, Propper and Wilson (2005) argue that the school choice policy brings about sorting of pupils among schools. They show that in areas of England where choice is more feasible, school sorting is higher relative to the local neighbourhood sorting. Moreover, Burgess et al. (2005), focusing on pupil sorting along ethnic lines, reveal that where choice is more feasible, sorting in schools is greater relative to sorting in the local neighbourhood. Thus, one of the implications of choice policy is characterised by the factor that where there is more choice, there are more chances of school segregation than local residential segregation. The other implication is the pupil sorting by schools which increases segregation.

3.2.3 Pupil sorting by schools

The potential impact of choice on the sorting of pupils is one of the central questions around the policy of school choice (Howell & Peterson, 2002). According to Weldon (2018), there are three types of sorting:

1. Parents' self-sorting: whereby they choose schools differently based on their priorities
2. Residential sorting: whereby house prices around popular schools force out families with low socio-economic status
3. School sorting: whereby gatekeeping mechanisms such as admissions policies, waiting lists, and ability tests affect different groups differently.

Weldon (2018) argue that ethnically segregated intakes of schools may be due to parental preferences or admissions arrangements. Epple and Romano (2003) argue that it is the residence requirement that is fundamental to sorting. However, pupil sorting is the outcome of all three factors (sorting done by parents, residential location and schools' admission criteria).

A study by Kaarsten, Ledoux, Roeleveld, Felix and Elshof (2003) on school choice and ethnic segregation showed how choice influenced pupils' stratification in Dutch primary schools. The interviews of the school Principals of the participating schools revealed that the variation in the ethnic composition of the schools was the result of residential segregation but was also caused by the schools themselves through (a) marketing academic/sports profiles of schools; (b) practising all kinds of gatekeeping methods, and (c) competing with each other which resulted in White as well as the

non-White flight of pupils. The findings show that the White-majority schools are generally located in affluent areas of the district. They usually cater to a large student population and follow a deterrent policy for pupil sorting based on admission criteria, waiting lists, ability tests and shifting ethnic minority parents to other segregated schools. Due to this reason, the critics of school choice (Musset, 2012) fear that choice increases pupil sorting and produces quality differentials among schools. It also negatively affects the exclusive potential of schools as agents of community cohesion, as they are further segregated by characteristics of pupil rolls from the same backgrounds, such as social class, religion or ethnicity.

The literature on school choice reveals that parents are not without a choice; they possess a degree of choice. However, the search for performing schools results in pupil sorting. Burgess et al. (2011) analyse how ethnic residential concentration determines the types of the school attended by pupils. They conclude from a large administrative data set for England on parents, schools and LAs that according to the de facto catchment area rule, the average parent has five schools that are accessible to them. However, parental choice varies by family characteristics such as ethnicity, culture and socio-economic status. The schools are not in a position to cater for all parents as they need official permission to expand. Moreover, oversubscription criteria determine whether a family is successful in their first choice. Mostly, the schools' admissions are controlled and coordinated by their LAs, which ensure the availability of sufficient choice/school places. So, parental preference is an inalienable part of the choice system, and parents are not without any choice at all.

In another study, Burges et al. (2004) examine the impact of choice on pupils sorting across schools for 11-18-year-olds. They establish that secondary school choice is both feasible for and exercised by the majority of parents in England. But more than half of pupils aged 11 do not attend a secondary school in their catchment area. Interestingly, schools perform ability sorting, and parents do sorting of schools by their ethnicity and socio-economic status. More choice brings more sorting, as choice and sorting are positively related. So, the LAs in which there are more schools are LAs in which there is more ability sorting. This is a cause for concern as it confirms the degree of social and ethnic segregation in the schools and quality differentials which has implications for pupils' educational attainments.

3.2.4 Pupils' educational attainments

The two key questions that need to be addressed are whether extending choice improves educational attainments of the pupils and whether pupil sorting determines the composition of each school's pupil rolls. As far as the first question is concerned, the differential attainment across various ethnic groups through formal schooling is a cause for concern for policymakers and researchers (Wilson, Burgess, & Briggs, 2011). In England, there is mixed evidence that White students outperform students from some minority ethnic groups such as Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean (Modood, 2005; Wilson et al., 2011). However, White students are sometimes outperformed by other minority pupils, for example, Chinese and Indians (Ibid.).

Burgess, Wilson, Briggs and Piebalga's (2008) study shows that differential education outcomes may not result from school or residential segregation. The other factors may include social class, poverty, family background, educational inputs and the quality of teachers. The analysis of differences in test scores of White and ethnic minority pupils (such as the Black Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani) is generally unaffected by segregation for all three groups. The potential explanation for this factor is that certain schools may have higher minority composition and are attended by more able minority ethnic students. Moreover, Asian students such as Pakistanis and Indians may experience a positive accumulative peer effect in comparison with their White peers in that school. This stance is also substantiated by Burgess et al. (2008) in another study, where they found that segregation does not have a negative impact on educational attainments, nor does it positively impact the attainment levels of different ethnic groups.

School segregation remains a matter of concern for the UK's government. The UK Government Select Committee inquiry into social cohesion emphasised that schools do not reflect the diverse population of students coming from a particular neighbourhood. This factor is causing a hindrance in the promotion of social cohesion (House of Commons 2004, para. 49). It is argued that whether test scores are unaffected by segregation, the schools need to take steps to integrate different minority ethnic groups for improved community cohesion. Various reports, such as Parekh Report (2000), note that Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils have low educational attainments in some of the LAs. Further, Cattle (2001) also rightly remarks that 'segregated' communities are so dominated by particular groups that

the possibility of contact with the majority population or another minority group is limited.

Similarly, the Casey Report (2016) acknowledges that Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities live in the most deprived regions of England. 28% of Bangladeshi and 31% of the Pakistani population live in 10% of the area considered deprived. This factor, along with the low socio-economic status, is also responsible for the low educational achievements of Pakistani and Bangladeshi children. However, recent trends indicate that Pakistani children are outperformed by children from other ethnic minority backgrounds. In comparison, the Bangladeshis and Indian children were ahead of Pakistani children (Gov.uk, 2019). One of the reasons highlighted is that Muslim children do not get support in state schools with reference to their specific educational needs arising from their culture and religion (Iqbal, 2018). Thus, the Parekh report advises that the schools be more responsive to the needs of these vulnerable minorities so that their academic achievements are improved significantly.

3.2.5 Housing demand near performing schools

The above discussion suggests that school segregation may not be a cause of discomfort and discontent between the White majority and ethnic minorities (as indicated by the Cantle and Ouseley Reports on the 2001 riots). However, school segregation may be the result of housing (residential) segregation. Siddiq (2018) found inner city Blackburn to be a geographically and socially segregated space lived only by Asian Muslims. Cantle (2001) argues that, of course, some minorities tend to self-segregate and choose to live within their own communities. Some would prefer to reside in an area dominated by one culture and the shared public spaces such as shops, schools and places of worship. This kind of living is adopted to ensure the safety of community members. The segregated housing results in schools becoming increasingly segregated. Kundnani (2001) argues that in some LAs of England, certain catchment areas are dominated by only one ethnic group. In other mixed catchment areas, White middle-class parents send their children to distant White-majority schools by choosing a choice mechanism as they can afford to buy houses near the popular schools.

In recent years, parents from high socio-economic status have been using different strategies to get their children into performing schools, as shown in the findings of the YouGov survey. 14% of parents reported that they moved into the catchment area of their preferred school. 20% of parents moved into an area with schools having

outstanding Ofsted ratings and a good reputation (Woodhead, 2013). According to Burgess et al. (2011), in areas where there is a lot of competition between schools, more advantaged families have higher chances of getting their children admitted to their most preferred school choices than poorer parents. Because advantaged parents can afford to live nearer these schools and this tendency will exacerbate social segregation in schools. It is revealed in a report from the Department for Education that this trend is on the rise, and prices of these neighbourhoods have increased manifold (DfE, 2017). It shows the 'Parent Power' to use money and information to boost their children's chances of educational success (Francis & Hutchings, 2013, p. 1). This trend again raises the issues of social class during the school choice process along with rising social inequality in education provision.

3.2.6 School segregation and residential segregation

The increasing emphasis on school choice has resulted in school segregation and residential segregation. Johnston, Burgess, Wilson and Harris (2006, p. 29) specify that:

The concept of segregation relates to the degree of sharing of a space by two or more groups, whether that space be a school, a neighbourhood, a workplace or some other territorially defined unit.

Clotfelter (2001, p. 13) found that in England, the White communities are 'fleeing' from the ethnic majority neighbourhoods, the racial patterns are changing, and enrolment shifts are happening in urban public schools. Research has shown that England's state schools are ethnically segregated (Johnston, Wilson & Burgess, 2005; Burgess & Wilson, 2005).

In one such study, Johnston et al. (2007) analysed the data on schools collected from the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) and the data on pupils' ethnicities in the 2001 Census across different LAs in England. They found that school segregation is shown to be greater than residential segregation. The implication to be drawn is that parental choice of where to enrol their students is generating greater school than neighbourhood ethnic polarisation. Findings of the study reveal that in England, where most of the people reside in White-majority communities and students generally attend White-majority schools, there is slightly more residential segregation than school segregation. Secondly, the South Asians (Bangladeshis, Indians and Pakistanis) and the Blacks live in White-minority

neighbourhoods and attend White-minority schools; there is much greater segregation in schools than in neighbourhoods. Thirdly, very few South Asians were living in White-majority neighbourhoods and attending White-majority schools; for both South Asians and Blacks, there was more school segregation than neighbourhood segregation. Further, this study implies that South Asians are more segregated than Blacks. South Asian students attending segregated schools, especially primary schools, contribute to segregation and fear of distrust in society. The researcher argues that the local milieux and the patterns of school segregation have serious repercussions for the tensions around 'community cohesion' in evolving the UK's multicultural society.

The socio-economic status of parents plays a significant role in school choice. It appears that the choice system is not working for those who are already disadvantaged and disempowered (Bagley, 2006; Reay, 2004; Burgess et al., 2005; Byrne, 2006; Weekes-Bernard, 2007; Barnardos, 2010; Shepherd, 2010; Crozier, Reay, James, Jamieson, Beedell, Hollingworth & Williams, 2008). In this regard, Burgess and Briggs (2010) look at the role of school assignment and school choice in influencing the quality of school for poor children. They show that the present system does not work well for students from low-income families. Such students are less likely to go to good schools.

In another such study, Burgess et al. (2005) clarify that school segregation and neighbourhood segregation are related; however, they do not map one-for-one and are not generally equal. In their study on ethnic segregation of England's secondary school-age children, Burgess et al. (2005) measured two aspects of segregation for 9 different ethnic groups. Looking at both schools and neighbourhoods, they found different levels of segregation; however, there is a higher level of segregation for South Asian pupils than for Black pupils. The data also suggest that segregation tends to be lower for Black pupils where they are in the majority. Still, for pupils of South Asian origin, their ratio of school to neighbourhood segregation increases with the population density of the area. Thus, ethnic minority children are more segregated in school than in their neighbourhoods. Segregation is a result of complex and multi-dimensional processes that affect educational attainments, pupil sorting and ethnic composition of schools.

In summary, the challenge for choice policy is to raise educational attainments through choice and competition, promote access to schools, and reduce the link

between home postcode and admission practices. In England, education system is based on a combination of neighbourhood- and choice-based schooling (Burgess et al., 2005). A successful choice policy means that access to a school does not primarily depend on the residence of a pupil (Burgess et al., 2007). The extending of choice will result in a fall in prices of houses near the popular school, benefitting families with low socio-economic status. A system based on parental school choice with some flexibility on the supply side can decrease sorting. This policy can lead to reduced pupil sorting by ethnicity and socio-economic status to achieve a diverse body of pupils in schools. Burgess et al. (2007) suggest that a universal choice policy would discourage pupil sorting and support expanded supply-side flexibility for existing schools to expand/contract, for new schools to start and for poor-performing schools to close.

The current school choice policy creates losers as well as winners (both parents as well as schools). A successful choice policy will be instrumental in making most of the parents and students as winners, especially those from poorer backgrounds, and raising educational attainment levels. The students from low socio-economic status will be in a position to live and attend the nearby performing schools. The admission criteria will be divorced from the postcode where pupils live. The choice schemes that have had positive results in combining choice with equity, where the admission is administered by LAs (or non-partisan bodies), may offer a moderated system of parental choice. It would provide control for both choices and residential location to dispel the residual effect of admissions policies on pupils sorting by schools. This would result in reducing school segregation by bringing about choice and diversity in the education system.

3.3 Multiculturalism policy developments and community cohesion

3.3.1 From multiculturalism to ‘community cohesion’

In the UK, multiculturalism¹³ has been one policy approach to accommodating the immigration of different ethnic communities in the 20th century. It has undergone a significant change in the 21st century (Thomas, 2020). Previously, multiculturalism policies aimed to increase social recognition and equality of racial and ethnic

¹³ In the thesis, ‘multicultural’ and ‘multiculturalism’ are the core terms and used multiple times. Multi-cultural is a description of the social characteristics which arise when different cultural communities live together, whilst multiculturalism is a form of governance involving strategies and policies which attempt to manage diversity and multiplicity in multicultural societies (Hall, 2000, p. 209).

minorities by decreasing inequalities and undesirable racial attitudes (Howarth & Andreouli, 2012). Race (2015, pp. 4-5) provided a broad overview of the term multiculturalism, and claimed that multiculturalism is:

A perspective on human life and contains central insights into how we socially construct our lives... at the very least, is a desirable acknowledgement of cultural diversity within a pluralistic society... [and] cannot be thought of as a single concept which is socially on its own, and ... is both plural and fluid which recognises how cultural diversity is constantly changing.

Multiculturalism policies recognise that a multicultural society appreciates the differences based on diverse cultures, ethnicities and beliefs (Aydin, 2014). In the UK, the evolution of multiculturalism took place to accommodate post-war immigration, especially Muslims from the sub-continent. However, according to Cattle (2005, p. 26), the result of multicultural approach is a segregated British society:

Britain is a multicultural society, but most people do not live in multicultural communities. Most of the ethnic population lives in London and a few other regional centres. The White population dominates the rest of the country. Even in areas that are mixed, the separation is often just as evident, with most towns and cities divided by neighbourhoods. But does it matter, and, if it does, what should we do about it?

Thomas, Busher, Macklin, Rogerson and Christmann (2018) argue that the government's policy has shifted from the notion of multiculturalism to 'community cohesion' agenda in the wake of summer 2001 disturbances in northern England. The riots in the towns of the North, such as Oldham, Bradford, Leeds, and Burnley, proved detrimental to the aspirations of creating a multicultural society (Thomas, 2011). It sparked a widespread debate on the governmental level that resulted in a 'crisis of multiculturalism' (Modood, 2007, p. 142).

Councillor Ted Cattle's investigation in North of England found a high level of segregation between communities in all spheres of life, and not just in the housing estates. The divisions were evident in educational and community institutions, workplaces, and social networks. Cattle (2001) observed that different communities live 'parallel lives' and do not interact with one another for meaningful exchanges. The report argued that the issues such as race, culture and religion had not been

debated with the communities on the pretext that they are sensitive subjects. Thus, a lack of communication between the government and the local communities was responsible for the riots. The publication of the Runnymede Trust report (2000), also called 'The Parekh Report', initiated the debates and discourses around multiculturalism. 'The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain' report identified worrying levels of increase in segregation and recommended to assist people in forming a vibrant multicultural British society.

Traditionally the multiculturalism policy was more focussed on the local level than the government level (Cantle, 2012). According to Abbas (2005), government's turn away from policies of multiculturalism back to assimilationism happened as multiculturalism policies were portrayed as 'an obstacle to 'integration' and a threat to 'our common culture'. Various politicians, such as the then British Prime Minister David Cameron, emphasised that schools should teach a 'common culture' (Cameron, 2011). Further, Rattansi (1992, p. 24) claimed that an integrated British society should agree to sympathetic teaching of 'other cultures' to root out communal prejudices and bring social integration. This led many people to believe that multiculturalism has embraced its 'death' in the UK. However, historically speaking, Britain has always theoretically supported multiculturalism, as it had been a society of immigrants (Sam & Berry, 2010). The idea of multiculturalism was put forward in the 1960s when Roy Jenkins (Jenkins, 1967, p. 267), the then Home Secretary, advocated the idea of diversity by pronouncing that integration is 'not as a flattening process of assimilation but as equal opportunity, accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance'.

From time to time, policies were formulated to promote racial equality, cultural diversity and encourage good race relations. The UK developed a robust legal framework protecting the rights of individuals to practice their beliefs and religion as Dhami, Squires and Modood (2006) noted that through the implementation of the Race Relations Acts (1965, 1968 and 1976), the government was committed to promoting equal opportunities to integrate the minorities in key areas of society. The Commission for Racial Equality was instituted to act as a watchdog in implementing the legislation to address individual complaints (Dhami et al., 2006). Further down the road, the Equality Act 2010 did not permit discrimination on the basis of differences such as race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation and gendered identities.

Such legislations complement each other towards realising the dream of an integrated multicultural British society.

3.3.2 'Death' of multiculturalism

During the 2000s, a series of debates started about the future of multiculturalism, such as 'is multiculturalism over?', 'is multiculturalism dead?', and 'beyond multiculturalism' (Allen, 2007 & 2015; Thomas et al., 2017; Meer & Modood, 2009; Modood, 2013; Kundnani, 2002). In 2004, the then Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Philips, controversially declared the failure of multiculturalism policies in the UK (Byrne & De Tona, 2014). Nevertheless, Trevor Phillips announced that multiculturalism stands for separateness; hence, it is better to 'kill off multiculturalism' (Baldwin, 2004, p. 29). Some of the leading political theorists declared that the London bombing of 7/7 was responsible for killing multiculturalism, and it is on 'retreat' in the UK (Appleyard, 2006; Joppke, 2004; Sanderson, 2007). Speeches of David Cameron criticised 'the doctrine of state multiculturalism' by declaring that multiculturalism is a 'barrier' that divides British society (Cameron, 2011), signalling that Britain is moving away from being a multicultural society.

These perspectives have generated other relevant debates, such as the 'civic integration' of ethnic minority groups, such as Muslims, in England (Joppke, 2004). However, Meer and Modood (2009) are not in agreement with the tropes that British multiculturalism is 'dead' or in a political 'retreat'; however, they specify that British multiculturalism is undergoing a process of 'civic-rebalancing'. British society is adjusting itself to the changing paradigms of 'community cohesion' and will return to multiculturalism with the passage of time. Thomas (2011) also supports the idea that 'community cohesion' does not imply the 'death' of multiculturalism; it is rebalancing and a renaming of multiculturalism.

The current 'community cohesion' agenda does not take into account the element of culture and religion. Verkuyten (2007) has rightly added that religion is not a significant issue of concern in the UK; instead, it is considered a matter of cultural diversity. The recent introduction of the 'Integrated Communities Action Plan' (MHCLG, 2019) has again shifted the focus of multiculturalism towards localised 'community cohesion'. The action plan aims to support the local partners in the community through a 'place-based approach'. This approach has been given importance due to residential segregation of the Muslim and non-Muslim communities has been on the rise in England over the last few years (Gray, McAnulty

& Keenan, 2009). The government laid an emphasis on transferring the responsibilities to local institutions to define diverse and peaceful neighbourhoods (Finney, Harries, Rhodes & Lymperopoulou, 2019). However, Grillo (2007) claims that the action plan is a temporary arrangement, a part of the smaller accommodation and not a national policy aiming for social cohesion. The plan is also a reflection of Hall's (1990) argument that, in Britain, multiculturalism is a discourse consisting of several policies (in plural) and not a coherent political policy. British multiculturalism is a 'patchwork of initiatives, rhetoric and aspirations' (Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 2).

3.3.3 Towards multicultural education

In recent years, the education of Muslims has been a subject of discussion when different aspects of multiculturalism are discussed. In the UK, the situation has been complicated by the perception of religion in the public sphere, in particular, the accommodations for religion in state schools (Clarke & Woodhead, 2018). State schools have been fundamental to achieving the goals of a multicultural society. However, their capability to act as places where meaningful intercultural interactions take place depends on the degree to which students from various cultural backgrounds are accommodated (Burgess et al., 2007). They are considered places of tension around culture and a possible solution to removing racialised inequalities in society (Gokulsing, 2006). The Casey report (Home Office, 2016, p. 137) revealed that segregation of Pakistani Muslim children in schools is on the rise, and the level of hate crimes and Islamophobic bullying is increasing against the Muslim community. Further, the school curriculum does not appreciate their religious values and family culture, and the Muslim community feels isolated in state schools (Meer, 2007). Therefore, the main challenge for Muslim parents is to retain Islamic faith and develop the Muslim identity of their children in the secular UK (Musharraf, 2015). In this context, it is often suggested that a multicultural curriculum may be introduced in multi-faith societies such as the UK (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008).

Parents face various challenges navigating the education system to send their children to their preferred schools (Gewirtz et al., 1995). Muslim children attend all types of schools in England (Hewer, 2001). Many Muslim parents prefer single-sex schools at the secondary level, especially for their daughters. However, the majority of Muslim children in the UK attend state schools (Meer, 2007). Due to residential segregation patterns, Muslim children tend to be concentrated in inner-city

community schools in major segregated towns and cities across England (Phillips, 2006).

The Cattle Report (2001) recommended that state schools ought to respect all faiths in their day-to-day activities, and the historical achievements of all cultures and nations of the UK should be acknowledged. In this regard, the government has taken steps to respond to the specific educational needs of Muslim children, wherein LAs offer guidance to schools on meeting the needs of Muslim pupils (Crawford, Maxwell, Coldron & Simkins, 2022). However, schools still have considerable discretion on how far and how enthusiastically the guidelines are implemented (Nielsen, 1989). Policies and practices adopted by LAs and individual schools in response to Muslim requests include: the provision of a room for midday prayer and special provision for Friday prayers; the adaptation of school uniform rules and sportswear requirements for Muslim girls, and the provision of appropriate showering arrangements; the use of discretionary holidays to allow Muslim children permission to be away from school at the start of *Ramadan* and *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*; the provision of *halal* food¹⁴ for school lunches; single-sex groupings and classes; and sensitivity to Islamic beliefs in assemblies (Dagkas & Benn, 2006).

However, such practices are not followed in a uniform manner across the UK. The implementation of these instructions varies from LA to LA, and precise data is unavailable on how widespread these policies are or what proportion of the Muslim pupil population attends schools that adopt such policies (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015)¹⁵. These actions are essential for the inclusion of students from ethnically diverse backgrounds, including Muslims (Race, 2018). Many Muslim parents continue to feel that state schools are not meeting the specific educational needs of their children and a growing number of community leaders argue that schools with a large majority of Muslim children should be re-designated as Muslim voluntary aided schools (Hewer, 2001). Other anxieties of Muslim parents include the continuing poor levels of achievement by Muslim children; the failure of schools to eradicate racist and Islamophobic discrimination, prejudice and bullying; the inadequacy of the spiritual and moral guidance that the schools provide; and the lack of support for their children's Muslim identity (Ibid.).

¹⁴ *Halal* meat refers to meat slaughtered according to Muslim customs.

¹⁵ The Muslim Council of Britain, hereafter MCB.

3.3.4 Language education

A language is a primary source to demonstrate a person's identity and membership to a social group (Miller, 2000). For Muslim parents, language education plays a significant role in choosing schools, shaping their expectations of either school system, state or faith-based schools (Ahmed, 2013). In the UK, the state schools provide a good platform for a child's early years' transition from mother tongue to English and provide relevant support to learn English as an additional language (EAL) (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003). The majority of Pakistani children are registered for learning for EAL in state schools (DfE, 2020). The learning of EAL has important implications for language development, social integration, pupils' educational attainments, and a 'greater sense of citizenship' through the learning and use of the English language (Cantle Report, 2001, p. 10).

In UK schools, there are more than a million children between 5-18 years old whose first language is not English (NALDIC, 2021)¹⁶. The state compulsory schools have the facilities to support the pupils with EAL (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003). However, there is an objection against EAL that it does not teach the curriculum that highlights the cultural traditions and family beliefs of Muslim children (IQRA Trust, 1991). The EAL content is based on Christian and European traditions. There is a call from some parents that the EAL curriculum should respond to the identity of young Muslims and should impart Islamic values and cultural practices (Ibid.). In this way, Muslim children could feel themselves a meaningful part of the education system.

Pakistani Muslim children are multilingual. They speak three or four languages on a daily basis: English at school, Arabic and Urdu at the mosque, and heritage languages such as Urdu and Punjabi at home (Curdt-Christiansen & La Morgia, 2018). Muslim parents who want fluency in English send their children to secular state schools that also teach modern foreign languages (MFL) such as French, German or Spanish (Long, Danechi & Loft, 2020). Arabic is offered as a modern language at Muslim schools. Supplementary schools are a good place to learn Arabic and heritage languages. However, the supplementary schools have started to reduce their reliance on heritage languages by using English books and employing *Imams* who are fluent in English. The Muslim schools run by Gujarati administrations in

¹⁶ NALDIC: National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum

Blackburn emphasise learning the Gujarati language (Martin, Bhatt, Bhojani & Creese, 2006).

3.3.5 Faith-based schools

In Britain, religion is in overall decline, and there is a growth in 'no religion' community (Levitt & Woodhead, 2018). Over the past half-century, Britain's landscape in terms of religion has been transformed beyond recognition (Butler-Sloss, 2015). Britain is passing through the most significant religious transformation in history. There are three principal trends in the religious transformation:

1. The number of people with religious affiliations is on a decline. Almost half of the British population represents itself as having no religion.
2. Christian beliefs and traditions are deteriorating, and the religious dominance of Churches is weakening. However, there is growth in the number of adherents to other churches, such as Pentecostal and Evangelical.
3. People with faith are getting more diverse. Jews were the largest minority in the UK 50 years ago. However, now Muslims are the largest community in Britain, followed by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jews.

There is a prediction that these trends will be on the rise in the future. However, in England, a significant number of schools, almost a third of all, are state-funded faith schools with religious affiliations (Levitt & Woodhead, 2018). However, the parental choice of faith schools is not without controversies. Walford (2008) argues that admission to the faith school and increasing the number of faith schools has been controversial due to three main reasons:

1. The segregation of minority faith students into separate schools could lead to ethnic and religious tension in future. This practice could have severe repercussions for community integration.
2. Some Church schools select students from faith-practising families and the White middle-class. The selection criteria could exclude students from other ethnic minorities.
3. Some faith schools' curricula may inculcate sensitive materials that may be considered intolerant by the wider society.

The choice of faith schools in Britain is a topic of contestation and debate. However, the process of support continues irrespective of any government in power. Recently, the Conservative government of Prime Minister Theresa May vowed to support faith

schools by publishing a consultation paper on faith-based education providers (DfE, 2016). Therefore, Church schools remain the second largest education provider for Muslim pupils (Clarke & Woodhead, 2015). Subject to the availability and exercise of choice, Muslim parents prefer faith-based schools (Catholic, Church of England or Muslim schools) over state schools.

There are various reasons behind Church school choice, such as they have a religious ethos, and they are respectful of religions other than Christianity. Generally, they have good academic standards and emphasise on moral guidance of pupils (King, 2010). Catholic schools rarely admit more than 10% of Muslim children, but the Dearing Report (2001) envisaged the expansion of secondary Church of England schools, which place no limits on admissions, thus expanding the choice for Muslim parents. Some Muslim parents may be anxious about the Christian character of the Church schools, but they are satisfied to the point if the schools do not attempt to convert their children to a religion other than Islam (King, 2010).

3.3.6 Muslim faith schools

There has been an increase in the demand for the establishment of separate Muslim schools in England (Walford, 2004). The recent years have been very significant as several Muslim schools have been established. The Association of Muslim Schools (2021) claims that teaching Islamic values should be the essence of the education of Muslim children; their statement of vision reads as:

Our vision is to provide high quality services and support for the development of excellence in Muslim schools; nurturing love of knowledge, continuous pursuit of *Taqwa* (God consciousness) and *Ihsan* (excellence) in all spheres of life for learners and educators.

This phenomenon is not new to England as religion-based schools affiliated with Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and other communities are well-established and widespread (King, 2010). What is on offer at the Muslim school which makes them the best choice for parents? Muslim schools believe in the 'Islamicisation of knowledge' (Shah, 2012, p. 52). They teach the National Curriculum and are allowed to teach their own syllabus for Islamic religious education in a self-defined Islamic environment (Shah, 2012). Moreover, they have an Islamic ethos and Muslim assemblies, and their teachers can provide a role model of belief and practice for

Muslim pupils. The Muslim schools offered a religious supportive environment, such as five daily prayers, which are a central component of the five pillars of Islam.

The place of Muslim schools within England's education system remains a controversial issue. It has got advocates as well as opponents (Flint, Dinham, Furbey & Lowndes, 2009). Some case studies indicate that Muslim schools are not teaching pupils about other religions and cultures. Their focus of attention is only on the religion of Islam. In this way, Muslim schools do not prepare children for living in a multicultural society (Haque, 2000). Cattle (2001) noted that increasing the number of Muslim schools (mono-cultural schools) would increase the problems associated with segregation and would foster the development of potentially more segregated communities. The Ouseley Report (2001) also reported the 'fear of confronting all white/and or all Muslim schools about their contribution, or rather lack of contribution, to social and racial integration'.

The majority of Muslim schools are single-sex schools, and many Muslim parents support such provisions, especially for their daughters after puberty (Daun & Walford, 2004). They claim there are fewer distractions, and the girls do not become a subject of harassment. However, in mixed schools, there are greater opportunities for boys to harass girls verbally and physically (Halstead, 1989). However, there is also evidence that in mixed-gender schools, boys take up most of the teachers' time and excel in academic excellence over girls (Scantlebury, 2009). These are some of the arguments offered by Muslim parents favouring single-sex schooling for their girls. But some Muslim parents prefer mixed-gender schools so that the girls may get successful in their future life when they work and live in the wider society (Shah & Conchar, 2009).

There is little consistency between the overall faith education sector. The complex terrain of faith schools (Church schools and Muslim schools) provides a confusing picture of diverse faith-based education provisions. However, they have a bright side as Walford (2008) argues that Muslim schools extend the choice for Muslim parents; however, most of them are not inclusive. So, they should be diverse and ready to work with non-denominational schools and those of other faiths.

3.3.7 Supplementary schools

Khan-Cheema (1996) asserted that the religion of Islam is not appreciated in state schools, and they do not meet the religious and cultural needs of Muslim children.

Thus, the Muslim community has responded to the situation by setting up a supplementary education sector. There are various kinds of supplementary schools, but usually, they are located in mosques (Maqsood, 2005), and others are held in church halls, school halls or private homes. Supplementary schools were established by Muslims in the UK in the late 1960s (Rosowsky, 2008). The reasons for their establishment included teaching community languages in the school curriculum, single-sex provision, and respect for culturally sensitive schooling (Al-Hawamleh, 2003). They run classes in teaching the Holy Quran, Hadith, faith and practices of Islam, and mother-tongue classes in Urdu, Hindi or Gujarati, which are not Islamic in character. They teach basic-level Quranic education focusing on *Nazra* (Verbal reading of Quran), *Tajweed* (pronunciation of Quran), and *Hifz* (memorising the Quran) (Gordon, 2002). Whether a girl or a boy, every Muslim child is expected to read and recite the Quran early at a young age (Anzar, 2003). The choice of evening supplementary school affects the choice of the day compulsory school.

Darby (2001) argues that for many Muslim children, the dominant pattern of education is to attend a state school in the daytime and a supplementary school in the evening. This arrangement is a practical solution adopted by the Muslim community to address the gap left by secular day schools. However, this pattern has created challenges for Muslim children. Firstly, the day secular schools and evening supplementary schools may impart views which are contradictory and can add to the confusion of young pupils. Secondly, according to Maqsood (2005), supplementary schooling can be a burden as the tired children are forced to study there after a hectic school day which can have an adverse effect on family relations and their educational attainments. Thirdly, supplementary schools lack proper facilities and qualified RE teachers, which raises concerns about the quality of education imparted in these schools (Ibid.). The local *Imams* may not be fluent in English and unfamiliar with current educational thinking as they are educated in other cultural contexts outside the UK. Klausen (2004) has highlighted that there is an urgent need to provide bi-lingual local *Imams* in the mosques to better communicate with British-born children. The mutual coordination, support, and partnership of mosques with the state schools will be useful for enhancing the academic achievements of the children (Maqsood, 2005) as the supplementary schools complete the educational experience of Muslim children along with state schools.

3.4 Culturally sensitive schooling and segregated education

3.4.1 Religion in state schools

Culturally sensitive schooling is about understanding diverse pupil populations, pedagogical strategies (Banks, 1979; Banks & McGee, 2001; Gay, 2004), cultural responsiveness (Cazden & Leggett, 1981; Gibson, 1976) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (2006) argue that the extent to which a school helps recognise and accommodate the needs of pupils plays a significant part in the school choice of parents. This approach was developed in the aftermath of the 'Swann Report of 1985 Education for All', which argued for cultural pluralism and opened the door for a range of multiculturalism policies from schools and LAs (Rattansi, 1992). It was envisaged that a curriculum needs to support Muslim children in maintaining their religious and cultural identity (Alsubaie, 2015). England's state schools teach a curriculum based on Christian and European traditions (Musharraf, 2015). Some state schools attempt to keep religion and faith out of school altogether, making it more difficult for them to meet the needs of Muslim children (Ibid.). This poses challenges for Muslim children when they receive religious education (RE) and relationships and sex education (RSE). There is a public controversy about teaching RE and RSE in state schools, and Muslim parents have mixed views about teaching these subjects.

3.4.2 Religious education

In England's education system, RE aims to develop the pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development; RE does not promote a particular religion; instead, its objective is educational (Berglund, 2015). The school children are entitled to receive RE. However, parents have a right to withdraw them from schools, as outlined in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (HSMO, 1998). The position of RE on the curriculum is unstable as it is part of the basic curriculum but does not constitute part of the national curriculum (Barnes, 2014). There are concerns over the purpose, mode of provision and teaching materials of RE (Conroy, Lundie & Baumfield, 2012). Sometimes, RE is considered as 'conflicted', 'superficial', and even dysfunctional'. Thus, the subject of RE is a persistent site of inquiry and is subject to evaluation from time to time (Barnes, 2014).

The quality of RE teaching in schools is a matter of concern for educationists and policymakers. Ofsted (2013) found an array of low standards in RE, such as casual teaching, confused focus, poor assessment techniques, lack of better-trained

teachers and overall weak assessment of the subject. Moreover, the quality of RE teaching in secondary schools was also not so encouraging either. Ofsted pointed out the following main issues:

- a) There are limited opportunities for the students to work as independent learners
- b) It focuses on preparing pupils for examinations, so the teachers are deficient in employing diverse teaching strategies.
- c) The lesson planning is bureaucratic and over-structured, which is deficient in promoting effective learning.

Faith schools have greater control over RE teaching as they are associated with a specific religion, and 'they can choose what they teach in religious studies' (Gov.uk, 2020). So, the Islamic faith schools teach Islamic religious education in place of RE (MCB, 2007). There is confusion over the purpose and curriculum of RE in England (Matemba, 2015). Therefore, parents have called for clarifying the aims and objectives of RE (Butler-Sloss, 2015) as it is a significant factor during the school choice process (Mawhinney, Niens, Richardson & Chiba, 2010).

Wright (2000) opined that the pupils should also be made aware aims and role of RE in schools so that they can reflect their position in relevance to the subject. RE curriculum should be devised in such a way that it respects the plurality in the classroom, by respecting diverse religious/non-religious and world views and does not reflect the dominant majority culture within the classroom (Nelson, 2019).

In a study on the meaning-making of RE in Irish schools, Nelson (2019) observed a 'crisis in meaning' in RE and an 'agreed ambiguity'. This ambiguity is because a standard curriculum for RE has been ascribed to different meanings by the schools. It affects the 'pupil agency' when they endeavour to apply their beliefs and values. However, Nelson (2019) noted that it was impossible to sustain a shared meaning and purpose of RE where schools are given the freedom to construct meaning. A flexible approach towards RE does not produce favourable results for a multicultural society. This approach may negatively affect the pupils' identity and differences, which needs to be mitigated with a robust policy for RE. For many Muslim parents, the teaching of RE is appropriate. However, it remains a sensitive issue as there is a lack of agreement between the government, schools and the community.

3.4.3 Relationships and sex education

In England, the teaching of RSE is compulsory from the age of 11 onwards (Long, 2020). The national curriculum of RSE comprises sexual identity, puberty, menstruation, sexual health, relationships and mental health. The reproductive and human growth parts, which form a part of the national science curriculum, are compulsory. Other than that, the parents can withdraw children from RSE classes (Long, 2020). There is a public controversy about teaching RSE, and people have mixed views about its utility. In the first place, some people oppose the inclusion of RSE in the curriculum (Lewis & Knijn, 2001). However, others believe that RSE should acknowledge the socio-cultural contexts in which it takes place (Wight & Abraham, 2000). Moreover, the teaching materials should respond to the community needs and support the identity of the pupils (Ibid.).

Muslim parents do not want sex education at the expense of Islamic values based on abstaining from pre-marital sex and Islamic family norms (Halstead, 1997 & 2005). According to a study conducted by Ahmed (2013), for a majority of parents, the use of explicit materials to teach sex to young people was the compelling factor in moving their children from state schools to Muslim schools. However, some parents appreciate the teaching of content such as puberty and sexual identity with the condition that it should be age-appropriate and be taught in a culturally sensitive manner.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2010) has clarified that many parents withdraw their children from RSE classes because some contents may be considered sinful or immodest by Muslims. RSE may not be imparted in mixed-gender classes (boys and girls). In this regard, schools need to be very clear about their RSE teaching policies and ensure that parents know their rights in this area. Banks (1994) rightly emphasises that culturally sensitive schooling attempts to equip Muslim parents to use their social and cultural resources and generate partnerships with schools and communities for better school choices.

3.4.4 Moments of choice

The debates around multiculturalism policies and culturally sensitive schooling define the 'moments' of school choice in segregated Muslim communities such as Blackburn (Ball, 2003). The moments of choice represent key decisions during school choice in response to the diversity of schooling options. The literature review constructs an understanding of how parental strategies regarding school choice are

influenced by diverse school landscape and their capacity to navigate the education system. The parents face various challenges in sending their children to the preferred schools in segregated neighbourhoods (Gewirtz et al.,1995). Generally, popular schools are not in a position to allocate places to all children. Some children are left to attend unpopular schools, and for them, the idea of choice is only fiction (Croft, 2004). However, there is a diversity in school types available to Muslim parents, such as state schools, faith-based schools, Muslim schools and various other schools (Musharraf & Nabeel, 2015), as shown in Figure 4 below.

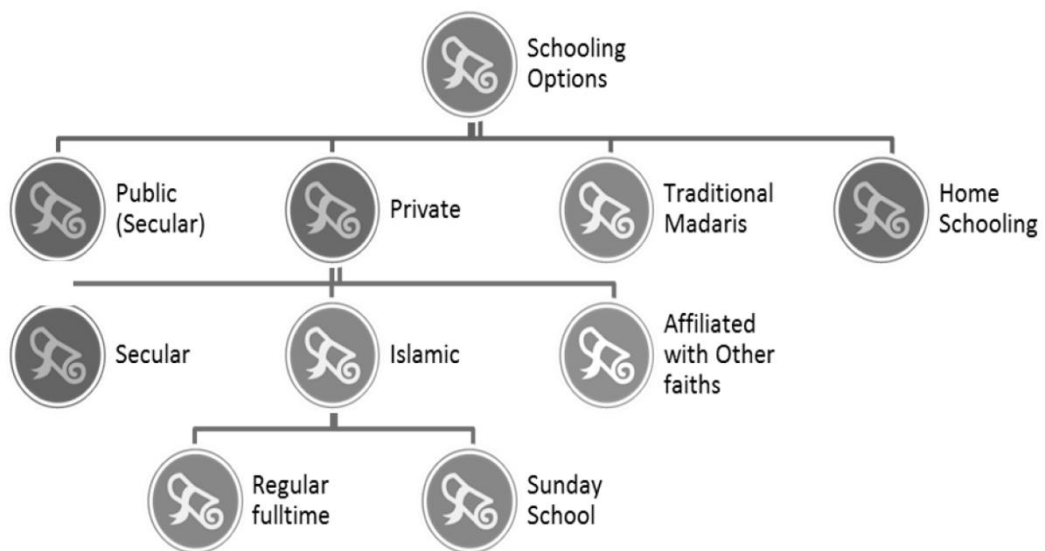


Figure 4: Classification of schooling options for parents

Source: Musharraf & Nabeel. (2015).

A sociological exploration of choice has conceptualized the choice process as a series of ‘micro-interactional processes’ (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 568), wherein the social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources can play their role. It is argued that the school choice process of British Pakistani Muslim parents may be viewed as a series of ‘micro-interactional processes’. These micro-processes are reflected in the form of moments of decisions during the schooling life of a child (Reay, 1996, p. 581). However, parents differ in their capacity to engage with or exploit the education system for their children’s advantage. Focusing on the decision-making processes during moments of choice reveals the ways in which multiple factors help and guide the parents to deal with diverse schooling options. Access to information and the ability to decode educational information and social networks are the other factors that generate differentiation.

Through social networks, parents gather information about schools' reputations which is called 'hot' knowledge by Ball and Vincent (1998, p. 380). The hot knowledge is contrasted with the 'cold' knowledge gained through official sources such as Ofsted reports and league table positions of the schools. The combination of this knowledge provides a critical point where social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources are utilised for school choice.

England has demonstrated that parental strategies of choice are heavily influenced by their cultural and economic resources (Gewirtz et al., 1995). However, these strategies also include notions of social, religious and ethnicity. The parents face various challenges in navigating the education system to send their children to the preferred schools in segregated neighbourhoods (Burgess et al., 2011). Generally, popular schools are not able to allocate places to all children. Some children are left to attend unpopular schools, and for them, the idea of choice is only fiction (Croft, 2004). Against this backdrop, the concept of social class emerges as a significant factor determining the choice.

3.4.5 Typology of choosers

Gewirtz et al. (1995) examined this question when doing a study on class differences in parental choice. The study involved 14 parents and school teachers interviewed in London secondary schools. It was found that cultural and economic capital differences may affect the parental ability to school choice. They concluded that there were three main types of parents who were categorised into privileged-skilled choosers, disconnected-local choosers and semi-skilled choosers (see Table 7). Gewirtz et al. (1995) concluded that cultural and economic capitals possessed by middle-class parents give them leverage over working-class parents in choosing performing schools. The education system may give everyone an extended choice; however, parents who possess economic and cultural resources are able to have better choices than others:

Table 7: Typology of school choosers (Gewirtz et al., 1995)

#	Type of chooser	Characteristics
1	Privileged-skilled choosers	These were mainly middle-class parents with high cultural capital who used their economic and cultural capital to gain educational capital for their children. They also use their economic capital to afford to move their children around the educational system to get the best deal out of it.
2	Disconnected-local choosers	These were mainly working-class parents with a lack of economic and cultural capital. They found it difficult to understand the education system and were less confident when

	dealing with schools. The cost of travel and distance were major restrictions when choosing a school, and their funds were limited.
3 Semi-skilled choosers	These were mainly working-class parents, but unlike the disconnected-local choosers, they were ambitious for their children. However, they also lacked cultural capital and found it difficult to make sense of the education system.

The parents in these categories differ in their capacities to navigate the education system. These categories overlap closely with social class groupings: a majority of the privileged-skilled choosers were middle-class parents, and the semi-skilled and disconnected-local choosers were overwhelmingly working-class parents. Middle-class parents are likely to have more resources at their disposal to negotiate practices of choice. For example, they are likely to have more experience assessing and ‘reading between the lines’ of official reports, such as Ofsted and League Tables. They are also likely to have had a better understanding of In England’s education system, RE aims to develop the pupils’ personal, spiritual and moral development; RE does not promote a particular religion; instead, its objective is educational (Berglund, 2015). The school children are entitled to receive RE. However, parents have a right to withdraw them from schools, as outlined in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (HSMO, 1998). The position of RE on the curriculum is unstable as it is part of the basic curriculum but does not constitute part of the national curriculum (Barnes, 2014). There are concerns over the purpose, mode of provision and teaching materials of RE (Conroy, Lundie & Baumfield, 2012). Sometimes, RE is considered as ‘conflicted’, ‘superficial’, and even dysfunctional’. Thus, the subject of RE is a persistent site of inquiry and is subject to evaluation from time to time (Barnes, 2014).

education system and more social contacts – for example, with education professionals (such as teachers) – which can help them orientate themselves to the best choices available.

There are straightforward and practical reasons why migrant families are disadvantaged during this process. The literature has shown that migrants’ social capital, particularly their family and friends’ networks, plays an important role in children’s adaptation to school (Portes & Rambaut, 2001). However, like other disadvantaged families, migrant families may suffer because of the lack of social and cultural capital (Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe, 1993; Holdaway, Crul & Roberts, 2009). Through both the lack of economic resources and also highly unequal social distribution, migrants and ethnic minorities are often forced to settle down in

segregated communities in under-served areas, associated with poorer schooling and adverse learning conditions for their children (Heath & Brinbaum, 2007, p. 302). Not surprisingly, under-performing schools are generally located in the urban inner-city areas with a higher proportion of migrant students (Kelly, 2007; Dobson, 2008).

The influence of cultural, economic, as well as social, religious and ethnic resources will be analysed in Blackburn's segregated 'ecology of choice' (Levitt & Woodhead, 2018). The researcher will draw on the typology of choosers provided by Gewirtz et al. (1995) to explore the school choices of Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. The possession and deployment of cultural (knowledge, skills, and social confidence) (Gewirtz et al., 1993), economic (finances, goods and transport), social (extended family, networks and relationships), and religious (engagement with religious organisations, supplementary schools and mosques), will be vital in explaining variations in parents' expression of school choice (Gewirtz et al., 1995).

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter concludes with a word of caution. The LAs and schools should consider that the evidence of the effectiveness of school choice in improving student achievement is mixed, and the evidence of the effects of competition between schools is inconclusive (Burgess et al., 2014). Schools should not focus on being better than the neighbouring school but should seek to maximise the educational attainment of their pupils in their context, and in doing so, should strive to establish a high-quality educational environment for the benefit of all their students. The chapter has also highlighted assumptions underpinning the admission of schools and how they might affect the sorting of pupils and help aggravate school segregation resulting in residential segregation. It has been argued the need to understand choice and competition processes and make flexible choice policies to expand choice for parents from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Undertaking the review of literature allowed to explore the evolution of multiculturalism policies, resulting in the alleged 'death' of multiculturalism, that gave birth to the government's 'community cohesion' agenda to achieve social integration. A review of multiculturalism policies indicated that there had not been a comprehensive multiculturalism policy in Britain. Instead, it is a 'patchwork of initiatives, rhetoric, and aspirations' (Lentin & Titley, 2011, p. 2). In the post-multiculturalism era, there is a localised approach to forming 'integrated communities'. It was highlighted that whether or not multiculturalism is backed up by

state commitments, a multicultural mode of social integration will continue growing and will not be easily eradicated (Faist & Kivisto, 2007). However, implementing multiculturalism is a challenging issue in Britain due to the continuous influx of immigrants from diverse backgrounds, cultures and religions.

The review of literature has revealed the multicultural dynamics in which British Pakistani Muslims are positioned in England. The Muslim presence is an intersection between various aspects of religion and schooling. State schools do not appreciate religious identity of Muslim pupils while teaching RE, RSE and language education. The support for establishing Muslim schools is due to the Islamic religious education gap created by the state schools. However, the issues of teaching RE, RSE, faith-based education and single-sex schooling are not without controversies. The outcome of segregated education is that parents endeavour to utilise the social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources at their disposal to choose performing schools for their children, as exhibited in Gewirtz's typology of school choosers.

The next chapter discusses the methodological approaches adopted in the study and the research methods involving documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews, leading to a thematic analysis of empirical data.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This study explores British Pakistani Muslim parents' school choices in Northern England by establishing an understanding of their perceptions of multicultural mixing, culturally sensitive schooling and 'moments' of choice. Multiculturalism policy development is examined to provide the context for parents' perceptions and choices. One overarching question informed this research: How do British multiculturalism policies affect the school choices of Muslim parents? In order to explore this question fully, the study aims to answer the following questions:

4. What are the school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn: a town in northern England with ethnic and residential segregation?
5. How do the British multiculturalism policy developments impact parents' school choices?
6. What are the characteristics associated with various types of school choosers?

To answer these questions, qualitative research methodology was found relevant (Hammersley, 2000) along with a case-study approach to enable the researcher for exploration of participants' school choices that are contextualised within the British multiculturalism policy evolution milieu.

This chapter discusses the research paradigm, methods, sampling strategy, data collection and approaches used to analyse the data. At the outset, the characteristics of the qualitative research methodology adopted for this study are introduced. The chapter then outlines the researcher's ontological and epistemological stance and their relationship with the qualitative methodology and research tools employed. The next section deals with approaches to conduct the documentary analysis, population and sampling and semi-structured interviews. The researcher's insider-outsider positionality is discussed, alongside reflexivity and its relevance to the epistemological standpoint. The chapter demonstrates the challenges faced during the refinement of themes and sub-themes through the coding process and the 'quantitizing' of qualitative data to establish clarifications in parental school preferences. Finally, approaches to data analysis are considered, and the last section justifies selecting the thematic analysis (TA) approach for data analysis.

4.2 Methodological perspective

As identified in the introductory chapters, this study explored the school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn, Northern England, through an interpretivist approach. It was realised by the researcher that an interpretive approach would be the most appropriate way to collect personal stories and qualitative accounts of the parents' experiences to meet the aims and objectives of the study (Bhandari, 2020). The interpretive approach aims to directly probe human perspectives when they are in social action (Miller, Hengst & Wang, 2003). Further, an interpretive approach sits within qualitative research, which aims to generate data by locating and interpreting human experiences as a 'situated activity', taking place in their 'natural settings' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3):

A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

This study is situated in the 'making sense' of participants' school choices for their children. Qualitative research tools, such as interviews and observations, have the potential to produce 'thick' data from local narratives and personal stories relevant to certain places and situations (Flick, 2009, p. 12). In this study, the research questions required the generation of a 'thick' description of multiculturalism policies and moments of school choice to fully understand the experiences of Muslim parents. This led the researcher to adopt a solely qualitative research design using an interpretive approach. In this process, the researcher assumed the role of the research instrument to co-construct the meanings of reality and interpret them by penetrating the context of this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 29).

The researcher's position as a research instrument was also situated within their own identity as a Pakistani Muslim, creating an 'insider-outsider' implication for data collection and interpretation (Adler & Adler, 1987). The technique of rapid transformations between insider-outsider position gave the researcher a certain amount of acceptance from the participants (Ibid.). The researcher found that their

position changed throughout the study from insider first and outsider later and vice versa. Shifting the researcher's position from insider to outsider multiple times when conducting the semi-structured interviews and contacting the community to recruit participants enabled maximum engagement with participants to elicit responses. Being both insider and outsider throughout the research allowed the collection of 'thick' data from semi-structured interviews as participants trusted the researcher's understanding of their situation and distance from it to support objectivity in reporting.

A quantitative research paradigm was deemed unsuitable for this study of human experience and choices. Compared to qualitative studies, quantitative research aims to quantify the data collection and analysis. It generally uses the research methods of surveys, questionnaires and 'more remote, inferential empirical materials' (Bryman, 2008, p. 10). While Atkinson, Coffey and Delamont (2003, p. 15) argued that qualitative research encompasses a comprehensive paradigm that can employ diverse data collection methods and analytical techniques to produce 'thick' descriptions articulating in-depth experiences and personal narratives of participants. Atkinson et al. (2003, p. 113) stressed the utility and importance of semi-structured interviews as they are the 'gold standard' in qualitative studies. Interviews reveal an understanding and differences between the speech and actions of participants besides facilitating the interpretation of context-specific data emanated from social processes (Ibid.). As far as documentary analysis is concerned, according to Krippendorff (2004) and Cohen, Salomon and Nijkamp (2002), it remains a more helpful strategy than other strategies of inquiry to study multiple documents surrounding events and individuals. These arguments for interviews and documentary analysis as tools for this interpretive study were persuasive for their adoption.

The data collected through qualitative research was analysed using thematic analysis following a process of coding to support the interpretive approach (Boyatzis, 1998). Adopting a qualitative research methodology supported the researcher's epistemological position and ontological views, providing a framework to develop a better understanding of the complex phenomenon of school choice in the lives of Pakistani Muslim parents against a lens of multiculturalism policies in the UK.

4.3 Research paradigm: Ontology and epistemology

A paradigm is a researcher's viewpoint based on various perceptions and assumptions about reality and knowledge (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). A

researcher's paradigm is influenced by their epistemology and ontology, which in turn should support the construction of an authentic methodology (Punch, 2009, p. 16):

What reality is like (ontology), what the relationship is between the researcher and that reality (epistemology), and what method can be used for studying the reality (methodology).

Fraser (2014) denotes that the ontology of interpretivism considers that multiple realities exist in the world and are subjective. During the research process, the realities are shaped by the researcher's values, thoughts, and morals (interpretivist approach), as the researcher's opinion impacts the research process in the interpretivist paradigm. Further, as a social constructionist interpretive researcher, the researcher was interested in understanding and interpreting the lived experience of parental constructions of reality through a case study approach (Ragin & Becker, 1992). The interpretivist ontology is embedded in this study's epistemological position and is rooted in social constructionism (Arghode, 2012). Social constructionism implies that reality is created by the human mind through different perceptions and influences and is subjective in nature (Arthur, Waring, Coe & Hedges, 2012). The use of qualitative research methods of semi-structured interviews aligned with the social constructionism approach (Arghode, 2012).

Realist epistemology, in opposition to social constructionism, ignores the role of the researcher in interpreting the findings that 'the external world exists independently of being thought of or perceived' (Burr, 2003, p. 204). Social constructionism challenges this approach that is embedded in the positivist paradigm (Durkheim, 1938; 1970; Comte, 1973). Durkheim (1938) argued that human beings and social institutions must be explained with the same objectivity level used to analyse natural sciences. In contrast, qualitative research challenges many of the principles of positivistic research and argues that human behaviour is fluid and flexible (Bryman, 2012) and cannot be studied on the principles of natural sciences.

Given the above considerations, the research adopted an interpretivist ontology, social constructionism epistemology, qualitative inquiry and a case study strategy that established a research paradigm.

4.4 Case study as a research strategy

Case study research is a comprehensive research strategy for understanding complex issues or objects and for extending previously unexplored research areas as well as strengthening existing research (Yin, 2009). The ability to use a case study approach for exploring a new area of parental school choice in the British Pakistani Muslim community offered an attractive option. The case study focused on a community and involved a detailed, contextual analysis of conditions influencing choices. Yin (2003, p. 1) clearly articulated why case studies are preferable for research seeking answers to questions on choice, such as in this study:

The preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context.[...] [This] method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events.

Case studies provide a systematic way of examining events, collecting data, analysing information and reporting results. Consequently, the researcher is able to gain a sharpened understanding of how and why events in question happen as they usually do (in this case, parental choice) and important areas for greater focus in future research. Sturman (1994, p. 61) suggests that:

while the techniques used in the investigation may be varied, [...] the distinguishing feature of the case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose collection of traits. As a consequence of this belief, case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalise or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge.

A single case study design involves one context or one case, whereas a multiple case design incorporates more than one case (Yin, 2014). This study explored one context - the school choices of Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. This case study included 33 participants (see Chapter 5, Table 8) to gain an in-depth understanding of their diverse school choice through a multiculturalism policies lens. Further, Jensen and Rodgers (2001, p. 237) propose a typology of case studies that include the following:

- Snapshot case studies: a detailed study of one research entity at one point in time.

- Longitudinal case studies: quantitative or qualitative study of one research entity at multiple points of time.
- Pre-post case studies: the study of one research entity at two points of time separated by a critical event.
- Patchwork case studies: a set of multiple case studies of the same research entity, using a snapshot, longitudinal, or pre-post design.
- Comparative case studies: a set of multiple case studies of multiple research entities for the purpose of cross-unit comparison.

Being an intrinsically descriptive case study, the current study adopts the snapshot approach in creating a single case study of multiple parents focused on school choices. The possibility of using other case study approaches identified by Jensen & Rodgers (2001) was dismissed based on the limited time and resources available to the researcher. Future research would benefit from a longitudinal approach to take into account changes over time in parental choices and influence of multiculturalism policies and other factors on these choices.

Resource and time constraints also affected the sampling strategy (see section 4.5.2), focusing only on British Pakistani Muslim parents whose children are studying in Key Stage 2 in Blackburn. It is the stage when parents start their search for 'good' secondary schools for their children who are aged 8-11 years old (secondary school begins for 11 years old in the UK). Sampling 33 parents whose children were studying across different years in Key Stage 2 allowed parents' moments of choice of diverse schools to be analysed as a whole and as single case study.

The researcher was fully apprised of case study limitations and attempted to mitigate these on the efficacy of the study. The challenges to rigour, producing biased interpretations, failure to generalise, time/effort consuming, and being very lengthy (Yin, 2018) were all known concerns and strategies developed to overcome them. The research design was robust to ensure rigour; the issue of bias was acknowledged through insider-outsider status considerations and attempts to use participants lived experiences to create themes; the size of the case study on generalisability was considered as offering similarities to other similar communities, and the time and length of the research were considered appropriate from a constructionist/interpretivist approach.

Overall, the chosen approach of case study offers access to a holistic view of participants' experiences of educating their children; shedding light on key issues around multiculturalism policies such as culturally sensitive schooling, single-sex education, RE, RSE, language education, and parents' capitalisation of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources, which influence secondary school choices.

4.5 Research methods

This study was conducted from a qualitative methodological position. Qualitative methods involve data collection techniques that use documentary, observational, focus group and communicative techniques in natural settings to understand the participants' social world (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). All research methods, the actual way the data is collected, come with certain advantages and disadvantages, and the role of the researcher is to create a balance among the methods and use them to serve their purpose (Grafton, Lillis, Malina, Norreklit & Selto, 2011), aligning with their own epistemological and ontological views. For this study, two research methods were selected for data collection: documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. Both research methods were appropriate in answering the research questions for the study and feasible in terms of time and resources available to the researcher.

The use of a semi-structured interview technique was appropriate to generate 'thick' data for this study to understand the parental school choice and educational challenges in segregated Blackburn. Semi-structured interviews compensated for the disadvantages of documentary analysis, as the documents are considered to be created without a research agenda (Fitzgerald, 2012) by providing an account of 'lived experiences' (McIntosh & Wright, 2019) and to reproduce the social world of the participants (Denzin, 1996). However, policy documents were also used as they can supplement an interview-based study by uncovering hidden knowledge and unanticipated perspectives of a social phenomenon (Patton, 2002). The policy documents on segregation in northern England and various reports of government and educational policies helped to understand the issues surrounding 'community cohesion' and extending parental school choices in the context of this study.

The research design did not include observation and focus group discussion methods as the researcher felt that parents' lived experiences would be hard to be observed (Palmer & Bolderston, 2006). Focus group discussion would not elicit

individualised experiences (Kitzinger, 2005) because experiences are composed of attitudes, feelings, thoughts, and emotional reactions that are not always directly observable (Wellington, 2015). While focus groups are also considered unsuitable to discuss sensitive topics such as religion, ethnicity, family values and segregation (Acocella, 2012). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) advocated that an interview is an effective instrument to explore the issues such as culture, ethnicity, and religiosity, which are held sensitive by the minorities, which supported the research design of semi-structured interviews.

4.5.1 Documentary analysis

Generally, the documentary analysis technique deals with texts which can be read and interpreted (Neuman, 2000). This technique is most frequently a qualitative and descriptive approach based on interpreting the texts (Howarth, 2000) to gain social and cultural insights (Bryman, 2008). Northey, Tepperman and Russell (2002, p. 92) explained the research method of documentary analysis:

[It] examines and interprets original written records as data about activities and beliefs of a person or group not otherwise available to the researcher. Such documents may include speeches, books, and essays by eminent figures, parliamentary debates, pamphlets, magazines, folk tales and art.

This study used documentary analysis as a data collection tool for three main reasons:

(1) Understanding government's policy position: A review of the government reports and official documents provided insight into the government's policy position and multiculturalism policy developments over the years, culturally sensitive schooling, and Muslim education. It transpired that multiculturalism is not a single coherent policy in Britain; instead, it combines several policies, initiatives, and legislations.

(2) Determining whether policy reflects the wishes of the Muslim community: Documentary analysis helped me identify the contours of official policies and their implementation in the lives of Muslims living in England. It further enabled me to find tensions between multiculturalism policies and the challenges faced by parents in educating their children in Blackburn. These insights highlighted the parents' level of satisfaction with government policies and how they situate themselves in the wider British society.

(3) *A support to the conduct of research and data collection tools:* The documentary analysis offered a better understanding of the multiculturalism policies and helped identify related debates, issues central to Muslim education and formulation of research questions to construct an interview guide.

The researcher examined public documents deriving from government and other organisations. The documents analysed included but were not limited to the Swann Report (1985), The future of multi-ethnic Britain - The Parekh Report (2000); The Cattle Report (2001); and 'Muslims on Education: A position paper' (2004). The recommendation of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life entitled 'Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the common good' (Butler-Sloss, 2015). I also included the reports from Clarke and Woodhead entitled 'A New Settlement: Religion and Belief in Schools' (2015) and 'A New Settlement Revised: Religion and Belief in Schools' (2018), which have reviewed the key areas of settlement between schools and religion.

In addition, legislations related to education, multiculturalism, diversity, pluralism and social integration were analysed, including Race Relations Acts; Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; Equality Act 2010; Education Act 1944 to Education and Skills Act 2008. Ofsted inspection reports were also consulted. Speeches of the political leaders and public figures were also analysed, including a 1966 speech by Roy Jenkins, the then Home Secretary, emphasising the importance of integration 'not as a flattening process of assimilation' (Jenkins, 1967, p. 267). Trevor Philips's speech, Britain is 'sleepwalking to segregation' (The Guardian, 2005); German Chancellor Angela Merkel's 2010 speech about 'multiculturalism has failed' (Presseurop, 2010); David Cameron's speech at Munich Security Conference 2011 setting out his view on radicalisation, multiculturalism and liberalism. These documents provided an understanding of community cohesion debates and how they might inform parents' right to choose schools.

Using documentary analysis can present challenges to the researcher. The first challenge is gaining access to documents due to restricted public domain availability and access (Scott, 1990). However, most documents and records for this study were publicly available and were accessed online. The website of Blackburn Council contained information about the demography of Blackburn, the ethnic and religious profile of population, and details of schools, alongside their Ofsted inspection reports (Blackburn Council, 2019). Moreover, the council was requested to provide a copy of

the BYPAC (Blackburn Young Pakistanis Commission) report (2019), which was made available to the researcher. In addition to traditional printed documents, online documents and information were accessed at the Gov.uk website regarding schools' performances and pupils' educational attainments.

The disadvantages of documentary analysis were explored before adopting the approach and perceived to be outweighed by the benefits to the study demonstrated above (Arthur et al., 2012; Denscombe, 2010). Fundamentally, documentary analysis for this study is used as secondary data (Cohen et al., 2011), and further to say that documents are silent and have no provision for human interaction, which removes any option for reframing content or reviewed for meaning (Hodder, 1998). It is possible to organise, analyse and examine the documents; however, interpreting their original purpose and intent of recording is challenging as they are disconnected from the recorder (Hodder, 1998). The researcher for this study was fully aware that documentary analysis can reflect the researcher's mind, which may lend a particular bias to the text. This can be a disadvantage in the documentary analysis if the potential for bias is not understood from the outset.

The policies, reports, studies and legislations were explored across a range of documents to understand the multiculturalism policy developments, post-war immigration, school segregation and education reform policies since the 1980s. It is clarified that there is a particular pre-requisite for analysing the documents (Northey et al. 2002). The researcher should be familiar with the previous interpretations and meanings ascribed by the interpreters to different texts and the reasons associated with those meanings (Northey et al., 2002). Therefore, the researcher for this study adopted the approach advocated by McCulloch (2004) of consulting additional documents to minimise the bias and maximise the reliability of documentary analysis.

4.5.2 Population and sampling

Sampling helps generate knowledge about the researched group as it is a finite portion of the population of the study (Merriam-Webster, 2003). In qualitative research, a sample can be a set of participants selected from the population to conduct interviews, surveys, participant observations or ethnographic studies (Marshall, 1996). The population of this study was British Muslim parents of Pakistani heritage in Blackburn. The sample drawn was purposive. Purposive sampling involved selecting research participants purposefully to meet the criteria that reflected the representation of the research topic (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). The sample was 33

parents constituted from this population. The sample was drawn from parents from different areas of the city, levels of education, gender, ages, different generations, and modes of migration to have maximum variation in the data (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Accessing a purposive stratified sample can present challenges. Initially, it was proposed to conduct semi-structured interviews of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn whose children were studying in Year 6 (age 10 to 11 years old), the final year of state primary schools. Year 6 children have spent maximum time at the primary stage, and their parents have sufficient depth of engagement with schools, so they are in a position to reflect on those experiences. Therefore, the research design was intended to recruit a sample of 30 participants through Blackburn primary schools. Ofsted inspection reports were used to identify the schools where the majority of pupils were Muslim with Pakistani heritage. 5 state primary schools were selected, with at least 50% of pupils of Pakistani Muslim heritage. Once the schools were chosen, a letter was sent to each school explaining the research with a request to participate in the study. However, the researcher did not receive a response from these schools. Access to the identified schools, which is usually a challenging task at the beginning of the research process (Robson, 2002), was not possible to achieve. Thus, the original plan to contact the parents through state primary schools produced no results, forcing a change in the sample and how they would be accessed.

Based on the researcher's knowledge of the community and a comprehensive review of literature, it was decided that participants would be contacted directly in the community instead of contacting them through state primary schools; and to recruit parents of the children in Key Stage 2 (Year 3 to Year 6 and age from 7 to 11 years old). Interviewing the parents of the children in Key Stage 2 would increase the sample field and help explore varied school preferences across different year groups.

For all studies, a robust sample of participants is crucial to answering the research questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Four main factors were kept in mind when finalising the sampling strategy for this study: the sample size, representativeness of the population, access issues, and a context-specific recruitment plan (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p. 92). Generally, there are no limits on the sample size; however, for an interview-based doctoral study, a sample size of 25 to 30 participants is considered 'normal' (Dworkin, 2012, p. 39), supporting a sample of 33 participants for this study (Baker & Edwards, 2012).

The key determinant for a participant in the sample was being a 'British Pakistani Muslim parent', and a definition was developed to facilitate participant selection. The criteria included:

- 1) The Pakistani heritage residents of Blackburn
- 2) Self-identifying themselves as Muslim
- 3) Having at least one child attending Blackburn primary schools at Key Stage 2
- 4) Representing different socio-economic groups
- 5) Coming from different areas of the city: a geographical spread

A snowball sampling technique (Morgan, 2008), whereby participants told their friends, extended family, relatives, and social networks about the study, was used to recruit participants. However, contacting the Blackburn Muslim community was not an easy task, and the fieldwork to engage participants started by visiting people from different walks of life in Blackburn through mosques, faith-based organisations, local business networks and the Blackburn Council. The desire to have a stratified sample was superseded by the need for access to any participant meeting the main criteria of being a British Pakistani Muslim parent of a child in Key Stage 2.

The first contact by the researcher was with a local business owner. He lived in Blackburn for over forty years and had connections with the British Pakistani business community. He recommended some of his fellow business owners whose children are married and have school-going children. Some of the parents showed their willingness for the interview. This enabled the researcher to start participant recruitment through the Blackburn business community.

Secondly, a manager at a local religious organisation was contacted who introduced the researcher to a prayer leader (*Imam*) of a local mosque. The *Imam* invited the researcher to attend a parents' evening at the mosque. The parents participated in the event whose children were learning *Nazra* Quran at the mosque. It was a useful opportunity as parents from different walks of life attended the event. During this time, the issue of insider-outsider position came to the surface. The staff at the mosque were wearing ethnic dresses (Pakistani and Arabic dresses), and the researcher was wearing western clothing and was singled out as different, with some parents feeling uncomfortable with the researcher's presence (an outsider). However, the researcher attempted to become an insider with potential participants by starting the conversation with the Islamic greetings of *Asslam-o-Alaikum* (may peace be upon you).

Thirdly, the participants were also recruited through the local council. Considering its significant role in community education, the council was contacted and arranged some participants for the interviews. The participants chose to be interviewed on the premises of the local council. No issues were faced during the recruitment and interviewing of the participants through the council.

Purposive sampling executed through snowball sampling provided flexibility in recruiting participants without changing the overall research design of the study (Silverman, 2000). Using purposive sampling justified participants' selection throughout data collection with freedom, which helped in soliciting views from people from diverse walks of life (Silverman, 2000). The participants were requested to speak in English, Urdu, or Punjabi. Some participants were comfortable speaking in Urdu and their mother tongue Punjabi. Purposive sampling also encouraged exploring different ideas, such as recruiting participants from the groups that were not anticipated before, such as secondary migrants, religious communities, business owners, and the parents contacted through the local council.

4.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

This study explored participants' in-depth accounts of school choice in relation to British multiculturalism policies. Although the documentary analysis method was used to provide a contextualised background and as an information-gathering tool, it lacked the flexibility (McCulloch, 2004) required to capture the subtle and complex meaning of Muslim schooling in a multicultural context. The ontological and epistemological assumptions compelled the researcher to adopt a probing stance towards interpretations of participants' world to produce a meaningful theoretical and conceptual account of multiculturalism and Muslim schooling. Exploring the participants' thoughts, feelings and beliefs required to employ the data collection tool of semi-structured interviews.

Interviews are effective and commonly used research methods in qualitative educational research (Gray, 2013). A small-scale study employing semi-structured interviews better understands the research subjects' experiences, values, perceptions and meanings attached to their social world (Wellington, 2000, p. 21). Structured interviews ask a set of standardised questions that are formal and inflexible and would not elicit the required amount of data from the participants (Burgess, 1984) for this study. In contrast, unstructured interviews are like day-to-day conversations in which the researcher uses certain prompts to cover a specific topic

of study (Ibid.), making focus more challenging. This study used semi-structured interviews to support focus while allowing participants to share their lived experiences.

A semi-structured interview is an effective method that allows the researcher to go into depth and discover the participants' social world. It is a flexible way of talking to people, allowing them to express their thoughts, which helps the researcher paint a picture of the social world, the participants believe in (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Semi-structured interviews are superior to questionnaires and surveys (Thomas & Purdon, 1994) for this study, as conversations occur in real-time and allow for clarification, subject to review and further probing on specific questions. The interview guide ensured that maximum information was obtained from the participants within the limited duration of the interview.

4.5.4 Interview guide

To support standardisation in the focus of the data collected from the interviews, an interview guide was prepared based on a review of literature around multiculturalism, residential segregation, Muslim migration, educational challenges for Muslims, religious and cultural identity, legislations, and different studies on minority communities in England. The documentary analysis helped identify the study's research questions and design the interview guide to answer these questions (see Chapter 2, section 2.3). The interview guide was structured to include specific to general questions. For example, the questions relating to participants' background, generation, school choice, and culturally sensitive schooling were asked first. The general questions of identity, mixing and experiences of living in multicultural Blackburn were asked later. The questions were asked in a flexible way without following a strict pattern. This technique provided the participants with a choice to frame their responses with freedom and move back and forth between their answers.

The researcher conducted three pilot interviews to test the guide and uncover any issues that might occur during the semi-structured interviews, such as participant understanding of the questions (Robson, 2011). Piloting was conducted with great care, with increased attention to the research questions and consideration of amendments to the guide in the light of participants' responses (Gillham, 2000). It was ensured that the questions were correctly worded (understood in the same way by all participants) and relevant to the study (Cohen et al., 2011). The questions regarding criteria for a good school, teaching of RSE and ethnic segregation in

Blackburn proved interesting and appropriate to the study research questions. However, the questions regarding dance classes, music education and dress of female students during sports were dropped. While relevant to the pupils' experiences at school, these questions were not the focus of this study. The piloting helped re-examine participants' assumptions about faith and culture and the implicit models of culturally sensitive schooling that the participants adhered to.

The method of semi-structured interviews has certain disadvantages, but these were acknowledged and mitigated for the study (using approaches suggested by Denscombe, 2014; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013); Robson, 2011; Gray, 2004; Cohen et al., 2011). The main disadvantage is that it follows a non-standardised pattern, limiting the number of opinions collected, and the researcher may face issues in finding answers to the research questions (Denscombe, 2007). However, Verma and Mallick (1999, p. 128) argue that these disadvantages are manageable for the following reasons:

A skilled, experienced, and practised interviewer can search responses and investigate feelings, motives, experiences, and attitudes which no other exploratory technique can reach.

The interview questions were simple and clear, with positive language, and conducted in a way that guided the participant to provide in-depth responses while respecting religious and cultural etiquette. Participants were put at ease at the start of the interview by the researcher through a brief conversation sharing the researcher's experience as a doctoral student and the purpose of the research. Participants were then asked to reflect on their experiences of migration to England, where they lived initially, and on their early employment and settlement issues. Afterwards, they were invited to share their thoughts on educational opportunities in England and their preferred schools in Blackburn. This informal talk helped the researcher develop rapport with participants (Morgan, 2008).

Additionally, the researcher presented themselves as an 'insider' as a Pakistani Muslim to develop an 'enhanced rapport' with respondents (Hockey, 1993, p. 119). However, during the interviews, depending on the situation, they assumed the role of an 'outsider' to create distance if needed to elicit the most 'honest' (not what another person from their religion or culture might want to hear) response from the

participants. The insider-outsider approach helped to obtain maximum viewpoints and in-depth perspectives from the participants.

A part of rapport building was to negotiate the consent form and participant information sheet. No participants raised any objection to the audio recording of the interview. During the introduction part and audio-recording, the confidentiality of the participants was ensured. Names of participants were not recorded. Audio recording began after the introduction of the participant. All the participants appeared comfortable during the interviews. Participants were informed that they could leave the interview at any stage if they wished to. However, no participant left the interview, and all 33 interviews were conducted and recorded smoothly. These interviewing techniques were helpful in obtaining in-depth answers to the research questions.

4.5.5. Interview languages

Mainly the English language was employed to conduct semi-structured interviews with participants for this study. However, the medium of Urdu (the national language of Pakistan) and Punjabi (the major regional language of Pakistan) was also adopted for the convenience of participants. As a Pakistani and a resident of Punjab province, the researcher could understand and communicate fluently in these languages. The technique of conducting interviews in multiple languages proved beneficial as some participants could not express their feelings clearly in English (Mary & Charlotte, 1998). The researcher transcribed all the interviews, observing the 'University's Transcription Guidelines' to keep the data safe, such as: transcribing through headphones to protect the participants' anonymity, and the audio files were saved on an encrypted server.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, with long pauses and false alerts such as 'umms' and 'ahhs'. The transcripts were full of messy words, and even the waves of laughter were not missed. It helped to engage with the language and participants' colloquialism (Arunasalam, 2019). The verbal cues helped to measure the participants' level of comfort or unease during the interviews and gain knowledge about local etiquette. Interestingly, the researcher became familiar with Lanky (the Lancashire English dialect) and the participants' peculiar way of expressing themselves in Lanky dialect (Dembry, 2011; Dutton, 1978). The transcription process helped to familiarise the researcher with the views, perceptions, experiences and social world of participants. During transcription, a notepad was used to note down the emerging themes to be used later during data analysis. The consolidation of

themes, therefore, started during the transcription, which helped in the data analysis and discussion on findings of the study.

4.6 Positionality: Insider-outsider status

The researcher's positionality of being an insider-outsider has significant implications for the data collection and data analysis in this study. The insider-outsider position of a researcher is a much-debated issue, with as many arguments as possible favouring and standing against it (Serrant-Green, 2002). Angrosino (2005, p. 734) argued that the role of a qualitative researcher is often perceived in relation to contextual identities during the conduct of research. Gair (2012, p. 137) noted that the researcher's position is determined by locating the degree of their belongingness to the researched group. An insider researcher generally possesses an intimate knowledge of the study sample (Griffith, 1998). Merton (1972, p. 21) adopted an operational conception of the insider-outsider position of a researcher. He considered outsiders as 'the non-members' and, in comparison, the insiders as members, having a 'specified social status' within the group.

Banks (1998) developed a typology of researchers, building on Merton's conception, that conceptualised the position of a researcher in terms of closeness or being distanced from the community being studied (as cited in Chavez, 2008). Banks (1998) classified the researcher's insider-outsider position into four types:

- a. Indigenous insider
- b. Indigenous outsider
- c. External insider
- d. External outsider

According to these categories, the indigenous insider researcher is closest to the participants as they are socialised in the same community. However, external outsiders are the most distant as they are socialised outside the community. This conceptualization of insider-outsider positionality is based on intellectual, cultural, and social distance of the researcher from the indigenous community. According to (Banks, 1998, p. 8), the insider-outsider position is not fixed. Generally, it does not give an advantage to the researcher. A researcher socialised inside the researched group can still be considered an 'outsider'. Similarly, an outsider researcher can be an 'insider' in case they share the culture, values, and heritage of the group being researched (Banks, 1998).

Against the backdrop of being an insider-outsider, the researcher faced numerous challenges during this study that being able to change from insider to outsider supported, thereby challenging Banks (1998) statement that there appeared to be little advantage in being an insider-outsider researcher. The researcher contacted the Blackburn Pakistani Muslims with the starting point of being a Pakistani and a Muslim. The commonality with the participants of being Pakistani and a Muslim allowed them to gain access that might otherwise be closed to an 'outsider' researcher in this field (Kanuha, 2000). The researcher shared their Pakistani identity, Urdu/Punjabi languages, Islamic faith, and heritage base with the participants of this study (Asselin, 2003) and gender (male) in most cases. The researcher did come from working in the Pakistani government's department of school education administering education reform activities and was familiar with the parental anxieties about school choice amongst the diverse schooling options in Pakistan.

Moreover, the researcher knew many overseas Pakistani families in the UK who faced dilemmas of religious education and school choices for their children. Due to these assumptions, the researcher considered themselves an insider, as enunciated by Merton (1972), and was advantaged by this in terms of access to the population and participant engagement. The researcher used the insider-outsider status to gain access to participants and achieve a required level of familiarity as well as the distance from them (Burns, Fenwick, Schmied and Sheehan, 2012).

However, the status of an 'insider' does not come without its inherent challenges and the researcher for the study, while sharing characteristics with the population, was also different to them. The researcher was fully aware of these differences and the potential limitation of the information on the population group and participants. The researcher would, therefore, not claim that their 'insider' status was an intimate relationship with the group (Hockey, 1993). As Innes (2009) stated, being a member of the study sample does not mean that a researcher is an insider. Sometimes, an insider may also need more time and effort to establish a symbolic interaction to look credible. The researcher found that the perceived status of being an 'insider' made participants anxious during interviewing interaction (Innes, 2009).

The researcher overcame the anxiety associated with being an 'insider' when it was realised that the insider-outsider positions are fluid and interchangeable and that this is acceptable to support the research outcomes. The fast-changing complexion of

insider-outsider positions involves the states of 'insiderness' or 'outsiderness' and does not possess a static status (Naples, 1996, p. 48). Therefore, during this study, the insider-outsider position was not fixed but was subject to change and multi-dimensional. On some occasions, the researcher considered themselves (as participants did) an outsider because they were not British Pakistani and insiders. Hence, the researcher made good use of both positions simultaneously, as the 'researchers cannot escape being both insiders and outsiders' during a research process (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013, p. 254).

The researcher was able to use their insider status to situate themselves within the interview context (Dodgson, 2019). This insider approach challenges the work of Limerick, Burgess-Limerick and Grace (1996), who argued that equal relationships are not possible in research as the researcher controls the interview schedule, presentation of questions, data collection and interpretation of findings. The researcher's approach to semi-structured interviews for this study acknowledged the relationship between the participants and the researcher as an unequal relationship. Still, it recognised the importance of establishing rapport with participants (Limerick et al., 1996) in creating a relationship of shared experience (being Pakistani and Muslim). The issue of power held by the researcher is important to be recognised during interviews (Seidman, 2006, p. 99):

To negotiate the variable in developing an equitable interviewing relationship, the interviewer must be acutely aware of his or her own experience with them as well as sensitive to the way the issue may be affecting the participants.

The researcher was fully aware of any power differential, particularly as the researcher had declared previously working for the Pakistani government. In this way, some participants might assume the current research was in the researcher's interest or that the researcher would share their experiences with the UK government and bring some backlash to the Muslim community already living under suspicion in England (Awan, 2014). Assuming an insider status at the start of the interview relaxed any participant anxiety and supported their trust in the confidentiality and anonymity of the process.

While recognising the complexity of the positionality, the researcher's perception of their insider-outsider status was notably subjective and flexible, with their positions

changing as the research progressed. The researcher's perspective about England-born Pakistani participants changed. Initially, it was thought that it might not be possible to recruit female participants, as in Pakistani culture, men and women are not generally allowed to mix freely and talk for extended periods of time. However, I was able to recruit 11 female participants who were confident and progressive, giving their opinions about issues such as RSE and single-sex schooling.

The researcher also expected England-born Pakistanis to be less religious than those born in Pakistan. This was based on the assumption that Pakistan is an Islamic country while England is a secular country. However, a majority of England-born Pakistanis showed their allegiance to religion and wished to send their children to Muslim schools. Therefore, most of the research preconceptions about British Pakistan Muslim parents were not precise, which enabled the researcher to be completely open to the participants' lived experiences. It also demonstrated the 'outsiderness' element of the researcher to the participant group from the outset and enabled deep reflection on 'insiderness' (as explored above).

The researcher gained a deep understanding of the educational issues of the British Pakistani Muslim Parents living in Northern England through the research design. This study also provided some key ideas that helped the researcher examine their personal beliefs, professional values, and guidelines for possible changes to future educational practice. Qualitative research is a learning process for both researcher and participants, as the inquiry involves deep thinking about the phenomena being studied. The researcher was able, thanks to the participants, to review their own views on multiculturalism and school choice within the UK and suggest recommendations for improvements to educational choices for the Muslim minority in Northern England.

4.7 Reflexivity

An interpretive researcher is an inevitable part of the data collection process, and when they seek to explore their perspective and role during data generation and interpretation, this process is called reflexivity (Mason, 2002). Nightingale and Cromby (1999, p. 228) discussed the requirements of reflexivity for a qualitative researcher as follows:

Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an

acknowledgement of the impossibility of remaining outside of one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity, then, urges us to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research.

From the outset of this PhD study, the researcher reflected on their research by noting down, reading and re-reading the proceedings of every meeting with supervisors, which helped in developing a connection with the research and in the construction of its meaning. As Hughes (1997) recommended, the researcher kept a research diary to record important ideas about their research during the study. The reflective (and emerging reflexive) research diary helped to frame initial research questions and theorise the research study. This process embedded a constant process of reflection and remained helpful at every stage of the research process (Russell & Kelly, 2002).

Reflections over interview transcriptions were essential in evolving reflexive practice. As soon as an interview was transcribed, a transcript was forwarded to the participants to review and confirm their expressed thoughts to ensure that the data was credible qualitative data through verification (Pool, 2017). Different agencies can be used for data verification, such as ethics committees, professional organisations, peers, and participants. The interview transcripts were forwarded to all 33 participants with the request to review the contents and verify the transcript. In response, 2 participants responded with thanks, and all other participants did not reply. This said, the option was presented to them to change their voice if desired.

Qualitative research is considered to have context; the research takes place at a particular time between two or more people at a specific place (Dodgson, 2019). A researcher should clearly describe the contextual relationship between the participants and themselves, which increases the credibility of the research. The researcher ensured that they listened carefully to what participants said during the interviews, summarising comments given in order to clarify meaning and understanding of meaning. Questions were repeated and rephrased for participants to support clarity of understanding, and all participants responded to the questions with the same sense of what was being asked. This technique was particularly helpful in understanding the meanings participants attached to different contexts such as 'mixing', 'mixed school', 'good school', 'good education' and 'lost children'.

Etherington (2004, p. 36) has rightly argued that reflexivity is more than a sense of self-awareness as:

[It] creates a dynamic process of interaction within and between ourselves, and our participants, and the data that inform decisions, actions and interpretations at all stages of research.

Therefore, reflexivity was embedded into this qualitative research to enable careful exploration of the phenomena under study and consider both researcher and participant assumptions and behaviour as they impacted every stage of this study (Giddens, 1984).

4.8 Thematic analysis (TA)

The qualitative data was analysed using a TA approach. The TA method is used for identifying, analysing, and reporting a wide range of themes in the collected data (Miller, 2018, Braun & Clarke, 2012). TA is a flexible data analysis approach compatible with various research designs (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). TA was considered the most appropriate analysis method for the primary data as it supported the qualitative research paradigms (Miller, 2018). There are other qualitative analysis approaches that are used to analyse qualitative data, such as narrative analysis, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis, as suggested by Robson (2011), which the researcher considered but found to be less appropriate in answering the research questions.

The TA approach is generally associated with the analysis of stories. It extracts data from the stories narrated in a first-person mode. Cullum-Swan and Manning (1994) explained that the 'narrative analysis typically takes the perspective of the teller, rather than that of society, and with various degrees of connection to actual events of persons'. Resultantly, the data analysis is performed in the form of a story.

Conversation analysis was considered for this study to have some inherent issues. It often involves incomplete stories with broken narratives (Ochs & Capps, 2001). The main reason being the focus of conversation analysis is how the participants construct reality. It does not focus on the nature and actual reasons behind perceptions about reality (Schegloff, 1999, p. 413), which was sought in this research design. Critical discourse analysis is a form of narrative analysis. It mainly deals with the text of the story told, aiming to examine the use of words, tone, pitch and pauses

chosen by the participants (Fairclough, 2013). The data analysis lens used in the narrative analysis, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis focus on how different narratives and stories are constructed. The resulting perceptions and 'reality' of the experiences of the participants are not taken into account (Weiss & Wodak, 2007) and were needed for this study.

TA supported the researcher in understanding an individual's opinions and experiences through the synthesis of their narratives to collect an evidence base for findings (Thorne, 2009). Therefore, TA was adopted to manage and analyse the interview transcripts (Robson, 2011), using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six stages of TA as a guiding principle, as illustrated in Table 8. However, transforming the data into findings was complex, and no uniform formula existed for qualitative data analysis (Patton, 2002, p. 32). The researcher has to work hard to find connections and how different concepts are interrelated. In this way, the refinement of the fluid data took place (Stronach, 2011). In this regard, the TA helped to categorise the data into various themes, and the parental opinions were counted (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7 for details). The technique of 'quantitizing' the parental views further refined the fluid data that informed the later discussion around the 'majority' and 'minority' of parental opinions (see Chapter 8).

4.9 'Quantitizing' the qualitative data

Qualitative researchers frequently use numbers or semi-quantification such as 'majority', 'minority', 'some', 'many' or 'most' when writing their data (Bauer & Gaskell, 2000). This is referred to by Crandell, Voils and Sandelowski (2011) as the 'quantitizing approach'. The numerical suggestions in qualitative research have been controversial among research methodologists. Prominent qualitative researchers such as Becker (1970), Hammersley (2000), and Miles and Huberman (1984) have supported the inclusion of numerical data in qualitative research practices and data reporting. Becker (1970) called quantitative data in qualitative research 'quasi-statistics', as it was based on simple counts of things such as participant number or phenomena to make statements such as 'majority', 'minority', 'some', 'usually', or 'most'. However, others have resisted such usage to avoid numbers leading to the inference (by either the researcher or the readers) of greater generality for the conclusions than is justified in a specific context (Neale, Miller & West, 2014).

Weiss (1994) provided a cogent argument that there are situations in which the use of numbers in reporting frequencies and proportions is inappropriate; however, he stated (p. 220):

Notwithstanding these concerns, sample numbers or proportions should probably be reported when an issue is central to a study.

Other qualitative researchers have argued that numbers cannot replace the actual description of evidence but can provide supplementary support to draw conclusions (Maxwell, 2010). In this regard, Sandelowski (2001) advised that the qualitative researchers have several options; they can use actual numbers in place of pronouns denoting vague quantity, or they can choose to use pronouns indicating a vague quantity such as 'a few', 'some' or 'many', but first they should advise readers what their pronouns denoting vague quantity will mean. A good rule is that if a total sample involves around 25 cases (e.g., persons, families, organizations), it is an appropriate number to get sufficient data for qualitative research. Following Sandelowski's (2001) advice, this research used the actual number of participants in reporting the opinions of the 33 participants.

Using numbers is a legitimate and valuable strategy for qualitative researchers when it is used to complement an overall process orientation of the research (Crandell et al., 2011). The inclusion of numbers does not inherently make the research a mixed-method study (Denscombe, 2008). Therefore, during data analysis, the researcher gave quantitative numbers instead of 'vague quantifiers' such as 'few', 'some', 'several' or 'many'. The use of numbers improved the transparency of data analysis, gave precision to participant statements, and enabled themes in the data to emerge with clarity. Therefore, during this study, the 'quantitizing' technique helped conduct the coding process and stages involved in the data analysis with precision. It increased the meanings of key findings by providing a focus on the emerging themes from the simple counts of participant statements.

4.10 Coding framework

The thematic analysis involved categorising the data into emerging themes and sub-themes and then coding them for analysis purposes (Boyatzis, 1998). The interview transcriptions were read several times to familiarise the researcher with the participants' responses. It was the starting point for preliminary coding. The data was processed through manual coding with great care so that a single detail (such as 'lost

children' and the concept of 'respect') was not lost. Codes were developed and revisited to formulate categories; thus, the coding process became an essential part of the TA approach.

The conduct of coding framework in relation to the TA approach remained helpful. Initially, the coding paradigm included three broad thematic codes: multiculturalism, culturally sensitive schooling, and moments of school choice. These codes reflected the major theoretical strands in the interview transcripts. Further probing resulted in the production of broad codes and numerous sub-codes, adding to the 'messiness' and 'fluidity' of data (Boyatzis, 1998, pp. 7-9). The inter-relationships among codes then led to the creation of a new series of codes, paving the way for the generation of 'thick' descriptions for further analysis. For example, the codes such as home-mosque-school linkages, multicultural competence, social networks, single-sex schooling, and supplementary education emerged from the cross-code relationships.

Table 8: Phases of thematic analysis

Phase	Description	Process
1	Researcher familiarises with data	Transcribe the data, read and re-read the data, and note down the initial ideas.
2	Generate initial codes	Code the interesting features in the data systematically across the whole data set and classify the data relevant to each code.
3	Search for themes	Classify codes into potential themes. Collate the data relevant to each potential theme and sub-theme.
4	Review the emerged themes	Check that the themes are relevant to the coded extracts. Create a thematic 'map' of the entire data set for analysis.
5	Define and name the themes	Define the particular features of each theme to organise a story of the whole analysis. Generate definitions and names for each theme
6	Write the report	Choose appropriate extracts from data, place them against each code, and collate relevant literature. Produce a scholarly report for further analysis and discussions of the study's findings.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87).

The themes and sub-themes in the data were summarised, described, and analysed, and the relationship between various themes was identified through manual coding. Lacey and Luff (2007) described two types of manual coding techniques: 1. cutting and pasting, and 2. colour coding. The researcher preferred cutting and pasting over

colour coding technique. The colour coding technique uses different coloured highlighter pens. Separate colours are applied to each category of theme or code. This technique is useful as a code becomes easily recognisable, and the text does not need to be cut and pasted to some other place. However, there is a limited number of colours available in the market. Moreover, the technique may not be useful where a complex category of themes needs to be coloured in more than one colour. Confusions may occur, and colour coding technique can compromise the quality of data analysis.

Instead, the researcher used the 'cutting and pasting' technique in an electronic manner and made extra copies of interview transcripts. The relevant words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs were cut electronically and pasted into a separate computer file during the initial coding. Three categories of major themes were identified, and the relevant text material was pasted under these broad categories. Afterwards, further sub-themes were carved under one main theme. For example, under the theme of school choice, the texts related to primary school choice and secondary school choice were grouped under separate sub-themes. Cross-referencing was also made in case a particular text relates to more than one theme or sub-theme. This process required a significant organisation as each text needs to be pasted under the relevant sub-themes and should be traceable back to its context.

Further, if a text received two or more codes, several copies need to be made to be placed under several themes or sub-themes (for example, out of the sub-theme of secondary school choice, the sub-codes such as community schools, Church of England, 'mixed', Asian majority and Muslim schools emerged). The coding process employing 'cutting and pasting' helped refine the emerged themes out of the fluid raw data (see Appendix H on coding framework for details). In this study, the data analysis was broadly organised through research questions. This stance is supported by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 468) as:

This was a useful way of organising data, as it drew together all the relevant data for the exact issue of concern to the researcher and preserved the coherence of material.

The TA approach ensured the constant interaction with data for interpretation and produced empirical findings. The findings are reported directly from the data collected for the research after a robust thematic analysis.

4.11 Conclusion

The research design for this study provided an opportunity to explore the insider-outsider status of the researcher and its impact on methodology, field research, and the decisions around research design and adjustment. The ontological and epistemological foundations of the researcher are qualitative through engagement with a social constructionist and interpretivist approach. Co-construction of meanings of research in the research process, both from participants and the researcher, was recognised from the very outset (Attia & Edge, 2017). The insider-outsider position was key to understanding the researched group and data collection through an appropriately robust qualitative research design. An in-depth qualitative study remained the best choice to realise the study's aims and objectives and answer the research questions (Walford, 2001). The positivist tradition was considered to have inherent limitations in exploring the subjects of religion, mixing, ethnicity, culture, choice and educational challenges faced by minority communities.

The decision to use a case study approach for the study was considered appropriate and supported by the research methods of documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews. It helped the researcher to bring the unique educational challenges faced by the participants in the segregated setting of Blackburn, North of England. The importance of reflexivity and power relations during semi-structured interviews were acknowledged to support the agency of participants and the focus on validity in the findings. The conduct of interviews in languages other than English supported participants' engagement. Data analysis involved thematic analysis, a 'quantitizing' technique and a coding framework to elicit a series of categories, themes, sub-themes, codes, and sub-codes to frame the data analysis out of the fluid raw data, as shown in Table 8.

Overall, the qualitative research methodology was successful in offering a deep insight into British Pakistani Muslim parental opinions about school choice and experiences of educating their children in a segregated northern town such as Blackburn. The chapters that follow will be an opportunity to discuss the findings from this study.

Chapter 5: Findings - Multiculturalism

5.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses and reflects on one of the key themes that emerged from the empirical findings: the Muslim parents' constructions of and responses to multiculturalism. The focus of this chapter is a comparison between 17 parents who chose Asian-majority schools, and the 16 parents who chose mixed schools. A key finding is around what mixing means, and how it is different from the policy and scholarly literature on multiculturalism. Various meanings and 'limits' of mixing are also discussed in the backdrop of diversity and living with difference. The participants consider multiculturalism as mixing with the non-faith communities as well as the non-Pakistani Asian community (pre-dominantly Gujarati Muslims).

Multiculturalism recognises a pluralistic society by accommodating differences based on diverse beliefs, ethnicities, and cultures. It aims to increase social recognition and equality of racial and ethnic minorities by decreasing inequalities (Thomas et al., 2018). However, for the participants, multiculturalism is day-to-day mixing with Muslim and non-Muslim communities. As far as the schooling of Muslim children is concerned, some parents restrict their children's interaction with other communities outside of the schools, and most of the mixing takes place within the school premises. A key finding of the study highlights the way that supplementary schools frame the life world of Muslim parents (such as compulsory school, extra-curricular activities, supplementary school, homework, and then going to sleep to get early in the morning for school again). This hectic routine affects the connectedness to the family as well as social 'mixing'.

The chapter begins with the tabular picture of the demographics, school choice and supplementary school choices of 33 participants. Then the chapter summarises the wider social and religious environment in Blackburn and goes on to address the relationship between multicultural mixing and school choice. Then the generational aspects of the multicultural mixing of Muslims with other communities and to what extent parents allow their children to mix, are discussed. It explores the nuances of mixing within the school premises and the wider society. The discussion explores how the inter-related aspects of everyday social and religious life, the Islamic environment, mixed schooling, and the Islamic notion of 'respect' play a role in the mixing of the Muslim community with other communities. The 'mixed' identities of Muslim parents and children with relevance to the choice of diverse schools are also

dilated upon. Lastly, this chapter attempts to redefine multiculturalism by tracing the participants' satisfaction with the government in support of the preservation of their religious and cultural identity in schools and multi-faith England.

5.2 Demographics of study participants

In this case study, the sample of 33 participants reflected a wide array of perspectives among the Muslim population in Blackburn. They were contacted through the Blackburn business community, a religious organisation, and the local council. Of the 33 participants, 13 were the first generation, 19 were the second generation, and 1 participant was a third-generation resident of Blackburn. The 5 participants who were 'secondary migrants' from Europe were included in the first-generation category. The 33 participants included 21 males, 11 females and 1 couple. The majority of the interviews (32) were with individual parents; however, one interview was conducted with both parents present (Parent14).

This sample expressed diverse opinions about mixing while preserving their religious and cultural identities in multicultural England. By highlighting the differences between participants' self-report and official or scholarly approaches to multiculturalism, this study showed that qualitative research has the potential to unpack the issues which might not be explored with quantitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). A much fuller, tabular picture of the participants, both in terms of their own demographics and backgrounds and their school choices and after-school (evening supplementary school) choices are given in Table 9 so that the later discussion on the findings of the study (such as mixing, culturally sensitive schooling and moments of choice, typology of choosers) can be better understood.

Table 9: Summary of Participants' views on school and after-school choices

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 1	F	Store worker	GCSE (UK)	Second	Three (Year 3, Year 4 & Year 5)	Community primary school	Asian-majority school, Ofsted rating	Muslim school	Good results, Ofsted rating	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect
Parent 2	M	Ex-Councillor	10 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 3 & Year 6)	Community primary school	Mixed school; having Asian and white British children	No-religion state school	Good results	Pakistani supplementary school	Same religious sect
Parent 3	F	Community worker	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Second	Two (Year 6 & Year 1)	Church of England Primary School	Close to home, Ofsted rating	Muslim school	Good results	Pakistani supplementary school	Good facilities for <i>hifz</i> (memorisation of Quran) Same religious sect
Parent 4	M	Quranic teacher	12 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 1)	Muslim primary school	Religious environment	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	The parent is a Quran teacher at the same mosque/supplementary school
Parent 5	F	Social Activist	Master's degree (UK)	Second	Two (Year 4 & Year 5)	Community primary school	Siblings	No-religion state school	Siblings, the convenience of distance, good results	Pakistani supplementary school	Same religious sect
Parent 6	F	Trainee Teacher	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Third	One (Year 3)	Community primary school	Mother herself attended the school, Ofsted rating	Catholic school	Less Asian and more white British children, discipline	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect
Parent 7	M	Self-employed	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 3)	Community primary school	Close to home, Ofsted rating	Muslim school	Good results	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect. Friends and family attend the same supplementary school

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 8	M	Taxi driver	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 3)	Church of England primary school	Close to home	Church of England school	The convenience of distance, siblings, good results	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect. It is a family tradition to attend this supplementary school
Parent 9	M	Factory worker	10 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 4)	Church of England primary school	Close to home, siblings and cousins attend the same school	No-religion state school	Good results, sibling (eldest child attended the same school),	Pakistani supplementary school	The children are shifted from other sect's supplementary school to that of the parents' sect. One child is also doing <i>hifz</i>
Parent 10	M	Restaurant owner	12 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 5)	Community primary school	Mixed; Asian and white British children	No-religion state school	Mixed community school	Pakistani supplementary school established by an Islamic organization	Same religious sect and the parent also attend the mosque attached to the supplementary school for daily prayers
Parent 11	M	NHS worker	14 years of education (Pak)	Second	Two (Year 4 & Year 6)	Muslim primary school	Religious environment	Muslim school	Religious environment	Gujarati Indian supplementary school was established by an Islamic school of the Wahabi sect which is not the sect of parents	To get admission to an Indian Islamic school to attain good results
Parent 12	M	Self-employed	Bachelor's degree (UK)	First	One (Year 6)	Muslim primary school	Religious environment	Muslim school	Religious environment	Gujarati Indian supplementary school	To get admission to an Indian Islamic school to attain good results

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 13	M	Self-employed	12 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 3 & Year 5)	Church of England primary school	Asian Muslim community, siblings	No-religion state school	Good results, Siblings (his two daughters also studied in the same school)	The parents have got the services of a Quran Teacher who teaches their children at home	The different mosques impart different philosophies of religion. The parent wants to teach his children the true spirit of Islam through a dedicated teacher
Parent 14	Couple	Husband is a Solicitor & wife is self-employed	Master's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 4)	Church of England primary school	Religious environment	Church of England school	Religious environment, mixed community school, interaction with other communities, especially white British	The parents send their daughter to a supplementary school based in the local community centre.	The teaching methods are not traditional. The teaching aims to embed the love for religion and the love of the Prophet of Islam. The teacher is a religious scholar who got religious education in the Middle East
Parent 15	M	Shopkeeper	14 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 3)	Community primary school	Close to home	Muslim school	Good results, religious environment	Gujarati Indian supplementary school	Convenience: close to home as the mother can do pick and drop, and the father does not have to close his business
Parent 16	F	Housewife	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 5)	Church of England primary school	Close to home	No-religion state school	Good results	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and English-speaking Britain-born Quran teachers. Children learn religion with fun and activities

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 17	M	Islamic studies teacher	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 2)	Muslim primary school	Religious environment	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and the Quran teachers whose first language is English
Parent 18	F	Housewife	5 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 3 & Year 5)	Church of England primary school	Asian Muslim community, siblings	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	Convenience of distance
Parent 19	M	Restaurant owner	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 6)	Church of England primary school	Mixed community school	Church of England school	Good results	Pakistani Islamic study centre	The convenience of distance and all children attend the same supplementary school.
Parent 20	M	Quranic teacher	Master's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 4)	Church of England school	Close to home	Muslim school	Siblings, single-sex, religious environment, good results	A stand-alone Islamic study centre established by the parent himself	The parent himself teaches his children at the study centre
Parent 21	F	Housewife	GCSE (UK)	Second	Two (Year 6 & Year 3)	Community primary school	Mother attended the same school	Muslim school	Religious environment	Gujarati Indian supplementary school	The mother herself attended the same supplementary school and knew the teachers. Attending this supplementary can earn her daughter a place in the Indian-administered good, quality Islamic school
Parent 22	M	Self-employed	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 6)	Church of England primary school	Religious environment, Asian Muslim community, siblings	Church of England school	Religious environment, discipline, good results	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 23	F	Housewife	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 5)	Community primary school	Siblings	No-religion state school	Ofsted rating, good results, siblings	Pakistani supplementary school	This supplementary school is at a distance. The parents have dispensed with the local supplementary schools in order to send their children to good quality school
Parent 24	F	Housewife	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 4)	Church of England primary school	Mixed community school	No-religion state school	Mixed community school	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect
Parent 25	M	Council Officer	Master's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 6)	Community primary School	Ofsted rating/diverse community	Muslim school	Single-sex, religious environment, friends attend the same school	Pakistani supplementary school	It is one of the oldest supplementary schools in Blackburn. The father attended the same supplementary school as all the children. It is a continuation of family tradition
Parent 26	M	Self-employed	GCSE (UK)	Second	One (Year 4)	Community primary school	Close to home, sibling	No-religion state school	Siblings	Pakistani supplementary school	The whole family and the extended family have attended this supplementary school. It is a continuation of family tradition
Parent 27	M	Teacher at Islamic school	Master's degree (UK)	Second	One (Year 3)	Muslim Primary School	Islamic environment	Muslim school	Islamic education, single-sex, siblings	Gujarati Indian supplementary school	Attending this supplementary can earn his children a place in Gujarati Muslim school

Code	Gender	Employment status	Qualification (UK/Pak)	Generation	No. of children in Key Stage 2	Primary school choice	Reasons for choice	Secondary school choice	Reasons for choice	Supplementary school choice	Reasons for choice
Parent 28	M	Self-employed	Bachelor's degree (UK)	Second	Two (Year 5 & Year 3)	Church of England primary school	Close to home, the parent and his cousin attended the same school	Muslim school	Single-sex, Islamic environment, good results	Pakistani supplementary school	The same religious sect, and it is a family tradition to attend this supplementary school
Parent 29	F	Housewife	5 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 5 & Year 6)	Church of England primary school	Close to home	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect
Parent 30	F	Housewife	10 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 5)	Church of England primary school	Close to home	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect
Parent 31	M	Takeaway worker	5 years of education (Pak)	First	One (Year 6)	Church of England primary school	Close to home, good results, friends attending the same school	No-religion state school	Siblings	Gujarati Indian supplementary school	The child was struggling at the Pakistani mosque. Then the father admitted the child to a good quality Indian mosque (of a different sect)
Parent 32	M	Factory worker	14 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 3 & Year 6)	Community primary school	Close to home	Muslim school	Religious environment	Home Quran teacher	The child gets the personal attention of the teacher, which is not possible at the mosque. No need to pick and drop.
Parent 33	M	Self-employed	12 years of education (Pak)	First	Two (Year 4 & Year 5)	Community primary school	Close to home	Muslim school	Religious environment	Pakistani supplementary school	The convenience of distance and same religious sect

5.3 Multicultural mixing and school choice

Blackburn has a sizeable Muslim population. According to 2011 Census, 27.0% described themselves as Muslims. The study participants preferred to live in Muslim concentration areas of Blackburn, and their desire was centred around two reasons: a. safety in numbers, and b. prevalence of the religious environment (Byrne & De Tona, 2014). All 33 participants were satisfied with the social and religious environment in the town. Although Pakistani Muslims lived in a segregated multi-faith northern England, they felt at 'home' in Blackburn because they were surrounded by members of their own community. The following remarks from the participants were representative of the availability of mosques and the religious environment in Blackburn:

Blackburn is a very small town where the minority is the majority, especially in our area, especially where we live, we are a minority in the country, but in the town, we are the majority, okay, maybe not in the town but maybe in the area we are a majority. [Parent28]

...there are a number of mosques around my house. If you go around the local area, you can find a mosque after every ten yards. [Parent9]

I moved in Blackburn two years ago from a town in Yorkshire. I used to live there, and I moved here because we wanted to send our children to Islamic school, and in Blackburn, we have the first school established by an Islamic movement organisation. [Parent4]

Parental perceptions associated their living preference with Blackburn, where the Muslim minority was in the majority. They felt themselves 'safer' in Blackburn because of its small size. The Muslims from Lancashire, Yorkshire and neighbouring cities migrated to Blackburn because of its Islamic environment. The Islamic environment was due to the availability of mosques, Muslim schools, faith-based organisations, and social networks (Musharraf & Nabeel, 2015). The participants wanted to preserve and propagate their religious and cultural values. They preferred to live in Muslim majority neighbourhoods as 'encapsulated' communities (Bhatti, 1999, p. 6). That England was the ultimate destination for the provision of Islamic education for children was acknowledged in the interviews, for example:

I asked one of my friends to move to Blackburn, and she accepted my request...she came here and saw the Islamic environment, and she liked it...then she decided to settle in Blackburn. [Parent30]

From the Islamic point of view, it is a very good town. There are many mosques here, and the environment is good. There is good quality Islamic education available for children. [Parent32]

There are a lot of opportunities...there are a lot of opportunities. There's a lot of good schools. There's so much choice. You can just go anywhere you want to.....the educational level in Blackburn is top-level. [Parent7]

Blackburn is a good town to bring children into some good schools in Blackburn...some outstanding schools in Blackburn. So yes, schools are really good. [Parent1]

Rather than just narrating stand-alone factors that influenced immigration, participants articulated a complex decision-making process that took into account multiple factors. These parents were following the advice of friends and extended families to move to Blackburn. Parent32 stated that Blackburn was a good town from an 'Islamic point of view', with many mosques. Moreover, Parent32 immigrated to England on the advice of people from his social networks. His friends and family have already moved to Blackburn and encouraged him to migrate. He was hopeful that the Islamic environment in Blackburn would help him in the Islamic education of his children.

Like Parent32, all 33 parents believed that Blackburn town was a suitable place to get their children educated because of the prevalence of the Islamic environment. However, participants were divided on choosing a mixed school (where Pakistani Muslim children are enrolled along with non-Muslim and White British children) and the Asian-majority schools (where Pakistani Muslim children are enrolled along with mostly Gujarati Indian Muslim children). Just over half of the parents (17 participants) were happy with the Asian majority schools. In comparison, 16 participants did not agree with this consideration, and they preferred education in a mixed school:

It's got to be mixed school, respects each religion and.... hmmm...discipline...but it has to be a school with diverse community of children. [Parent5]

However, the word 'mixed' was used to denote different meanings, like mixing with people of different communities, religions, ethnicities, and genders. For example, 4 participants talked about their schooling in Blackburn and labelled their schools as

mixed because they had children from White British and Asian communities. One of the participants stated:

I went to a local high school in Blackburn. I was there for five years...and it was a mixture of English and Asian people, and it was a fantastic school. [Parent7]

7 participants perceived a mixed school to be one that accommodates and respects children from all religions:

It's got to be mixed school, respects each religion and.... hmmm...discipline...but it has to be a school with diverse... it's their right to learn about other religions and respect one another [Parent5]

For 4 participants, a 'good' school should have a 'good mix' of people from different ethnic backgrounds. They thought that children with peers from different ethnic backgrounds learn from each other and develop lifelong friendships. The mixing of different ethnicities was very significant for social integration:

I think we need to kind of look beyond that, and you know, maybe try and encourage a good mix of, you know, different ethnic backgrounds to go to you know, same school, where they can meet and engage, and you know, interact with, you know, people of their age, so, that they kind of form, you know, a long term relationship friendships, you know, which will inevitably lead on to a real cohesive community in general, a wider cohesive community in general. [Parent25]

A second-generation mother gave her account of a mixed school when she described mixing different cultures. In this way, children could learn about other cultures and the things associated with them. They come to know that there are other religions, and they have their holy books and religious traditions:

They (children) do know that we live in a mixed culture. We live in a mixed world. That's, you know, so many cultures, not just two, plenty of cultures, but I think when you know that which culture you're from, you know, that's what I'm doing. But then they know there's a Bible. They know there's other cultures, so they tend to listen. [Parent21]

3 participants noted that the word 'mixed' means the mixing of gender in schools. Parent5 saw mixed-gender schools were vital as they symbolised a real-life situation where boys and girls were bound to mix:

I believe in mixed schools; I don't believe in same-sex schools...I just think...people...that you cannot segregate children from boys and girls because every part of life they are going to mix with these, whether they work in communities and schools...they are gonna mix so you can't keep segregated...when you segregate a child whether a girl from the opposite sex. They could become curious and that they want to explore, and I don't think, I think there has been more negative than positive. [Parent5]

4 participants added that genders should be allowed to mix; however, Parent10 also valued mixing different ethnicities:

My eldest son is attending a local high school; it's a good one. It is mixed; it has boys and girls and the children from all ethnic backgrounds. Personally, I feel that a child learns more when he interacts with other communities. [Parent10]

9 participants perceived that mixing is important in sports and extracurricular activities where children could experience different cultures. The interaction and mixing of children with other cultures were essential to gain multicultural competence:

I will try my best [laughs] try my best, you know she goes gymnastic, she mixes with the society which is...she is only ten, try different cultures because obviously, it's not our culture...the different cultures, and send them to tuition and help them obviously a little bit more, they do everything, they do a lot of scores, mix with different people and community...not just ours...hmmm, football...my son goes to football, gymnastic...my daughter goes to after-school clubs. I try my best to mix them...I am trying to get them into scouts as well...it's really hard to get the children in there...so just trying to get everything I can do...just a matter I send them so they can mix. It's not easy to go places. [Parent1]

Finally, 1 parent indicated that 'mixing' means mixing of sexes, races, and religions, advocating for an education system that aims to bring people from diverse backgrounds together to promote unity and social cohesion:

I think personally it's important for the children to mix with the different sexes, it's important for them to meet people of a different race, different religion is how they broaden the horizon. [Parent28]

The above 16 participants preferred mixed schools for their children. They reported that a mixed school is better because it provides a platform for interaction. It is

interesting to note that they attached different meanings to the process of mixing. The above discussion highlighted diversity of views expressed by the participants in this study. It also shows a disconnect between the language of multiculturalism used in the policy and the one used by the ethnic minority people on the streets. The policy literature uses the vocabulary of a diverse, multi-faith and multicultural society; however, the people on the streets take multiculturalism as day-to-day mixing, interacting and communicating with other communities in shared public spaces such as schools, neighbourhoods, places of worship, offices and businesses.

5.4 Parents favouring Asian majority schools

Of 33 participants, 16 opted to send their children to Asian-majority schools. There were different reasons behind this mindset. 6 participants observed that children do not learn the concept of 'respect' from mixed schools. Their position was that mixed schools were fraught with behaviour management issues which sometimes make children bossy and arrogant. If the teacher advised them at some point, they would say: 'you can't touch me...you can't, you can't tell me what to do, you are not the boss with me' [Parent6]. These participants believed that Asian-majority schools respect the culture and traditions of Muslim children and teach respect (for teachers and parents) to children. For these 6 parents, this notion of respect and behaviour management is a driving force for the choice of Asian-majority schools as the children learn how to respect others based on the Islamic ideals of kindness and mutual respect:

.... discipline in the school. Obviously, good teaching, there are the two main reasons for me and the family understanding, you know if there's any questions, it should be helpful. [Parent26]

What if she went to these mixed schools, I've seen stabbings, I've seen swearing, I've seen people swearing at other teachers. Don't pick up respect from there. They learn how to become bossy and bully. [Parent21]

Why Blackburn? Two reasons; why Blackburn. The reason the Blackburn, because the school they go to, I say hundred per cent kids is Asian...so that's the reason the school wise, and the culture-wise, it's no difference to, if you take them to Islamic school or a local Catholic school. [Parent22]

Parent26 and Parent21 believed that the mixed schools had discipline issues. They feared that the company of non-Muslim children might have a negative influence on the upbringing of their children. They might become 'bossy' and 'bully'. Parent22 represents the example of a parent who chose an Asian-majority school irrespective of the fact that whether it was a state school or a Church school. For such parents, the state school with Muslim majority pupils is a preferred choice in the absence of a local Muslim school or in the case if the latter being over-subscribed. They saw no difference between the Asian majority (community or church school) and a Muslim school. Due to the overwhelming Muslim community in Blackburn, most of the pupils in the state schools are from Muslim backgrounds. The Muslim ethnic composition of state schools made them a preferred choice for participants.

10 participants believed that Asian majority schools were their preferred choice as they felt safety in numbers:

I wanted my son to go to the best of the Asian schools...so the one state high school have fifty per cent people of ethnic minority and fifty per cent white people in there. But his primary school was hundred per cent Asian people. [Parent14]

They are they, they are two Muslim schools.... but there are other schools state-run academy high schools, they've also got over fifty per cent of the students are also Muslim heritage. So, I think I think that's not a problem. Again, the limited space is there. So, I wouldn't know life is a problem. But all I can say is that these schools have got fifty-sixty per cent of Asians as well. I don't think there are issues with that. [Parent17]

Yeah. There is another school nearer to us. But this community primary school, it was about twenty minutes. So, it was not very far because it was walking distance. And there was a large Asian community, and I think, maybe ninety-five per cent Asian in the school at the time. It is a nice school. [Parent26]

The above participants (Parent14, Parent17 and Parent26) are satisfied that their children were studying in schools with more than 50% Asian children. The parents felt safety in numbers as their children were studying amongst the Muslim children who brought Muslim culture and family values to the school premises.

However, Parent25, an employee of the local council, lamented that the state schools in the town centre had become all-Asian schools. In contrast, 'White-only' schools

were mainly located on the outskirts of the town. He stated that segregation of schools was not advantageous for the realisation of a multicultural society:

Thus again, I think I've kind of touched upon the fact that you know if it was up to me, and if I, you know, what would be ideal solution to the kind of problems and difficulties we face in terms of having, you know, segregated schools or, you know, White-only schools in outskirts of town, you know, within, the inner city, you know, city would have, you know, ethnic schools. So, I would, you know, I think the local authorities can play a major role in terms of, you know, having admission policies to kind of, you know, reflect the diverse backgrounds of pupils, and then you know, kind of maybe putting, you know, diverse people you know, so not not having hundred per cent White schools, not having hundred per cent Asian or Muslim schools. So, you would have a nice healthy balance. And not only you know, I'm talking about Muslims and non-Muslims, I'm talking about, you know, people of different faiths, different colours, No different ethnicity, race or religion. So, I'm talking as a whole society. [Parent25]

It was interesting to note that there was a key division between the participants who wanted mixed schools (having White and Asian pupil enrolment) and those who wanted Asian-majority schools (having Pakistani and Gujarati Indian pupil enrolment). Parent25 was of the view that a segregated town such as Blackburn needed to have more mixed schools which accommodated all ethnicities and communities where children from different backgrounds would learn from each other. In this way, the idea of a multicultural society could be achieved. However, the participants who preferred Asian-majority schools were more concerned about the safety of their children. Likewise, they intended to preserve the identity of their children because most of the interaction amongst children takes place within the school premises. For these parents, an Asian-majority school, whether a community school or a Church school, was the preferred choice, which was in some way equivalent to choosing a Muslim school [Parent22].

5.5 Muslim children's mixing with different communities

Multiculturalism is about the sense of equality, dialogue, and inclusion in society (Modood, 2013). In this study, multiculturalism is regarded as everyday 'living with difference' where Muslims mix with different communities based on cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious differences. The findings of this study indicated that parents' experiences of multiculturalism shape their children's multicultural experiences:

.When they see that, obviously, they understand that there's more than one religion out there. So, they have to take that in and look there is Christianity, Hinduism, Sikhism. So, they're obviously taking that in, but everybody is different in their own belief. So, I think that they have more understanding to that now. Whereas we didn't really have that much understanding. They're not brought up, I'm not saying that we were brought up in a way where we looked at every religion in a negative way because we also had religious education at high school, but we probably wasn't as much involved and known much about it as much as they are now, because now obviously they see like when our parents they didn't have friends from English friends or Christian friends or Indian friends or Hindus, but these children they see that obviously, our parents have friends in them, from different walks of life due to work or just acquaintances. So, I think they understand that yes, there is a difference, just people do believe in different things. But we are, we are.

[Parent28: a 37-year-old second-generation father]

The statement of Parent2 was very significant and illustrated that the first generation was relatively less multicultural in comparison to the second generation. His parents were not multicultural; they did not have friends from other communities such as White British, Christians, or Hindus. However, most second-generation parents have friends from other communities. They might be from work colleagues or just acquaintances. This was important because it seemed that Parent2 believed in 'mixing' with diverse people but not making them 'friends'.

All 19 second-generation parents acknowledged that they were more multicultural and would like their children to become like that. The following first quote represents a second-generation father educated in England who had several friends from the White British community. They developed lifelong friendships since school, and he was known to their parents as a family member:

Yeah, yeah. Other communities as neighbours, where we lived in the area. My own...when I went in school, I have got lot of English friends...still now my children as well. We all keep in touch, no issue whatsoever...we are grown up together as a child and up to this age...their parents as well...we know. They know ours as well.

[Parent8: a second-generation father whose father migrated to England in the late 1960s. He came to the UK in his childhood and attended high school for a couple of years]

Hmmm...we are brought up in a very Westernized way...my dad had no restrictions, didn't tell us to pray...hmmm I have to tell my daughter...no no, it was never forced upon us, even now we see, yeah yeah, my daughter at the age of seven, I said now, she is only young,

it's nice that they understand. My dad never forced us to pray, never forced us to wear...I never wore a scarf. It's only been five years since I wore a scarf...we were brought up just like kids...not forced to do anything. My kids, obviously, we never forced anything upon them.....Hmmm, if they wanna.....wanna do something.....we will support them.

[Parent1: a 38-year-old second-generation mother, born and educated in England]

The second opinion revealed a significant aspect of Muslim children's upbringing. If the children are given freedom of choice, especially girls, it was perceived as a 'Westernized way' of parenting by Parent1. She revealed that her parents did not impose restrictions on her, and as a child, she was never forced to wear a *hijab*¹⁷. She started wearing a *hijab* out of her own choice. Therefore, she wanted to raise her children in the way she was 'brought up just like kids'. She desired to support her daughter in her life choice based on her own experiences of upbringing and interaction with the larger society. The findings revealed that 20 second and third-generation participants showed more readiness to mix with non-Muslim communities than the 13 first-generation immigrants.

Mixing Muslim children in society with children from different cultures and backgrounds is a matter of concern for some participants. The parents were divided on the issue of mixing their children with other communities. Out of 33 participants, 16 opined that they firmly say 'yes' to mixing their children, while another 12 parents favoured mixing but attached certain conditions with it. However, 3 parents firmly said 'no' in this regard. Interestingly, 1 mother told that her daughter did not want to mix with non-Muslims, and 1 participant preferred mixing his children with children from Muslim backgrounds only. It is interesting to note that 16 parents who favoured mixing also favoured educating their children in mixed schools. While the rest of the 17 parents preferred Asian majority schools.

The interviews revealed various meanings of mixing and socializing Muslim children on school premises, extracurricular activities, sports, social groups, and gender mixing in wider society.

They do everything; they do a lot of scores, mix with different people and community...not just ours...hmmm, football...my son goes to football, gymnastic...my daughter goes to after-school clubs. I try my

¹⁷ *Hijab* is the headscarf worn by Muslim women for decency, privacy, and modesty.

best to mix them...I am trying to get them into scouts as well...'.
[Parent1]

They do know that we live in a mixed culture. We live in a mixed world. That's, you know, so many cultures, not just two [xxx], plenty of cultures, but I think when you know that which culture you're from, you know, that's what I'm doing. [Parent21]

In today's day and age, being in this country, being in an all-boys school or an all-girls school, I think it's irrelevant. Okay, it's good in some aspect; I think personally it's important for the children to mix with the different sexes, it's important for them to meet people of a different race, different religion is how they broaden their horizon.
[Parent28]

Most of the parents wanted a multicultural experience for their children. However, 3 parents did not permit the mixing of their children and labelled mixing as 'unnecessary' on account of multiple reasons:

I don't encourage them...actually, I don't allow my children to go out as there are drug-related issues in Blackburn...children are using drugs, and they do smoke. The environment is also not so good at the schools. It is therefore, my children come home directly from the schools. They just meet and mix with some of their close friends. Their interaction is kept at a minimum. [Parent12]

You know the environment at home affects the children a lot. I have never let my children go out of the home. They themselves don't want to go outside, and I don't allow them to go as well to go out and wander with friends...because there are a lot of drug issues here in Blackburn.
[Parent11]

The company of friends will affect their upbringing. Right now, they are just children, so we can control them. We don't let them go out unnecessarily; however, when they see other children on the streets, they say: 'Why you keep us inside of the home all the time? Why can't we go out alone?' [Parent29]

For these parents, mixing was not about concern regarding intercultural mixing; it was about the concern to keep their children safe from *haram* things and actions that are forbidden in Islam.

5.6 Children's hectic daily routine and mixing

Another reason which restricts the mixing of Muslim children is their hectic daily routine. Muslim children have a busy schedule. Their day is full of activities such as schooling, after-school activities, evening classes at the mosques, and, finally, homework. They attend compulsory schools in the morning and go to mosques in the evening. They usually have 'a long-rushed day' as expressed by a mother, and the parents have to 'juggle' between different activities throughout the day:

Because by the time they come home, they eat...they have something to eat...you know...shower...get ready for masjid (mosque). It's time to go again. So, they don't have that time to sit down with family...talk about their day or do things with the families...So, he will be doing the army cadets Friday afternoon, so it shouldn't affect the masjid. But it is if he does an extracurricular activity. They are finishing up at four or quarter past four...coming home...rush...get ready for masjid. It is a long-rushed day. [Parent3]

The above quote also showed the efficacy of in-depth qualitative interviewing. Parent3 talked about the daily routines and activities rather than stated their answers about mixing. It indicated a conflict between parental desire to allow their children to mix; however, there is limited space and time to do so in practice. Due to the 'rushed' compulsory schooling, parents struggled to choose a convenient supplementary school to ease the burden on themselves and their children:

Yes. It is necessary...it is necessary because when the children return from the school around 3:30 pm, then their mosque time starts, which is usually from 5 pm to 7 pm. Actually, every person and every family has got a different approach...they have different views on sending a child to a mosque for two hours. People are divided on this issue. [Parent13]

It is okay. I've read in that mosque, so from most of the mosques in Blackburn area, I do definitely prefer that. It's a good mosque, definitely, yeah. [Parent21]

The the local mosque that I'm attached to, and I've been affiliated for, you know, since I was a kid myself, I went to the same madrassa evening class. She goes to the same one. It's a Pakistani mosque. It's one of the, in fact, it's probably the oldest Islamic institution in Blackburn. And, you know, I'm still, you know, practising Muslim, I go there five times a day to pray and so hence the, you know, continuation for my daughter to kind of go to that, you know, evening

classes, classes that and she's continuing in the family tradition. [Parent25]

This mosque, the main thing again is my family is going to that mosque, and it's just continuous. [Parent26]

Parental perceptions of supplementary school choice are connected with their own mixing experiences, social networks, and family traditions. It is a standard routine that two hours are reserved for evening Quranic education at a local mosque. The statement of Parent13 illustrated that every family had a different approach towards mixing and supplementary education, which guided them to choose a particular supplementary school. Parent21 sent his child to the same supplementary school where he was educated in his childhood. He said that he knew the Quran teacher and the *Imam* (prayer leader), so he believed his child would be safe at the mosque of his choice. He had access to the teachers and could discuss the educational progress of his son. Therefore, he considered the mosque of his choice to be a 'good' mosque in the Blackburn area.

A second-generation mother [Parent1 below] told that her daughter did not want to mix. She was not comfortable interacting with the White neighbours and her school teachers because they were Christians. The other significant factor was that she mixes with White children during the extracurricular activities on the school premises; however, she did not want to befriend them. The following quote of the mother indicates the 'limits' of mixing, indicating a subtle difference between 'mixing' and making a 'friend':

They need to learn...have to mix with people. She already says to me, "Mama, I want to go to Islamic school because here my teachers are Christians", and that's a little child of ten years old is saying that. My neighbours are White...it's in her head. She does not want to mix. She goes gymnastic, and there are a lot of White children. She mixes with them, but she never had a friend. She does not know their culture...things like that. [Parent1]

Similarly, a father who is a Quran teacher at a local mosque told that a Muslim child should first 'grow enough' before mixing out with the community. He should learn his religion (Islam) which is the basis for all permissible and non-permissible actions. In this view, this would provide a Muslim child with the necessary knowledge to

differentiate between good and bad things. Then he might be allowed to mix with the wider society. The following quote is representative of his thought- process:

When he [the child] grows old and...yeah...grow enough. Then if he wants to see...mix with others...it's okay. Unless you know, if he learns about Islam, and he knows about the values of Islam, then he can go and see, then if he knows *halal* (permissible) and *haram* (forbidden), *jaiz* (permitted) and *najaiz* (prohibited). According to that, you know he can decide himself. This is the reason my priority is to teach him according to Islam, so if he knows about Islam, then he can decide for himself. What's good and what's bad? [Parent4]

For Parent4 *halal* and *haram* was a significant issue in mixing children. He stated *halal* was permissible while *haram* was the forbidden things and acts in Islam. *Haram* was sinful action that was forbidden to be done, which defined the morality of a Muslim's action. Acts that were *haram* were typically prohibited in the religious texts of the Quran and the Sunnah (the acts of Prophet Muhammad). Parent4 later clarified that he wanted his child to abstain from certain food and drinks, such as pork and alcohol and certain actions, such as gambling, free mixing of genders and sex outside of marriage.

The mixing of Muslim children with other communities comes with its benefits too. When a parent was asked whether he encourages his children to mix with children from different communities, he responded:

Absolutely. Yeah, yeah. So that they don't see anything. Because the more you mix, the less you see; the less you mix, the more you see. [Parent27]

Parent27, a second-generation father who was a teacher at a local Muslim school, summarised the benefit of 'mixing' in an impressive way which had significant implications for living with difference. He viewed that children would become more culturally responsive by being more open to others' viewpoints, beliefs and thoughts. He emphasised that if children 'mix 'more, they will celebrate the difference and will find common grounds to establish relationships which ultimately leads to social integration

5.7 Multicultural competence

Out of 33 participants, 3 university-educated second-generation parents emphasised making their child a 'well-rounded individual', 'all-rounded personality' and a person

with knowledge of the 'rounded picture of the community'. There were different background ideas behind these perspectives.

Parent14 was a second-generation couple in their mid-30s living in the affluent neighbourhood of Blackburn. They wanted a multicultural education for their daughters at the secondary level so that they might be successful in their life. The wife was of the view that she would not send her daughter to a Muslim school as she was already attending a supplementary school in the evening. Moreover, she was also studying RE at the school. The parents believed it was better to send her to a 'mixed school' for multicultural competence, where she could interact with children from different backgrounds. The collective experience of state schooling and supplementary education would help make her a 'well-rounded' individual:

Wife: Yeah, and the other thing I don't know...for me, a lot of people do send their children to the Islamic schools that are accessible now. A lot of them, majority of them say that: 'Their children are spoon-fed'. So, basically, they are taught how to pass exams but not necessarily able to carry on. Once they leave, they struggle more. So, again that's another issue for me. I just wanted a well-rounded individual because, in the mixed school, she is saying: 'There is a lot'. I would say it's about fifty-fifty if not sixty-forty, but for me, that's a good mix; it's not too much one or the other. [Parent14]

Husband: 'We wanted them to be well-rounded'. Then I believe that I want to keep them *Sunni*, make sure that they follow the path of what we believe is right...and then, I don't want them to be bullied...and they need to be diverse as well. They need to learn how to interact. [Parent14]

A second-generation father [Parent27], a teacher at a local Muslim school, held similar views. He was born in England and educated at a Church school. He believed that the Muslim community in England was fortunate to have a comprehensive education system. He favoured faith-based education provision because, in his view, state schools were deficient in imparting moral and ethical values according to the spirit of Islam. He emphasized that faith-based education could play a significant role in transforming his child into a 'well-rounded individual' with high ethical and moral values:

Yeah, because of the academic excellence because of the faith-based provision, because of it being a single-sex school, all these factors, their specialism is on leadership. So, it really does develop those

leadership of performance of moral and civic leadership duties. And it creates a well-rounded individual who is really confident about knowing where they want to go into...'[Parent27]

At the same time, this parent was also aware that children's exposure to different communities through sports and extracurricular activities helped create an 'all-rounded' personality:

Yeah. To have an all-rounded, I'm very mindful of some of the schools which my child attends. They're predominantly Muslim heritage, Pakistani Indian heritage. So, I will expose them to activities which get them to go on it engage and interact with the wider community. So, whether that be the swimming on Saturday or the karate on Sunday and the football. They're having to go outside their social circle to be able to represent a local team, and that gives them the skills of leadership, teamwork. [Parent27]

The recognition of diversity and mixing of Muslim children with children from different ethnic backgrounds is also expressed by Parent25, a second-generation parent who worked at the local council. He has lived in Blackburn for the last forty years. He sent his daughter to a Muslim school. For him, a 'good' school has a diverse population of students from different ethnicities and religions. The educational experiences with a diverse community of students would give his daughter a 'rounded picture of the community' to help shape her as a tolerant and multicultural member of society:

I was also mindful of the fact that my daughter, you know, went to a school where there was a good mix of diversity in terms of ethnic backgrounds because I wanted my daughter to sort of have a rounded picture of the community in general that we that we reside in. [Parent25]

The factor that binds all three parents mentioned above was the selection of faith-based education provision for children. The parents preferred educating their children at Muslim schools to make them 'well-rounded individuals'. The participants' viewpoints illustrated a variety of factors parents considered for children's upbringing, such as schooling with a 'good mix' and diversity of students from different ethnic backgrounds. They negotiate questions of race and class through school choice in their desire to have a right mix of pupils (Byrne, 2006). Even Muslim schools were considered a good place for education as Muslim children from Pakistani and

Gujarati ethnicities had the opportunity to mix through classroom interactions, sports and extracurricular activities.

The findings emphasised the importance of soft skills such as communication for shaping children's multicultural competence. The findings showed an inter-generation difference in the level of parental communication with children. 13 first-generation parents did not emphasise the importance of communication as they were generally busy in their initial struggle to settle in a foreign country. They relied entirely on state schools to provide their children with the necessary soft skills¹⁸. However, 19 second-generation parents, along with 1 third-generation parent, born and educated in England, emphasised the need to communicate with children on a regular basis:

It's not easy; twenty years before, the world was different; twenty years coming on, it going to be different, so it's gonna be much tougher for them, which is why they have to prepare because we know we are not going to be there for them until a certain age till we can we want to give them that maturity where they know now, we're doing things and then hopefully they can use their skills with their children. [Parent21: a second-generation mother born and educated in England]

So, that it's about that engagement. And the one area which I feel there needs to be some work on with parents is it's about having an awareness that the power of the parents' communication can never be substituted. [Parent27: a second-generation father born and educated in England]

Ideally, I want them to be a practising Muslims, where they gotta go out there in the world and not be shy of their religion and be confident...never get oppressed by other people and all other religions, then they should have that knowledge and that power to explain to someone why they chose obviously, to be practising and why their religion is above others. So yeah. [Parent23: a second-generation mother born and educated in England]

I am already preparing him. I think the first skill I am giving him is 'communication': that's speak your mind; be respectful and just focussing with him on this...and taking time out, when he has homework, I will sit with him, I will do it with him. I will speak to him every single day: 'How was your day? How was mosque? How was school?' Because they are two different things and I want to know

¹⁸ The subject is discussed in detail in Ch. 7 on parental compulsory school choices and 'moments' of choice.

about both, equally...and its, when we have our Islamic days, we make a big thing of it and teach him there, and I always say to him. [Parent6: a third-generation mother born and educated in England]

These statements of second-generation and third-generation parents illustrated the variety of issues they considered and reflected on the strategies used to communicate with the children. Parent21's quote was a widely shared concern of the parents regarding mixing their children. It showed uncertainty about the future of children. Parent27 reported that parents were more empowered to develop communication with their children compared to schools and mosques. In this scenario, the role of communication with the children could not be undermined. Parent6, a third-generation trainee teacher mother, was mindful of this fact. She mentioned that she did a lot of communication with her only child. She believed that parents need to talk about every aspect of a child's everyday activity. The child's day is full of diverse activities such as a school in the morning and supplementary school in the evening. For Parent5, these are two different activities, and the parents should keep themselves abreast of children's engagements.

The 19 second-generation participants showed awareness about the existence of different cultures in the society where they live. 16 of these 19 participants preferred mixed schools and wanted to educate their children with non-Muslim White children. They viewed that Muslim children have to negotiate with religious values, family cultures as well as western values. These encounters could create confusions that could be removed with parental communication:

Well, I suppose every parent does their best. You just teach young to be kind, caring, understanding individuals, you teach them the religion side of things, the cultural side of things, and we, we not only got the Pakistani culture, we got our western culture that's attached with us as well. I mean, she can't take that away. It's not one or the other. If both of them mixed...and as for you, take the good bits out of everything and go forward with that. [Parent1]

Pakistani culture? I embrace it. It's what can I say, very, is beautiful. It can get very difficult sometimes because the older older generation seem to mix the culture with the religion, and it's a big battle. That if you are clear on what religion and what culture is, life becomes a lot more simpler, and ultimately you're supposed to follow your religion, not the culture. As much I mean, obviously culture to a certain extent. But if your culture is doing something against the religion, then you have to say, well, NO to it. [Parent24]

Parent1 and Parent24 clarified that religion and culture had different connotations. Religions reign supreme over culture. Parental communication was necessary so the children could differentiate between religion and culture. If parents did not communicate effectively, children could not talk about their culture and religion with people from different faiths and cultural backgrounds. In this way, the children would learn respect for different communities. During the interviews, several Muslim parents showed a realisation that 'respect' was a fundamental concept for living in a multicultural society. 11 participants explicitly mentioned the concept of 'respect' in multiple contexts:

They (children) should be educated so that they may be respected. We were not so much educated. If they get education, they can contribute to the welfare of the society. [Parent9]

I do. I support this as you live in a multicultural community. In a street, people from ten different communities may be living...there may be people from different religions, nationalities, modes of migration...I consider it as a joint system, and it should be respected as such. Everyone should live in harmony and unity. [Parent13]

The above specimen statements demonstrated that participants believed that the concept of 'respect' could have two purposes in education. First, an educated person is respected by society. Second, an educated person has a realisation to respect people from different cultures and backgrounds. Mostly, the first-generation parents had a nominal level of education. Therefore, they wanted their children to be educated in such a manner that they respect a mix of different races, ethnicities, and backgrounds in their neighbourhood as well as the wider society. Parents13 described a multicultural community as a 'joint system' whose foundation rests on the notion of respect. Teaching respect for the Pakistani heritage, religion of Islam, Muslim culture and British values is a parental duty. 1 parent put it like this:

I've...I've always told my children, they are Pakistani...British Pakistani Muslims and to respect the country they are in...and my, my job is to teach them their culture and their religion as well... [Parent5]

The Muslim adherence to respect for Pakistani heritage, the religion of Islam, and British values create different shades of identities. For study participants, the identity of being a British citizen was an important but complex one. Out of 33 participants, 3

parents considered themselves only as the 'British', while another 3 labelled them only as Pakistanis. While 6 parents described themselves as British Muslims and 4 parents preferred to be identified as only Muslims. 6 parents maintained an emotional attachment to their Pakistani roots and called themselves 'Pakistani Muslims'. 1 parent was still in a confused state of mind, and he considered himself neither a Pakistani nor a British.

The findings revealed that British citizenship was shaping parents' identity with regard to their Pakistani heritage. They also maintained an emotional attachment with their Pakistani roots while accepting Britain as their new 'home'. These various shades of participants contributed to establishing another identity: 'British Pakistani Muslim'. Resultantly, 10 parents described that they embraced their identity as 'British Pakistani Muslims'. This identity serves two purposes: first, they assert themselves as one community based on nationality and religiosity. Second, they presented themselves as different from other Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Britain:

State allows us to have this identity...we can use these three words together. British national, Pakistan and Islam, you can use it jointly. This country does not put an obstacle in the way of your identity. We can identify also as Muslims; we are also British...we are Pakistani British as well, and this is also our identity. We have no problem here...not at all. [Parent13]

I am proud of my Britishness and my Pakistani heritage. And also, I, you know, I am part and parcel of this British society. I'm proud of all three of those facets. Yeah, I would describe myself as a, you know, British Muslim of Pakistani heritage. [Parent25]

Yeah, I am very clear about it. If anybody asks me.... before Pakistani, I am Muslim. [Parent6]

The connotation of these declarations was the understanding that religion (Islam) came first and their country of origin (Pakistan) and country of residence (England) later. These 10 participants had constructed a new 'brand' of identity based on their religion to avoid the complex notions of nationality, race, ethnicity, and language. Being Muslim is a 'unique' identity that is now being used in the public sphere. The interviews showed that participants might seem comfortable with their Pakistani

identity. Still, they strictly believe that their children are Muslim in the first place, and the Britishness comes afterwards:

As a British Muslim, I want them (children) to value their religion, and I also want them to value the country. Obviously, we are British; we are British. My children are British. They need to understand that they are the part of this country; they need to add value to the country. How they are gonna add value to the country if they don't even count themselves. They can't go and say, 'I'm a Pakistani', okay, I'm a Pakistani, but my children are British, and they are Muslim. That is what they are. For that's what they need to be comfortable with. If they're not comfortable with saying it at home, how they are gonna say this outside? [Parent28]

I think their (children's) identity is Muslim. You know what I mean. Because they are not Pakistani now, I am, they are not. They are not Pakistani, yeah. So, I think they are Muslim. They have a faith and Muslim; you know what I mean. They are not Pakistani...[Parent6]

Identity is Muslim. Obviously, first Muslim...then practising Muslim is the second thing. If you are not practising Muslim, just Muslim...so you are just a name, as a Muslim brand. [Parent15]

6 parents proclaim that Islam raises the foundation for the contours of British Pakistani Muslim identity. However, this innovative identity is still in its infancy and participants interpreted the Islamic aspect of their identity in different ways. For 1 participant, it was about Islamic belief and conviction. Another participant described that his identity was all about being a 'practicing' Muslim; otherwise, religion is just a label. Another participant considered his identity as a 'good Muslim' who did not inflict harm on anyone. Despite a number of various interpretations, all 33 participants were unanimous that Islamic identity is a lifestyle that revolves around religious values, Muslim cultural traditions and being a useful member of British society. However, it is worth mentioning that 10 participants who embraced the 'British Pakistani Muslim' identity preferred to send their children to Asian majority schools to preserve their religious and cultural identity.

5.8 Multiculturalism re-defined

One of the critical questions asked to the participants was their degree of satisfaction with the government's support for Muslims in education and society. In the exploration of this aspect, the participants put forwarded various assessments. There is a lack of reports discussing the level of satisfaction of British Pakistani Muslims

with the government's multiculturalism policies. Nevertheless, there is often discussion on the issues such as racism, the role of faith, educational needs of Muslims, ethnicity, community cohesion, and limits of religiosity. According to Halstead (2005), the policy discourse on multiculturalism often discusses two broad areas: a. equalising opportunities, and b. supporting and preserving the religious and cultural identity of Muslims. 9 interviewees shared their views on this matter:

Yes. They are. I think they are doing everything. Yeah, yeah. They are doing everything perfect. There is no racism. Not much racism anywhere or anything. [Parent7]

Yeah, yeah. I am quite comfortable, quite happy, and there are some issues like sex education and these halal haram...these things...so, other than that it's okay. [Parent15]

The Government? I think they've done; they have done the best that they can do. You know, because at the end of the day, it is a Christian country and, you know, they've allowed us to build mosques and everything, tried to facilitate us with prayer rooms where they can, you know, and it's just the, just the most of the media channels and stuff like that portray sometimes, you know, but...yes. [Parent26]

Participants were divided on their level of satisfaction with the efforts of the government in supporting the Muslim minority in England. However, the above quotes represent 5 participants who believed that the government had done its best to help Muslims. Parent26 showed the awareness that England is essentially a non-Muslim country. Even then, Muslims are allowed to establish their places of worship and enjoy religious freedom in the country. However, sometimes there was publicity in the media that Muslims were being persecuted in England. Parent7 considered religious and cultural freedom with regard to racism. He believed there was no racism, and that Muslims were treated equally in schools and society. Nevertheless, for Parent15, there was no problem for him in England except for the issues of sex education in schools and the public availability of *haram* things.

2 participants avoided giving a direct answer to this question. They might think that their comments would be reported to the government, and they might face backlash. Awan (2014) argued that this state of mind of the Muslim community might be understood in the backdrop of the 9/11 and 7/7 incidents. Stories linking Muslims with acts of terrorism have reduced them to a community living under suspicion (Ibid.). 1

participant (Parent1), instead of giving a straight answer to the question, stressed the need to work hard 'regardless' of what the government is doing. However, there was a subtle expectation from the White British majority to show 'more balance' and help the Muslim community to succeed:

I think...life is what you make of it; if you want to succeed, you will do regardless of anything. You push, and you push unless you. There is no matter who is stopping you, you still gonna do what you want to do.....I think people are aiming more in Muslim community. They might be a few of us, but we do, we are loud, and we get known. What we are supposed to do, we can't. If they do, if nowadays they are Asian Muslim minority, I am sure our White friends will have something to say about that...support us and show us more balance. [Parent1]

Similarly, another participant (Parent27) hoped that Muslims would be given more opportunities in the future and get good jobs in the labour market. He seemed very firm that Muslims have the potential to get rid of deprivation through better education and prosper in future:

We don't want to set ourselves by going back. We're at a stage now where our children should be lifted to be able to get to wherever they want to get to within education. And those and those kinds of jobs, which, which we're about for our Pakistani heritage in the main kind of community and cohorts, this shouldn't be there now for the majority of our children. I'm not saying there's anything wrong with them, but we should not see another generation fitting in certain jobs because we should have come past that now. [Parent 27]

Nevertheless, 2 parents were not satisfied with the government's efforts in supporting the Pakistani Muslim community. They cast doubts on the intentions and performance of the government:

Government is not doing hundred per cent for the Muslims.... however, you may say it is doing fifty to sixty per cent up to the satisfaction of the Muslims. Racism is there in schools...particularly institutional racism is there. If you go for a job, you have to compete more than a White British. You have to show more ability and commitment. The White British gets priority due to the sameness of culture, language and way of life. [Parent2]

And I think overall, you know, the government, you know, maybe needs to do more. And I think, you know, it's been acknowledged, following, you know, a few reports, because of the riots that took place in northern towns of England, where there were race riots, I think if the

government has come to, you know, the knowledge that you know, to kind of have a moral, more inclusive society, we need to, you know, and empower people within those communities to work more closely together, you know, around building relationship building bridges, so that every part of the community feels, you know, part of a wider and a bigger community, rather than living in kind of segregated, isolated pockets, you know, in different have different ethnic backgrounds. I think that's very, very important to kind of break down those barriers. But you know, that I mean, you know, maybe starting from schools, as I mentioned earlier, that you need to have good mix of schools, you know, of diverse ethnic backgrounds, put them in schools together, so that so that they can form long and lasting relationships, friendships, going into, you know, the wider community and you know, in future life. [Parent25]

Parent25 is a British-born second-generation parent. He was not satisfied with the government's performance and stressed that the government should do more to lessen the miseries of the Muslim minority. He pointed out a lack of trust among the Muslims and White British due to the disturbances that took place in some cities of northern England in the wake of the September 11 attacks. He emphasised the need for a 'moral inclusive society' where communities could build bridges among themselves. He added that mixed schools could play an important role as children build lifelong friendships from schools, making way for an inclusive society. Every community should be treated as part of a wider community as 'one nation'. Muslims must be 'understood as a community of communities and of citizens' (Commission on Multi-Ethnic Britain, 2000, p. 56).

Parent2 contradicted the satisfaction level of Parent7, stating that racism existed in schools and society, and the government was not doing the maximum for the Muslim community. The government is indifferent to the problems faced by the Muslim community. In his view, Muslims were discriminated against due to their race, ethnicity, culture, and religiosity. They had to struggle hard by showing more qualifications and ability to get a particular job than their White British counterpart.

2 participants above were not satisfied with the overall support of the government extended to the Muslim community. They felt excluded and discriminated against. However, the other 5 participants in this study showed satisfaction with the government support. These 5 participants constituted a part of 16 parents who preferred mixed schools as they trusted In England's education system, RE aims to develop the pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development; RE does not promote a particular religion; instead, its objective is educational (Berglund, 2015). The school

children are entitled to receive RE. However, parents have a right to withdraw them from schools, as outlined in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (HSMO, 1998). The position of RE on the curriculum is unstable as it is part of the basic curriculum but does not constitute part of the national curriculum (Barnes, 2014). There are concerns over the purpose, mode of provision and teaching materials of RE (Conroy, Lundie & Baumfield, 2012). Sometimes, RE is considered as 'conflicted', 'superficial', and even dysfunctional'. Thus, the subject of RE is a persistent site of inquiry and is subject to evaluation from time to time (Barnes, 2014).

education system. While another 4 participants were among those 17 parents who chose Asian-majority schools because they required more support and safety assurance from the government before mixing their children in the White majority schools.

5.9 Conclusion

The imperial findings increased our understanding of Muslims' mixing with different communities. Blackburn was considered a suitable town for the upbringing of Muslim children. It was revealed that parents' multicultural experiences shape their children's mixing experiences. However, there were 'limits' to mixing, as there was a difference between 'mixing' and making 'friends'. Multiculturalism is regarded as mixing and everyday living with difference where different communities interact based on cultural and religious differences. The parents' perceptions of living in a multicultural society showed implications for their school choice. In this regard, school choice surfaces as a significant issue in shaping multicultural experiences of children.

This chapter focused on the 17 participants who chose Asian-majority schools, and the 16 participants who chose mixed schools. For the latter, a 'good' school is essentially a mixed school with a diverse population of students from different ethnic backgrounds. However, another half of the participants preferred Asian-majority schools to protect their children from *haram* things and racism. The Muslim mixed schools are chosen to give children multicultural competence and a 'rounded picture of community'. Most of the mixing of Muslim children takes place with children from different backgrounds within the school premises. At the same time, the parents recognised that state schools impart secular education and do not acknowledge Islamic values and traditions. Therefore, some parents tried to restrict their children's interaction with other communities outside the schools. Further, the hectic routine of Muslim children restricts their mixing with the community outside of school.

This chapter has also shown that the identity of British Muslims is complex and heterogeneous (Modood, 2010). Using a qualitative research approach was instrumental in allowing British Pakistani Muslims to speak about their identity concerns for themselves and their children. They shared their experiences of growing up and living in Blackburn, and as a result, they have carved a new type of identity, 'British Pakistani Muslim'. There were divisions among participants on the support extended by the government for the preservation of their identity in schools and society. Some participants expected more support from the government and the White British community to realise their potential. However, all participants found Britain their home, which provided them with a sense of safety and community.

The following chapter focuses on parental concerns about culturally sensitive schooling. The perceptions of parents about religious education, relationships and sex education, language education and single-sex education are discussed, alongside the specific educational needs of Muslim pupils in state schools.

Chapter 6: Findings - Culturally Sensitive Schooling

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of this study about culturally sensitive schooling in relation to parents' diverse school choices in Blackburn. One of the key findings of the study is the division between Muslim parents who send their children to Muslim schools and those who decide not to choose Muslim schools. The flashpoints are the extent to which schools are culturally sensitive to the specific needs of Muslim children. In this regard, issues such as the teaching of religious education, relationships and sex education, language education and single-sex schooling establish the reasons for the choice of either Muslim schools or no-religion state schools. This chapter focuses on 5 parents who chose to send their children to Muslim schools compared to 8 parents who chose Asian majority state schools or Church schools.

The extent to which a school helps recognise and accommodate the religious and cultural needs of pupils plays a significant part in the school choice of Muslim parents in Blackburn. The necessity of Arabic language learning is discussed along with the supplementary education sector operated by the Pakistani and Gujarati Muslim communities in Blackburn. The chapter also brings forth the strategies employed by the supplementary schools to synchronise with the state schools. The study participants showed concern that Muslim culture and religious values are not reflected in the national curriculum of state schools in England. Moreover, the subjects of RE, RSE and MFL are not taught in a way that respects Muslim culture and religious values. The preference for Muslim schools in one cohort of participants (5 participants) is because they teach the national curriculum alongside Islamic religious education and heritage languages. This is to say, Muslim schools provide an environment that includes an overall Islamic ethos (Musharraf, 2015). However, Muslim schools are not without controversies; although they expand choice, but they also contribute to school and residential neighbourhood segregation.

6.2 Religious education

In English schools, RE aims to develop the pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development; it does not promote a particular religion; instead, its objective is educational (Conroy et al., 2012). Faith schools have greater control over RE teaching as they are associated with a specific religion, and 'they can choose what

they teach in religious studies' (Gov.uk, 2020). There is confusion over the purpose and the curriculum of RE in England (Barnes, 2014). The parents in this study have called for clarifying the aims and objectives of RE as it was a significant factor in school choice. The participants showed concerns that their religion is not appreciated in state schools while teaching:

I mean, we are Muslims, at least. Muslim children should know their religion. Plus, they should know the prayers, fasting, their religious duties and reading of Holy Quran. Most of the parents strive that their children should know how to read Holy Quran, offer the prayer, fasting during Ramadan, and they should know the major things of their religion. [Parent2]

The thing is that: 'Do the kids have a choice about religion? For me, they don't have a choice because this is what they have been brought up with. [Parent5]

All 33 participants were unanimous on the point that religion was not a matter of 'choice' for their children as they were born with an affiliation to the Islamic faith. They also agreed that children should be familiar with other religious traditions and world views. In this way, they could realise how they were different from the followers of other religions. Parent2 articulated that he might not be an ideal Muslim; however, it was their religious obligation to transfer religious beliefs to the next generation. This commitment showed that the participants might not be 'practising' Muslims but were Muslim by birth and adhered to Islamic values. Therefore, the teaching of RE surfaced as an important point influencing school choice.

Of 33 participants, 5 participants sent their children to Islamic schools, so they could not comment on the status of RE in no-religion state schools. The remaining 28 participants expressed their views, and the majority of parents (24 participants) believed that RE in state schools was a subject of ethics and a basic overview of the world's major religions. Therefore, they had no objection to their children receiving RE:

The religious education at schools is a basic overview of...of every religion, and most of their stuff is there because they have a basic overview of it...' [Parent5]

I think the religious education given at the school is not so rigorous. [Parent12]

They have developed a religious education syllabus which is like middle of a road. There is no preaching or promotion of a certain religion. This is a policy of the council. However, the Catholic or Church schools preach and teach Christianity just as Islam is taught by the Islamic faith schools. [Parent2]

Yeah, because it's just religious education, it's just basic, and anything they need to know about their culture is done at mosque, so schools...they touch every religion. Don't they? It is basic, so I am happy with that...we are happy with that...just ethics...they go to the mosque in any way, their religion. [Parent1]

In the Islamic school, they probably compare a little bit more, which I think is nice for the kids to understand that...they are different, the way they pray or whatever they do is different from us as Muslims, and I think it's good to have that knowledge of other religions. [Parent3]

I think if you if you were to consider religious education as being a subject of humanity and about values, then there is no contradiction or there is no issue. It creates opportunities to discuss boundaries, about etiquettes, social norms, and therefore it reinforces if you've got a faith identity, it will reinforce what you consider to be the values of your own faith. And part of learning about your own faith is to learn about others and their faith to to only learn about one. You will never know what the other, he is practising and why you're practising, which would then be enforcing your own religion. [Parent27]

These participants perceived RE as a subject that lacked depth. They considered it very 'basic', giving their children a 'basic overview' of the world's major religions. It was a simple subject and did not involve rigorous learning. The state developed a 'middle of the road' RE curriculum acceptable to every community. These participants felt that the teaching of RE did not challenge the religious beliefs of Muslim children and the spiritual aspects of their personalities. This scenario resonated with the findings of the 2013 Ofsted Long Report on RE titled, 'Religious education: realising the potential' – which said that the RE subject did well at teaching children about others' religions but did little to deepen their understanding of their own spirituality.

In line with the findings of the 2013 Ofsted report, participants represented their children's RE as essentially a study of ethics and morality, which were universal in nature. They did not feel threatened by RE as the institution of the mosque was there to teach Islamic religious education in the evening. In this regard, above Parent1, a second-generation mother, gave a detailed account of the nature of RE and its effect

on Muslim children. She outlined the general nature of RE and stated it was a good subject for Muslim children as the schools teach about other religions. She felt that RE teaches that Muslim children are different and does not affect them spiritually. In her view, religious spirituality was taken care of at the mosque in the evening as children had to 'go to the mosque in any way'.

While most participants (24) were 'happy' with RE teaching in the state schools, 4 participants showed dissatisfaction with RE teaching, which is exemplified in the following interview extracts:

It's (RE) contrary to the Islamic principles, in my opinion. And I strongly believe that because obviously, I spent quite a lot of time in schools. [Parent25]

But it was, it was Christianity, to be honest...things like that. It was mainly history; you know that they were teaching. There was no Islam about it or anything like that. There was no Judaism, you know and all the other religions. It was just Christianity, so we have to send our children to mosque to learn about our religion. [Parent7]

I don't believe it is sufficient. No. I don't believe it is sufficient for children. But just from a superficial level point of view, they cover the religions, you know...I do explain to them the importance, importance of Islam for a Muslim, how important it is and how to look at other religions from an Islamic perspective that has, you know, that is the most important factor, I believe. [Parent20]

Parent25 and Parent7 believed that RE teaching was against the basic principles of Islam. Despite this perception, they allowed their children to attend RE classes. Parent31 went a step further and did not agree with the idea that his children should receive this 'type' of RE at state schools because it is non-Islamic in character. However, the remarks of Parent20 presented a different stance; his view was that learning about other religions from non-Islamic perspectives was just 'superficial'. In the view of Parent20, major world religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism should be studied from the Islamic perspective. It was inappropriate to study Islam and other faiths from a non-Islamic perspective. In this way, the children could understand the true spirit of Islam and other religions from a comparative point of view. It was the responsibility of the parents to teach their children the importance of Islam in comparison to other religions.

The findings also demonstrated that the 5 participants who sent their children to Muslim schools received fewer questions about religion than the 28 participants whose children attended state schools. Parent11 stated that his children were studying at a Muslim school that caters to his child's religious needs, and, as a consequence, they pose fewer questions about religion at home:

They don't put so much questions. They don't usually do so much questions. [Parent11]

I'm very, very pleased that you know, in schools, that there is there is the five major, you know, world religions are taught, you know, as part of the national curriculum, and my daughter is exposed to that information. And she comes home with less questions about other faiths. [Parent25]

However, children who attended secular state schools raised more questions regarding other religions (especially Christianity and Hinduism), religious symbols and different spiritual practices at home:

She asks questions all the time, and now because she is a bit older, she understands...about Jesus, and you know a lot of Christianity is very similar to Islam. [Parent14]

Sometimes they do, like Christmas times when they are learning about Christmas festival then Jesus and so then they do question you and...I just tell them about different faiths, different beliefs. That's, you know, that's their belief, and this is our belief. This is what we believe as Muslims. They're Christians, they believe, basically just telling different faiths. Everyone has their own beliefs. [Parent16]

He (the child) asks every single thing. Usually, he asks about Hindus...yeah and some like Christmas and these things. This is, he said: 'Christian festivals is not ours'... yeah...these things he do ask. [Parent15]

These participants maintained that the teaching of major religions in the school might give rise to confusion. Due to this reason, children often posed different questions about the beliefs and practices of other faiths. Parent15's child has an inquisitive mind and is curious about other religions. The questions may arise due to the similarity between Christianity and Islam, as both are Abrahamic religions (Gordon, 2002). Most of the Christian stories and the life of Jesus bear the same relevance to

Christianity and Islam. The daughter of Parent14 often raised questions about the similarities between Christianity, Islam, and religious festivals such as Christmas.

All 33 participants mentioned that they had to explain the difference between Muslims and other religious communities such as Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. However, 8 participants stated that the most critical question put forward by the children was: 'Why don't we celebrate Christmas?' [Parent6]:

Sometimes they do, like Christmas times when they are learning about Christmas festival then Jesus and so then they do question you and...I just tell them about different faiths, different beliefs. That's, you know, that's their belief, and this is our belief. This is what we believe as Muslims. They're Christians, they believe, basically just telling different faiths. Everyone has their own beliefs. [Parent16]

Like on Christmas, she would say we should have a Christmas tree. I would say, 'No', we don't do that'...you know... it's just about we get together on Christmas day, but only because everyone is off. So, we all sit and have...and have dinner together. [Parent3]

Because in schools, they have the Christmas trees, and they are all wearing Christmas jumpers and learning that side of it...I buy him presents when it is Christmas time. Not because we believe in it because it's fun, it's just everyone, does it. It's just culture; everybody does it. [Parent6]

Sometimes they [schools] give the books. They said...the stories of Jesus and then as parents; we explain them...what what as Muslim, what we...what we have belief, this is our belief...this is not our belief. [Parent15]

Christmas is a time of celebration. Although Muslims and Christians have different religious beliefs and practices, the two communities share many similarities. The subtext of these remarks is that Christmas is a subject of dialogue between the participants and their children around the festive season. During Christmas, the questions increased, and they talked about different symbols associated with Christmas. They discussed the birth of Jesus Christ, the Christmas tree, Christmas jumper, and Christmas presents. Some participants considered Christmas a cultural event; everybody was home and enjoyed a 'cultural' Christmas. The participants made the children understand that Christians and Muslims believed in the same Prophets and how they are related. The focus was specifically on Jesus and what

Muslims believe about him as a Prophet of God. Although the participants met and greeted their extended family and friends on Christmas, they clarified to their children that it was not an Islamic festival:

...but we do Eid like the English Christmas in the sense of we give presents, and all the children get presents, and you know. [Parent3]

That's the best question, actually [laughter]. They, most of the time ask, especially during the Christmas time, they ask common question, you know. Yeah, so we tell them, you know, like okay, we celebrate Eid...I have a different way. I take them out. What all was they feel it's Eid...it's something there, you know what I mean? So, if someone rings me, I'm out. [Parent6]

While showcasing the similarities between Muslims and Christians, the participants also demonstrated the religious differences to children. Parent6 compared Christmas with the Muslim festivals of *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*¹⁹. He did an innovative activity with his children on *Eid* day. He took his children outside on Blackburn streets and showed them the festive environment. In this way, he described the similarities and differences between Islam and Christianity through Christmas and *Eid* festivals. The children of Parent6 struggled to compare and contrast the festivals of *Eid* and Christmas. However, in the case of Muslim school choosers, the burden of explanation is shared by the schools. Muslim schools taught about the importance of Islam and made children aware of other religions and Christianity. Those children did not ask for Christmas presents or dinner as they knew that Christmas was not 'their' festival. However, Christmas was the least of the worries of Muslim parents. Their major concern was when their children mixed with non-Muslim children in the playgrounds and faced peer pressure on various choices, such as pressure to smoke, drink alcohol, take drugs and have a boy or girlfriend. Therefore, some parents chose to send their children to a Muslim school because these activities were discouraged in such schools, being against the principles of Islam.

6.3 Relationships and sex education

The teaching of the subject of relationships and sex education (RSE) at schools emerged as a contentious issue for Muslim parents. 15 of the 33 participants

¹⁹ In an Islamic year, the Muslims world over celebrate two festivals called *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*. The former is celebrated after the month of Ramadan (the holy month of fasting), and the latter is a ritual to sacrifice the permitted animals for the pleasure of Allah.

expressed concern that RSE should not be taught at schools. However, the rest of the 18 participants accepted the teaching of RSE and recognised that teaching certain content of sex education is essential for Muslim children. 3 of the 18 participants accepted RSE teaching at the secondary level on the pretext that it was a government policy:

Our priority is children...when they grow up, they learn, what's there...it's not important to tell them about the sex and these things in the very low level. But it's a government policy...what we can say it's their own agenda. [Parent15]

The religion is a completely different situation on what's right and what's wrong or what the religion permits you to do, but as the law of the land and the religion are two completely different things. [Parent28]

It is the responsibility of state...if state thinks that it is necessary.... you know, the think tanks of the state consider it necessary. We should accept it if we want to live in this country. [Parent13]

The participants feared that RSE at the secondary level was a threat to the religious and cultural identity of their children. Parent15 did not advocate RSE at the secondary level; however, he accepted it as the government policy. Similarly, Parent28 shows an increased understanding of this policy as he differentiated between religious beliefs and the laws of the land. On the same note, Parent13 endorsed RSE because it was a policy of the government. This was indicative of a very interesting assimilationist view of social integration and multiculturalism. It showed that these 3 parents are trying to create a sense of belonging to society by accepting the government's policy of RSE teaching in schools.

Only 2 participants were in favour of teaching RSE in state schools; however, they attached certain conditions to it:

I think, 'yeah' and 'no'. 'No' because when you expose something to children at such a young age, they become inquisitive, and which makes them want to do things and inquire. 'Yeah' in the sense where I think it comes into where your children have been groomed or abused, and they don't know it's happening. When they learn about sexual education. There have been lots of cases where children have said: 'That's happening to me'. So, that means it's wrong, so in that sense, 'yeah': a child should understand their body and know what's right and wrong. I think they shouldn't expose it to an extent where it

makes children vulgar or want them to go and do things. They shouldn't...because they know how to be safe about it. So, yeah. [Parent6]

We weren't taught that much when we were there at that time, but when, I mean, there's a time and age for everything to move forward a bit. So, I don't know. I mean, I am two minds, to be honest. A yes or no, it just depends what they're going to teach. [Parent19]

These participants were confused and had 'two minds' about the teaching of RSE. Parent6, a father, believed that sex education had its benefits as it allows a child to know his body to resist any abuse. However, he thought it should be taught in a way that does not make a child 'vulgar'. Parent19 summarised the viewpoint of Parent6 and stated that teaching practices determines the impact of RSE on Muslim children. Similarly, the following 4 participants favoured the RSE; however, they emphasised making it 'age-related':

All I would like to say at this point is, if everything is taught which is age-related and is of relevance to a person's age, then there needs to be an opportunity for in, in a sensitive way. [Parent27]

But I think, even when they are eleven or twelve... thirteen is the right age to tell them and explain to them the things like that, they might understand, not in Year 7....8 maybe. [Parent1]

I don't think so that it is needed at all....in my opinion. Especially if they bring it to the primary schools, if it is imparted in the last years of high school, then it is understandable. Obviously, the children become young at that stage. [Parent10]

...the children should be taught that that what their starting point of view is regarding sex education, but it is important for children to know about that when the right time comes. [Parent20]

The appropriate age for RSE teaching was different for different participants. Parent1 and Parent27 advocate that RSE should be given at the 'right' age and in a sensitive way. For Parent1, 13 years was the right age for a child to teach RSE. Parent20 was not clear about the appropriate age of a child when RSE should be imparted. He said, 'when the right time comes'. This remark was elaborated by Parent10, who emphasised that RSE should be taught to children in the last years of secondary school during Key Stage 4 when the child was between 14 to 16 years of age.

3 parents also showed concern over the dangers of the promotion of sex outside marriage. They thought that the subject of RSE did not teach the moral side of sex which involves respect for the institution of marriage. They proposed that the non-religious school and local communities should agree on the culturally sensitive curriculum and teaching methods of RSE:

I think it's important. I think it's very important. I think it's important for them to know what basically, obviously, it's important for them to know what happens rather than, like, what could be the dangers. I think more in the schools they should more explain more about like, the dangers of sex. I think that's what they should the point they should be going that, not the fact that 'It's okay to have sex'. [Parent28]

That's been a H-U-G-E- topic for the last...coming...a year or plus more...till a certain extent, they do need to be taught about it, how they get taught and what the material is. That is something to question and obviously discussed with the schools and the communities. [Parent24]

The parents should have the right to opt-out, if they you know, they so wish out of sex education if they don't want the child to...[Parent25]

Generally, these participants showed concerns about the teaching of RSE. These parents were choosers of community schools and Church schools. Parent28 expected the schools to explain more about the 'dangers of sex' instead of 'it's okay to have sex'. However, Parent24, a second-generation young mother, gave elaborated opinion and viewed that it is the responsibility of education authorities to take local communities on board about the contents of the RSE curriculum. In a significant finding, a minority of parents (6 participants) suggested that RSE should be informally taught by the parents at home rather than in state schools:

In my opinion. I mean, I think the parents. I think it should be the parents...We don't like to take that kind of topic. But times are changing; you have to change with the times. So, we should be doing something about it...should be; we should definitely, but we don't take that step because we are too scared, too ashamed or too scared? [Parent19]

It (RSE) should come from the home first, from the parent. Parents should have the first right to teach the children that sort of subject according to their own understanding and level of...how they want them to teach. [Parent24]

Just talk, and if you can't talk to your children about these things, who you can you talk to? ... and if you are averse of the schools educating through the SRE, then as a parent, you you've got to take the responsibility of saying, I will take the opportunity of educating or making my child aware with some of what is needed in order for them to be able to deal with some of what are the dilemmas. [Parent27]

Parent19 made a significant comment that although sex was a sensitive subject in the Pakistani Muslim community, however, things were changing, and parents should not be too 'ashamed' or 'scared' while talking about sex-related matters. Similarly, Parent24 made an interesting comment that RSE should be taught by the parents at home first. This way, the parents could guide children according to their cultural values, religious beliefs, and family traditions. Afterwards, the subject may be led by the school, but the foundation of sex education should be laid down by the parents first according to children's religious and cultural needs. The quotations from the following parents elaborated on the role of the parents further:

It is the responsibility of the father in case of a son and the responsibility of mother in case of a daughter. [Parent10]

This gap should be filled, I think, with common sense. Coz I think back if we go from back in the days from when our parents were born from before that, there was no education. It's just something that comes as you grow up naturally rather than being put into your head. Children know nothing, and then there's parents, there were fathers to guide the son, and there were mothers to guide their daughters, they know when's the right time, they can explain them better. They can put it through them. There're some children that don't know nothing. And they were eleven twelve years old. They don't need to be told...and telling them that making them grow up before they age. So, no. I don't believe in that. [Parent21]

2 participants (Parent10 and Parent21) suggested that sex education was the responsibility of both father and mother. However, Parent21 further clarified that this issue should be tackled with 'common sense'. He believed that RSE should be strictly 'age-related' and that parents should decide the appropriate time and mode of instruction.

15 participants were very vocal against the RSE, and they expressed their thoughts as under:

It shouldn't be. It's wrong why they are teaching at such a young age. These things... it's total. For me as a parent, I am concerned. What they're gonna teach him. It's wrong, totally wrong. I don't agree with them at all. [Parent8]

You know, I don't see no, no. I don't see no moral foundation, and that's one of the main reasons I sent my daughter to Islamia school. That is one of the main reasons because apparently, it was going wild...I think there's no moral behind that. It's just a complete waste of time. [Parent21]

I don't agree with it at all. If the option is to take my children out of school when those lessons are taking place, I would like going and sitting with them in the car for an hour...that's okay. I will teach them. [Parent14]

The parents above were against the policy of teaching RSE at the secondary school stage. Parent8 stated that it was 'wrong', and as a parent, he was very concerned about the moral education of their children. Parent14 did not agree with the concept and teaching of RSE. The mother stated that she would prefer to withdraw their daughter from the RSE and teach her at home. Similarly, Parent21 (a mother) considered it a 'complete waste of time'. Due to the teaching of RSE at state schools, Parent21 chose a Muslim school for her children because Muslim schools are essentially single-sex schools.

5 parents who chose Muslim schools were primarily due to the teaching of RSE at state schools. They showed satisfaction their children are receiving RSE in an environment replete with an Islamic ethos. While, 8 parents who chose community schools or Church schools were concerned about the teaching of RSE. Some of them felt uncomfortable about their children being taught RSE by non-Muslim teachers or teachers of the opposite sex. The parents believed that, at present, RSE taught in secular state schools is inadequate. Therefore, a majority of parents (20 participants) wanted Muslim schooling but could not choose due to the strict faith-based admission requirements of Muslim Gujarati schools in Blackburn. The Parent6 feared that the more children know about sex, the more they will do it because RSE does not cover Islamic values associated with abstaining from sex outside marriage. Such parental concerns regarding RSE were shaping their preference for single-sex Muslim schools.

6.4 Language education

Pakistani Muslim children are multilingual. They speak three or four languages on a daily basis: English at school, Arabic and Urdu at the mosque, and Urdu and Punjabi at home. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, all 33 participants stated that good quality spoken English is one of the criteria for a good school. The majority of participants selected a state school due to the proficiency in 'spoken English' of the children [Parent20]. The state schools provide a suitable platform for a child's early years' transition from mother tongue to English and provide relevant support to learn English as an additional language (Bhattacharyya et al., 2003). 5 Pakistani immigrants from Europe (secondary migrants) also cite English language education as one reason for migrating to England. They revealed their understanding regarding the teaching of heritage languages (Urdu and Punjabi), religious language (Arabic) and modern foreign languages (such as French and Spanish) to their children.

The statement of Parent1 is representative of the varied preference of languages on the part of the participants for their children:

Yeah, I think...daughter wants to do Spanish. She is learning French at the moment in school. So, yeah...she is supposed to pick up languages. Punjabi²⁰ no... Urdu²¹ no... English, yes. I try to teach her a little bit of Punjabi now...but yeah.

The preference for language education also surfaced as a factor in the school choice process:

Urdu or Punjabi is almost finished...the children speak English at the home. Our family members try to speak Urdu with the children. Even if we speak Urdu with them, they reply in English. [Parent12]

Urdu. I would love to teach them Urdu. I mean, I try my best at home and got books at home as well. But especially well, children are taught outside really from a teacher. I mean, when I was in high school, did GCSE in Urdu. So instead of any other languages, I prefer that, but they don't have this option anymore in high school. It's finished, it's sad really because either Spanish or French nowadays. [Parent23]

I would like them to learn Urdu as well.... but it's nice too. It's hard for us to teach them because we when we don't speak it either.... but if

²⁰ Punjabi: the native language of people living in Punjab province of Pakistan; a widely spoken language.

²¹ Urdu: the national language of Pakistan.

my children have picked it up, it's only through programmes or watching YouTube videos or something, yeah yeah. [Parent16]

I would. Yes. I've taught them Urdu as well, to some extent, and Insha Allah. I have taught all of my children up to the second or third book from Pakistan, Urdu books. So, they can read basic Urdu, understand it. [Parent20]

They (the grandparents) were very happy when they saw my children speaking Urdu. Otherwise, if my children would be speaking in English, they would have problems in communicating with the children. If your children frequently talk to their grandparents in Pakistan, it has a benefit in the sense that they learn Urdu and can communicate easily with grandparents. [Parent9]

In the past, a local high school started the teaching of Urdu language. However, no parent showed interest in imparting Urdu language learning to his or her child. Now, the parents and children prefer to speak English language even at home. Urdu language is spoken very rarely. [Parent2]

These accounts revealed that participants had diverse opinions on the importance of heritage languages such as Urdu and Punjabi. According to Parent12, Urdu and Punjabi languages were 'almost finished' as they were replaced by the English language. He shared an observation that if some parents tried to speak Urdu with their children, they usually replied in English. In most cases, the children could understand Urdu but could not speak it fluently. They preferred to talk in English, which is spoken in school and in the mosque by the England-born Quran teachers. This stance is substantiated by Parent2, who reported an initiative to teach Urdu in a local secondary school in Blackburn was unsuccessful in attracting sufficient enrolment and was ultimately discontinued.

However, other participants such as Parent23, Parent16 and Parent20 wanted to revive the heritage languages. They were committed to Urdu being Pakistan's national language and a symbol of Pakistani identity. They used different strategies to teach Urdu language to their children, e.g., they got Urdu books from Pakistan and watched Urdu programmes on YouTube alongside their children. They wanted their children to learn at least a basic Urdu reading and writing level. Learning Urdu was a means of maintaining a link with Pakistan, their erstwhile homeland. It was also necessary to enable the children to communicate with their grandparents in Pakistan.

The grandparents could not communicate in English and were happy if their grandchildren spoke Urdu (Parent9).

As far as Arabic language learning was concerned, it was generally considered the responsibility of the mosque, and it was regarded as the 'most superior language' among other languages being the language of the Holy Quran:

I would like to because I'm like pro-Islamic Studies, etc., and I teach Islamic sciences. I would like them to focus more on learning the Arabic language. Yeah. Because the Muslim...that is very important to us and we believe that is the most superior language from all languages. [Parent20]

Arabic, as well as Urdu language, is also offered by the school (Islamic school). [Parent11]

All 33 participants were comfortable with teaching Arabic language as children attend the mosque in the evening daily. Arabic was also offered as a modern language alongside Urdu at Muslim schools [Parent11 above]. However, state schools widely offered other modern foreign languages such as French:

Yes, I would. They do teach French in the Church of England primary school and Spanish. They also take the Year 5 and 6 to France holiday abroad for three, four days. So hopefully, she'll be going to now. [Parent24]

I think certainly French widely chosen by students, and it is widely offered as well. [Parent20]

Urdu and Punjabi, she can learn at home. They are all learning at home as well...but not Arabic. Arabic, obviously in the mosque. Foreign language, I would say French is perfect. [Parent7]

Well, I think it is good because obviously, as they grow up, they wanna travel and it's good. [Parent21]

These statements revealed that Muslim children chose French as the most popular MFL. The 19 participants explicitly mentioned that their children are studying French as a modern foreign language. 11 of the 19 participants wanted their children to speak Urdu, children of 3 participants spoke Urdu at home. Only 1 parent was teaching Punjabi to her children. In contrast, 2 parents wanted their children to speak

both Urdu and Punjabi. However, 2 parents neither wanted to teach Urdu nor Punjabi to their children because they wanted their children to get expertise in English. All 33 parents preferred that their children should learn the Arabic language through attendance at evening supplementary schools. Similarly, they wanted their children to achieve academic excellence and believed this could be achieved through developing expertise in English language.

5 'secondary migrants' showed varied preferences for various languages. They described Islamic education opportunities and English language education as the main reasons for their migration to England. However, they asked their children to study Italian and Spanish languages as they were still holding the citizenship of these countries:

When they (children) grow old, they have to move somewhere for higher education because in Spain students have to go out of Spain for higher studies...there is a shortage of good universities...due to this issue, we moved our children here to the UK. [Parent30]

English is the main language; all the subjects are taught in English. There is only one book of English taught in the Italian schools. [Parent29]

If my children get education from England and in future, they have to move to Pakistan. Then it will be easy for them to get admission into schools, colleges and universities in Pakistan. In Italy, there is Italian language. It is a problem for us, as we have to move to Pakistan at some point in future. [Parent33]

They are learning English, Arabic, Urdu.... we speak Urdu language at our home...now my son speaks certain words of Punjabi language. He learnt it from other students in the school [both laugh]. Now, he speaks Punjabi at home. [Parent30]

Obviously, they have lived in Pakistan most of the time, so they are quite fluent in Punjabi and Urdu languages. Punjabi is our mother tongue. The children are grown up; they are not so small, so they know the language. [Parent33]

I have asked my son to study Italian language because they have become Italian citizens, so the learning of Italian language is necessary. [Parent31]

The above participants emphasised that English is a global language and a means of social mobility and future employment. It served as a bridge to connect the world and Pakistan as the Pakistani education system incorporated English language teaching. The children often visit Pakistan on holidays, and if they know heritage languages, they will be better able to communicate with their relatives and extended family. Further, if children move to Pakistan permanently at a later stage, England's education system will support them [Parent33]. The education systems in Italy and Spain were based on their respective national languages. After immigrating to Britain, they suggested their children choose Italian and Spanish languages at school because they held citizenship of these countries. These participants were first-generation immigrants, and their children were familiar with heritage languages as they were brought up in Pakistan. However, they were happy with Arabic language education at the local mosques, which were not easily accessible in Italy and Spain.

33 participants believed that learning Arabic language is the duty of every Muslim because it is the 'most superior language from all languages' [Parent20]. The mosques used simple English books to give Islamic knowledge to the children. The children could communicate with their teachers as the newly employed teachers are British-born and could communicate in fluent English:

Yes, they are English-speaking teachers; they are British born. The children read Arabic as well as translation of Quran in English and explain the meanings of different words of Quran. So, the children are not reading Arabic script only as we read Quran in our childhood without understanding the meanings of it. They are taught proper meanings of the Arabic words...it is a very good practice. [Parent30]

Yes. You know, and there's like, you know, you read the *Nasheed* and do the alphabet, also Arabic alphabet in a, in a fun way. It's not like both sit there and just learn Alif Baa Taa²². Yeah. [Parent24]

Their books are really, really good compared to what we had when we went to the mosque. They are in English with transliteration and everything, even their Quran Sharif that they do all have separate *juziz* (parts of the Quran). They have story behind every surah, so they know the background and all of that. So, it's a better way of learning. She probably knows more than me now. [Parent14]

²² Alif Baa Taa are the first three alphabets of Arabic language.

The above comments were offered by second-generation participants. They were committed to religious excellence like their first-generation predecessors. The connotation of these remarks was that the participants believed their children were receiving better Quran education as compared to them. The second-generation parents' Quran education was only limited to the *Nazra*. They did not read the translation of the Quran. Now, children are taught translation as well as transliteration: the correct Arabic words and their authentic English meanings. The Quranic understanding of children is of a higher level as compared to their parents.

The statement of Parent24 indicated that the Arabic alphabet were taught to the children through the technique of *Nasheed*. It is a lyrical style of pronouncing Arabic words, making it interesting for the children to learn. Moreover, the children are taught the religious events and stories behind every part of the Quran to make it interesting. This enhances the children's levels of comprehension of Arabic language and their knowledge of the history and traditions of Islam.

It is worth mentioning that Arabic is a foreign language for Pakistani heritage children. Only 1 participant mentioned that Arabic should not be offered as MFL at schools because the Arab heritage children can outshine the Pakistani heritage children:

When you're looking at it from a comparative performance point of view, Arabic is one of the hardest subjects to get any form of results which shows that it is a successful subject because you're competing with the Emiratis. So, when their Arabic is next level, so our children will never get to that stage. [Parent27]

It is not out of place to mention that Arabic language is not offered to Pakistani Muslim children as a modern foreign language in supplementary schools. They do not learn how to communicate in Arabic; however, they learn Arabic to the extent of reading and understanding the Quran. 5 parents who chose Muslim schools also sent their children to supplementary schools to learn Quran and gain more understanding of Arabic language. Similarly, 8 parents who chose secular state schools or Church schools also sent children to supplementary schools. This is to say; language appears to give a degree of agency and choice to parents in relation to meeting religious and cultural needs of their children's education. Arabic language is the language of religion which is essential to keep children connected to the roots of

Islam. The parents exercised their agency to maintain a link with their heritage, culture and religion by teaching a variety of languages to their children.

6.5 Single-sex schooling

While discussing the 'criteria' for a good school, many priority areas were highlighted by the participants. For some, co-educational schools were of crucial importance, while for others, the provision of single-sex schooling was of paramount importance. As discussed in the literature review, Muslim parents exhibited diversity in their choice of schools for their children. Some would select a school with an Islamic ethos, while others would favour single-sex schools (Walford, 2008; Halstead, 1989; Shah & Conchar, 2009; Meer, 2007; Dagkas & Benn, 2006; Daun & Walford, 2004). Some Muslim parents would choose a Church school if it were respectful of Muslim children's religious beliefs and identity. It was interesting to note that more than half of the participants (18 participants) endorsed mixed-sex schooling while other participants (15 participants) favoured single-sex schooling; each side had strong arguments for their particular choice:

I would say it's...it would make more sense from observations. I think girls differently and boys differently. So, I think it does make sense. I think it would be beneficial to see the girls separate and boys separate. [Parent17]

Yeah. My daughters have been attending the single-gender school, yeah. I think they'll do much better there. There's no distraction. [Parent20]

Yeah, because of the academic excellence because of the faith-based provision, because of it being a single-sex school, all these factors. Their specialism is on leadership. [Parent27]

The children are growing up because after the age of eleven, you're growing up. And then you come to that age where you don't want your children to go into the wrong field. So, as a parent, you want to try your best. We didn't have an only female school in Blackburn. And then, my second choice was Islamic. [Parent21]

These participants did not support the mixed-gender groupings within a co-educational context. They felt that boys need single-sex schooling as much as girls. The boys could be more easily distracted than the girls. However, the first-generation participants were more concerned about the girls' education in co-education schools.

They also provided the historical pretext for setting up separate Muslim schools to cater to Muslim girls' specific educational needs. The participants in this study considered educating girls in single-sex schools a significant issue.

At Key Stage 2 level, all 33 participants unanimously favoured mixed-sex schooling when the children were under the age of eleven years. However, at the secondary level, children, especially girls, were nearing puberty, so they preferred single-sex schooling:

Yeah, I mean, as far as primary school is concerned, they went to a mixed school. [Parent16]

She's attending a local Islamic high school, which is a single-sex Islamic Muslim school. And the reason you know, we've chosen that school, you know, in comparison to other schools, is that she was very, very keen to go to a single-sex school. That was her choice more than, you know, my choice, our choice, I should say. [Parent25]

Yeah. My daughters have been attending the single-gender Islamic school, yeah. I think they'll do much better there. There's no distraction. [Parent20]

The views of the participants confirmed the review of literature, namely that gender and religion were the primary impetus behind the establishment of Muslim schools in Britain (Haw, 1998). The above-mentioned parents preferred the provision of single-sex schooling. There was also a religious dimension to the provision of single-sex schooling in a faith-based educational setting. According to Muslim religious law, boys and girls should not mix freely after the age of about twelve.²³ Therefore devout Muslims prefer single-sex schools for their children at the secondary level. Thus, single-sex schooling has a wider constituency and huge demand. Many Muslim parents want separate single-sex education for their girls at the secondary level (Halstead, 1989). Of the 15 participants who favoured single-sex schooling, 13 had daughters. While the 18 participants favoured mixed-sex schooling, 12 of them had daughters. This shows that the provision of a safe environment for post-pubescent children (especially girls) has been a significant driver in this regard (Halstead, 2005;

²³ Verse from Holy Quran: 'And when you ask the ladies for anything, ask them from before a screen. That makes for greater purity for your hearts and for theirs.' [Surah Al-Ahzab: Verse 53].

Hewer, 2001). It transpires that the study participants are a heterogeneous group of parents with varied schooling preferences for their daughters.

The findings also indicated that out of 22 male participants, 12 participants endorsed single-sex schooling for their children, especially daughters. However, out of 11 female participants, only 3 favoured single-sex schooling. It suggested that fathers are more protective of their daughters. They attributed single-sex education as a much higher priority considering the safety of their daughters. A father stated:

Sometimes you can see them being harassed. But I went, went to a mixed school. I saw sometimes, you know, girls would be molested physically, and they wouldn't tell the teacher, you know, or it would probably just be ignored. So, to protect them from possible or potential molestation, etc. I, I...an option was available, so I took advantage of that and sent them to a single-gender school. [Parent20]

Another father expressed similar views; however, he stated his daughter herself chose the single-sex school:

She's attending a local Islamic high school, which is a single-sex Islamic Muslim school. And the reason you know, we've chosen that school, you know, in comparison to other schools is that she was very, very keen to go to a single-sex school. That was her choice more than, you know, my choice.... our choice, I should say. [Parent25]

The other 18 participants told a different story. They placed the issue of single-sex schooling at the bottom of their criteria for a good school. They were of the view that in the modern world, the separation of sexes is no more possible:

Well, when you go for a school life...when you for a college...you can't be a separate college. You have to be a mix. So, if you opt for the mix, then you know, you will be comfortable...college, university...when you are working. Obviously, this country well-advanced country now...you all working together. So, you can't. This is everywhere...you can't be, even Pakistan or whichever country you are. [Parent8]

In today's day and age, being in this country, being in an all-boys school or all-girls school, I think it's irrelevant. Okay, it's good in some aspect. I think personally it's important for the children to mix with the different sexes, it's important for them to meet people of a different race, different religion is how they broaden the horizon. [Parent28]

These participants mentioned that the mixing of genders happens at higher education institutions and workplaces and that children need to mix at the school level to have a smooth transition to practical life so that they are not 'lost'. For these participants, single-sex schooling is 'irrelevant' in contemporary times. One of the highlights of mixed-sex schooling is that children interact with children from other communities and gain multicultural competence. However, the divergence of the participants' opinions on gender lines was apparent. A group of parents wanted only single-sex schooling for their children, whether they were boys or girls. The researcher argues that there is a need to conduct further research to establish comprehensive reasons behind substantial variations in single-sex school choices among Muslim parents.

6.6 Muslim schools: The sites of contestations

The findings of the study revealed that there was a divide between parents who decided to send their children to Muslim schools compared to the parents who decided not to. The motives behind the choice of Muslim schools and state secular schools established that schools are the sites of contestation for the multicultural 'mixing' of Muslims with non-Muslims. The participants were divided on the matter of sending the children to Muslim schools. During the interviews, I came across three types of parents:

1. The parents who wished to send their children to Muslim schools and their children secured admission to these schools. [5 participants]
2. The parents who wanted to educate their children at Muslim schools. However, their children could not get admission to these schools due to differences in the sect, long admission queues and membership in Gujarati mosques. [20 participants]
3. The parents who did not favour educating their children at Muslim schools. They were not in favour of the functioning of Islamic schools. They believe Islamic education should only be restricted to evening supplementary schools. [8 participants]

The interviews indicated how Muslim schools' choice was related to the broader issues of culturally sensitive schooling. 25 participants wished their children to be admitted to Muslim schools; 5 of them secured admission and sent their children to Islamic schools:

It is actually due to the Islamic style education provision. They have Islamic ethos. As a parent, I want to keep my children close to Islamic environment. The high school, my children are attending, also has majority of Muslim Pakistani and Indian children. By all means, they have maintained a control; there is no such outright freedom. [Parent33]

Yeah, my children have been attending the single-gender Islamic school, yeah. I think they'll do much better there. There's no distraction. [Parent20]

She's attending a local Islamic girls' academy high school, which is a single-sex Islamic Muslim school. And the reason you know, we've chosen that school, you know, in comparison to other schools is that she was very, very keen to go to a single-sex school.... and she is, you know, her particular interest is to do with Islam and Islamic Studies. She's very, very keen because she attends the madrasa classes in the evenings. She wanted to kind of complement and enhance her, you know, already grounding in religious education and then taking it a little bit further at school. [Parent25]

I will send my children to Islamic schools at the secondary level. The most important thing for the Muslims that they should get a better hereafter. My wife has a desire that our daughter should go to an Islamic school and our son should become a *hafiz*. In this way, God will forgive our sins. [Parent32]

I've seen stabbings, I've seen swearing, I've seen people swearing at other teachers. Don't pick up respect from there. They learn how to become bossy and bully. [Parent21]

Yeah, because of the academic excellence because of the faith-based provision, because of it being a single-sex school, all these factors, their specialism is on leadership. So, it really does develop those leadership of performance of moral and civic leadership duties. And it creates a well-rounded individual who is really confident about knowing where they want to go into...'[Parent27]

The fundamental reason for selecting these schools was the Islamic environment that helped impart culturally sensitive schooling according to the specific educational needs of Muslim children. Out of the 25 participants, 6 parents opined that they wished their children to be educated at a Muslim school because of the quality of education besides the Islamic ethos. For example, Parent3, a second-generation mother educated at a Church school, sent her son to a Muslim school because it was one of the 'best' schools, exhibiting good results:

When I was choosing a high school...yeah...because it was close by, but it was one of the best in...in the UK, it was...it was number three in the league tables across the country...so, because it was such a good school and it was close by...the fact that it's an Islamic school, is a bonus. I did not send him there because it was an Islamic school. I sent him because it was academically a very good school. [Parent3]

For such participants, the good quality of education was a priority, and the school's Islamic character was just a 'bonus'. However, the 17 participants mentioned above were against choosing secular state schools. They considered state schools as having non-Islamic ethos:

Because I think you know...as being a Muslim, it is my duty to teach my kids about Islam, and if you send them to other schools, the mainstream schools...they don't teach about Islam, or they don't teach the real picture of Islam. Because obviously, if they teach Islam, the teacher is non-Muslim. [Parent4]

It's an Islamic school...it has Islamic environment, although it is government-funded but has Islamic ethos.... that was the main reasons.... It is affiliated with an Islamic academy high school...it is their primary school. [Parent11]

For Parent4 above, state schools were secular in character. They taught a religious education curriculum which did not fulfil the religious needs of their children. He also feared that the freedom of choice given at state schools might convert his child into a non-Muslim. The statements by Parent4 and Parent11 were the signposts for choosing Muslim schools. However, 8 participants not sending their children to a Muslim school were equally vocal. Parent13 believed that Muslim schools represented a particular 'mindset' of their administration, and they are 'time pass' schools usually lacking infrastructure, sports facilities, and extracurricular activities:

They have a smaller number of students, and the community has the same mindset. The students, teachers and the administration have the same bent of mind, so they develop a kind of understanding... The community and the school administration in the Islamic schools are on the same page. I consider these schools as time pass schools...they are only time pass... Those schools don't have proper sports facilities, no extracurricular activities. That's why I don't give so much importance. [Parent13]

The provision of facilities was also raised as a significant factor affecting the reputation of Muslim schools. Most parents were looking for a school that offered a holistic educational experience for their children and had the resources to deliver such. In selecting a school, parents were mindful of the academic and physical resources of the school. They were aware of the logistic factors, such as school buildings, science laboratories and playgrounds, that are associated with attending school. Logistics was a complex issue and very individualistic; therefore, it could be difficult to generalise and apply across differing contexts. The following participants complained about the lack of facilities in Muslim schools:

I was doing Science and Chemistry lab tests in a classroom on a desk...which isn't the way our maths teacher left just before our GCSEs. There is nobody to question it... [Parent6]

My daughter passed GCSE from there. However, she did not use the lab even for one day during her studies. You imagine that your child is getting education in the UK and did not go to the lab for science practicals; did not test anything. You know the teachers employed are also not so qualified; if they are qualified, they don't want to use their abilities. [Parent10]

It's because one of my kid, he had a speech problem. So, in the Islamic school, they can't provide that kind of facility to teach one-to-one. So that's how I changed it to this school...[Parent6]

Parent6's evaluation reflects the issues of lack of science laboratory facilities and the availability of Mathematics teacher. This participant was a third-generation mother who described her experiences of education at an Islamic secondary school. There were no proper science laboratory facilities, and being a science student, she had to perform all laboratory tests on her desk in the classroom. Furthermore, she had to face problems in the examinations; the teacher of Mathematics left the school when the examinations were quite near. So, she believed there were issues of lack of facilities and accountability in her school. Similarly, Parent10, a second-generation mother, recounted her daughter's educational experience. She did not use the science laboratory for the tests during her GCSE, besides having issues with the availability of qualified teachers and student support from the school.

Parent6 had to switch from Muslim schools to state schools because of the unavailability of special needs for children with disabilities. He initially admitted his

son to a Muslim school so that he would receive an Islamic education. His son had a speech problem, and the Muslim school could not support his son appropriately, so he had to withdraw his son from school. Now, his son is studying in a state school and receiving relevant special needs support from the state school.

The parental perceptions associated several issues with the functioning of Muslim schools. There were four broad categories of problems: a. strict discipline; b. learning based on spoon-feeding; c. lack of facilities, and d. strict faith-based admission requirements. The discipline at these schools was very 'military', and they exerted a lot of pressure on pupils, affecting their creativity. The Muslim schools lacked facilities and resources. Their premises were generally inadequate; children with special needs were not generally supported. Mostly, the infrastructure for sports and extracurricular activities was also lacking. For these reasons, one section of participants did not favour sending their children to Muslim schools.

Other participants showed similar concerns about the quality of education provision in Muslim schools:

I don't...if you can ask me, I don't agree with Islamic schools...I just...I would send my child to a mixed school. I think Islamic studies should be separate from the main schools... [Parent5]

Yeah, and the other thing I don't know...for me, a lot of people do send their children to the Islamic schools that are accessible now. A lot of them, majority of them say that: 'Their children are spoon-fed'. So, basically, they are taught how to pass exams but not necessarily able to carry on. Once they leave, they struggle more. [Parent14]

Its...they are just spoon-fed. It's very military, you know. A child in Year 1 is not expected to get up and play. They are expected to sit at the table and just learn. Learn, learn, learn and learn, all day long... [Parent6]

So, she did have PSE. She did a history. She did the English, so she managed to do three lessons, but they did a half an hour of an Islamic lesson on a Friday, they do especially on a Friday. [Parent21]

These quotes exhibited different reasons for not selecting Muslim schools. Parent5 was not in agreement with the establishment and functioning of Muslim schools. He believed it is better to keep religious education away from the schools (the state or Muslim schools) in secular England. The children could have secular education at the

schools, and Islamic education was better reserved for mosques (evening supplementary schools).

Parent14 pointed out another important issue in Muslim schools. He believed that children in Muslim schools were 'spoon-fed', compromising their creativity and limiting their opportunities to become independent learners. A mother (Parent6) educated at a Muslim school expressed similar views. She mentioned that the education provision at Muslim schools was very 'military'. They did not generally care for pupils' overall well-being and constantly pushed them to learn to get better results to maintain the school's reputation. She further added:

I think we were spoon-fed answers quite a lot. Like this is what which will come in the test. So, it was not learning for your knowledge. It was learning to answer a test. That's why their results are good...I don't...I don't want for him. [Parent6]

It is interesting to note that this kind of pedagogies such as spoon feeding and rote-learning is used in the mosque, e.g., during *hifz* of Quran. It is beneficial for the memorisation of the Quran. However, when it comes to education in secondary schools, it is not appreciated by parents. Spoon-feeding was one of the limitations for the parents who chose Muslim schools on the pretext of culturally sensitive schooling. It is added that Muslim schools were primarily established by mosques and religious organisations, and consequently, such pedagogies were introduced in Muslim schools.

It was also questioned during the qualitative interviews whether Muslim schools were really Islamic entities. Parent21 challenged the myth of Muslim schools being Islamic in their character. She mentioned that Muslim schools put more emphasis on Science, Mathematics, and English subjects. Islamic education was taught very briefly, and still, they were labelled as Muslim schools.

So, she did have PFC, she did a history. She did the English, so she managed to do three lessons, but they did a half an hour of an Islamic lesson on a Friday, they do especially on a Friday. [Parent21]

This argument was carried forward by a parent, who commented:

You go there, and they get funds from the government. It's funded by them, so have to teach all those things which they want them to teach.

So, they don't have any, you know, any choice. So, no difference, you know, in sending them to English school or state Islamic school. [Parent4]

Parent4 did not believe in the existence of Muslim schools on the pretext that most of them were academies - funded by the state. If the state-supported these schools, they had to teach the national curriculum, one Islamic education subject, and some community languages. Thus, sending a child to a state-funded Muslim school was like sending them to a secular state school. So, 8 parents who chose secular state schools or Church schools along with supplementary schools emphasised the academic attainments of their children and not the faith-based education provision.

The 20 participants who could not get their children admitted to Muslim schools pointed out various issues in the admission criteria, education philosophy, religious dimensions and the facilities available in the Muslim schools of Blackburn:

There is no reason. Lot of my friends...they applied for their children. They only give priority to those people who follow their *aqeeda* (belief). They don't look at them as a whole Muslim community. [Parent8]

...there is that there is definitely more Indians in Islamic schools...because the higher management, their senior management is all Indian, so in that case when there are about six or seven Indian children applying and Pakistani children applying...the Indians get it quicker as compared to we would. [Parent6]

Parent8 believed that Blackburn Muslim schools were not inclusive in their nature. They claimed they represented the whole community and welcomed pupils from all faiths and none. For example, the following is the mission statement of a well-reputed Muslim school in Blackburn:

A Muslim faith-based school that promotes fundamental British values and welcomes applications from all faiths and none...we believe that every young man – regardless of faith, race or background – is unique and special and has the capacity to succeed.

However, Parent8 showed dissatisfaction with this mission statement. He believed that Muslim schools only include the students who believed in the *aqeeda* (religious belief) of the leadership of the school. This statement was in agreement with Walford (2008), who argued that most Muslim schools were ethnically and socially divisive.

They did not serve the wider community and hence were not inclusive. They claimed that they accepted students from all communities; however, this rarely happened in practice. So, the result was the alienation of Muslim children from wider society, negatively affecting community cohesion.

Carrying this argument forward, Parent6 viewed that the senior management of most of the Muslim schools in Blackburn was from the Gujarati Muslim community. They did not want to disturb the ethnic makeup of the Gujarati schools; they devised their admission policies in a manner that Pakistani children are discouraged and left unadmitted. Furthermore, Pakistani children in the Gujarati-dominated schools felt excluded as the majority of children communicate in Gujarati language, which is incomprehensible to Pakistani heritage children. Parent14 feared his children might be excluded from these schools because they could not speak Gujarati language. He expressed concern that his children might be discriminated against on this account and can become a victim of bullying:

Kids don't speak (Gujarati language); they only speak English...if they go there; one, they are Pakistani by...from their father, which they would be bullied for...two, they won't be able to interact because lot of Gujaratis tend to speak Gujarati within, within each other. [Parentr14]

As Chapter 4 (literature review) discussed, Pakistani and Gujarati Indian Muslims live side by side in Blackburn. They interact with each other in shared public spaces such as schools, housing, business and religious organisations. Both share the South Asian culture and the religion of Islam. However, Gujaratis adhere to the *Wahabi* sect of Islam, whilst Pakistani Muslims belong to the *Sunni* sect of Islam. The participants were divided regarding choosing a Gujarati-run supplementary school. 7 participants (including 5 participants who were already sending their children to Gujarati schools) mentioned that they sent their children to the supplementary schools established by Gujarati Muslims even though the latter belongs to a different sect:

They teach Holy Quran with *tajweed*. Secondly, they have devised a proper system of their institutions. They have devised a proper syllabus...they have plans for what they have to cover on year-to-year basis. They have created a discipline; nothing is haphazard. They complete teaching of Holy Quran to your child in a period of six years. They teach complete Holy Quran to your child with complete

tajweed...They have a complete course called 'A Child's Gift', which contains different prayers and lessons on Seerah²⁴. [Parent12]

I have to get the membership of the mosque near to my house...I don't have the membership earlier as my daughter is aspiring for the high school, so I have to get membership of the mosque.... because I want admission of my daughter in Islamic academy girls' high school. [Parent11]

...as religion-wise...as a parent, if we don't go to the...yeah, our children don't go. Like Indian community, they are very good by taking their children in mosques five times. If they are home, they took them five times. [Parent15]

I really want an Islamic girls' high school; we can try "(overlapping) it's a tough competition", yes, it's a tough competition...mosque membership and then catchment area. [Parent1]

They are attending an Indian community-run mosque for the last four days. I think I have struggled for four months in order to get them admitted to this mosque. [Parent31]

They (Pakistani mosques) should observe strict uniform discipline. In case someone violates the discipline, he should be fined. Then I think everyone will observe the discipline. Pakistani mosques lack this kind of discipline.... although they (Gujaratis) follow a different sect.... however, when their children leave the school or mosque, they are wearing the same uniform. They are very disciplined indeed as they have a standard. [Parent9]

Participants in the above-cited quotations insisted on choosing a Gujarati supplementary school due to the discipline and quality of Islamic education. Parent9 advised that the Pakistani supplementary schooling sector should learn lessons from Gujarati Muslims. It did not mean that Gujarati religious beliefs (*Wahabism*) are better than *Sunnism* or Gujarati culture takes precedence over Pakistani culture. The participants appreciated Gujarati Muslims on account of their more observant Islamic culture. It also reflected a deviation from the traditional culturally sensitive schooling; educating their children among Pakistani children only. Pakistani parents are now ready to accept the Gujarati values for the time being. Secondly, the selection of

²⁴ *Seerah* is the biography of Prophet Muhammad. Muslims seek guidance about different aspects of the religion and the world from the life of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him).

Gujarati supplementary schools plays a role in the choice of Gujarati-run independent Islamic compulsory schools. To get admission into these schools, parents need to be a member of one of the Gujarati mosques in Blackburn. Gujarati independent Muslim schools have shown good results and graded as 'outstanding' for their quality education (Ofsted, 2016).

Despite good results, Muslim schools were perceived as not playing a more significant role in the multicultural mixing of Muslim children in the wider society. Muslim children faced several issues when they transitioned from secondary school to further and higher education institutions. As a result, Muslim children might feel that they are 'genuinely lost' [Parent6 below]. The issues related to self-esteem, confidence, mixing with people from the opposite gender, fluency in English language, and academic attainments were mentioned by 4 participants:

So, parents want to send their children there because they have good results. Then those children, when they are out of high school and go to college, which...we don't have a lot of Islamic, we don't have Islamic colleges here. It's a big cultural shock for those children. They, they are genuinely lost...and they go off the radar completely. They get all this freedom. They're not spoon-fed. It's independent learning, and when I went to college, within our first year, half of the children are dropped out because they failed. Because there is nobody to say, 'this is what you have to do'..... So, it's a massive cultural shock for those children. Yeah, it does affect them massively. [Parent6]

Well, when you go for a school life...when you go for a college...you can't be a separate college. You have to be a mix. So, if you opt for the mix, then you know you will be comfortable...college, university...when you are working. [Parent8]

When my daughter completed her education from the Islamic school, she got stars and A grade. Then she got her admission in the college. However, she had to struggle a lot at the college level. At this school, the education was all spoon-fed...the education was based on rote learning and nothing else. You know, when she has to do practical lesson and had to answer proper real questions...then she struggled a lot. [Parent10]

This is exactly same happened with my eldest child. He got A and B stars in the high school...he got very good results. Then he went to a college; however, the first year was very difficult for him to settle. His attendance was hundred per cent; he completed all assignments, but he could not perform well and got low grades. He could not get settle down in the co-education system. Then I met the principal, and it was

decided that my son repeated should repeat the same year...now I know he will kick off, but it is difficult...it's a very big problem. It's not a small but a very big problem. [Parent11]

The interview accounts of Parent6 and Parent8 indicated that female Muslim students who received education at Muslim secondary schools struggled to mix in the co-educational environment at the college. Parent6's quote reflected this issue more clearly. Female students usually got good grades at Muslim schools; however, mixing with boys at college was a 'massive' cultural shock. They were brought up in an environment that did not encourage free mixing or frequent interaction with males. Parent6 mentioned another critical issue. The students were supposed to be independent learners in college. However, they faced extreme difficulty as they were usually 'spoon-fed' in Muslim schools. She recalled that half of her fellow students educated at Islamic secondary schools could not adjust to college and, consequently, dropped out.

On the same continuum, Parent10 and Parent11 cited instances of failure of their daughter and son, respectively, in the further education colleges. It showed that the transition affected the boys and girls equally as they embraced the same environment and went through similar educational experiences at a Muslim school. Parent10 narrated that his daughter got good grades in GCSE at a Muslim school. However, she had to struggle at college as she could not prove herself as an independent learner. There was no creativity-based learning, and they got success in examinations based on rote learning. Similarly, the son of Parent11 got good grades at school; however, he could not perform well at college as he faced problems in the co-educational classes. Later, he had to repeat the initial college year. The transition and adjustment issue at the college was described as a 'big problem' by his father. Both parents saw an equal fall in social self-esteem in their children as they transitioned from Muslim secondary schools to the first year at community colleges. Nonetheless, the children raised in a multicultural environment could be easily adjusted to college:

Hmmm...no, because straight after I went to college, and that is our biggest college here as compared to my school, it was mixed. And it was very big, and I seemed to fit in very easily because around our area where we lived is mixed and as for this a lot to do with how you're brought up in your home you know, you have the influence of your parents, your wider community must do.... I adopted very easily from

a girl's Islamic school into college. But I don't think everyone's the same. [Parent24]

These remarks were expressed by only 1 participant who was a second-generation parent. She was educated at a Church primary school and attended an Islamic girls' secondary school. She acknowledged that she was successful at the college due to parental support and living in a neighbourhood with a diverse community. Thus, she revealed the influence of her multicultural upbringing on her smooth adjustment to the college community. The idea of culturally sensitive schooling assumes that the ways in which students learning and thinking are deeply influenced by the culturally diverse community around them. Therefore, it becomes evident that multiculturalism prepares students to thrive in a diverse world.

6.7 Combination of state schooling and supplementary schooling

All already discussed, sending the children to the secular state school during the day and to supplementary school in the evening has developed as a dominant pattern for Muslim education in England. The children learn secular subjects in schools while getting Islamic education in the evening. This combination works well for the parents. The mosque (supplementary school) occupies an important place in the community life of Muslims; therefore, the participants were asked whether they were satisfied with the role of mosques in the religious nurture of their children. All 33 participants appreciated the role of the mosque in religious education and in bringing discipline into the lives of Muslim children. This was because mosques have transformed themselves over time, and they were working side by side with the compulsory schools:

Of course, they've changed drastically and for the better. They are more academy style, academy, academy style. They have different classrooms for different ages. And the teachers are more trained; they are more knowledgeable. They know how to teach the children, not only teaching but to cope with the different behaviours of the children as well. Before, it'd be a bit more like you could get a smack over, but now it's not allowed...it's more how to cope with the behaviour through how you speak to them and how you treat them. [Parent21]

All the books what he is using, using very good English simple books. Have you seen any of the books that he uses? They are brilliant, so I think the children now have more understanding about religion what they're learning in the masjid is more fun. So, from where they are starting here, it's like a school basically, they start in like nursery, so

the reception class here is like nursery, they are praying, but they are learning, having fun and praying. But as we didn't have fun and pray. [Parent28]

Yes, definitely like my children. They all started at the age of four. So, they started reception class in school at four, and then they went to the mosque, and that was a reception class also. So, it's not like get there and start just learning a whole different language that you've never seen or heard before. It's like do a bit of colouring, do a bit of games. [Parent24]

These interview extracts from parental accounts exemplified that they assigned the mosques an informal 'academy' status. They were happy that the mosque was a disciplined institution run like an academy school. The mosques have synchronised themselves with state schools. This aspect of the mosque was significant as the children received the same disciplined environment in the evening at a school in an Islamic setting. When the children were admitted to the nursery in the school, they started reception classes in mosques. By the time they finished Quranic education in the mosque, they had completed their primary education. So, most Muslim children got mosque education from the age of 4 years to 12 years. Parent24 and Parent28 highlighted that now children learn with fun and enjoyment. They studied Islamic books in simple English, played games on the mosque premises, and did the colouring. So, they had fun alongside Islamic education and daily prayers. The parents in this study noted the difference between contemporary practices and their own experiences as children attending the mosque.

A significant factor in selecting a supplementary school is the religious sect or the religious school of thought of the participants:

I mean, here, the Muslims attend the mosques of their respective sects. [Parent2]

...and because it's a Sunni (a Muslim sect) mosque...we are also from a Sunni background...that's why they are able to. [Parent5]

...you prefer to choose a mosque which matches your sectarian affiliation. When my children were young, they used to go to the mosques of other sects. However, it created a lot of confusions...the children going to the different sect's mosques used to have different version of the religion. [Parent9]

These perspectives represent two critical areas when choosing a mosque or supplementary school: a. sectarian affiliation, and b. ethnic affiliation. Parent2 and Parent5 talked about selecting a mosque that corresponded to their sect. However, Parent9, rather than just describing his choice, articulated the whole decision-making process. He said that Blackburn has a large number of mosques belonging to different sects. He used to send his children to a mosque of another sect from their own. The mosque administration adhered to other practices and interpretations of Islamic Shariah law. It created confusion in the children's minds as a different religious philosophy guided them at home. Later, the parent had to switch the mosque to a mosque of their own sect. The second aspect of choice is ethnic mixing. Parent6 sent his child to a mosque of his own sect, the one run by the Pakistani community. He did not prefer a Gujarati mosque due to the difference in sectarian affiliation, heritage language and culture, which might lead to the exclusion of his child in the mosque community. In this way, the child felt alienated and potentially faced problems in mixing with Muslim children from other schools of thought and the wider society.

3 participants shared their perceptions about better facilities at mosques. These responses illustrated a variety of strategies the modern mosques were adopting, such as better trained teachers; young Britain-born teachers whose first language was English. Currently, most of the teachers are from Pakistan, whose mother tongues are Urdu and Punjabi. The mosques are restructuring the Islamic education curriculum with easy-to-understand simple books; children are taught about Islam and relevant things of day-to-day importance in their daily lives. So, the availability of native Muslim teachers, teaching methods, teaching materials, and relevant curriculum have resulted in improved mosques as well as supplementary schools. In this regard, the participants were satisfied with the performance of the mosques:

Yeah, because they're doing really well with the way the teaching method has changed quite a lot to the mosques before...now there's younger teachers teaching the children, better-trained teachers. They are from here, from the UK and not from abroad...they don't do that, and so children are happy, they're happy with their teachers...don't come home saying that their teachers, they have fun in mosques as well. [Parent16]

I think it's about how you so basically when we went to mosque, it was very different in our generation. I think they, now that when we went

to mosques, obviously, we didn't have no...English books. There was...we had teachers from Pakistan. [Parent28]

I think over the time, it has changed. I am talking about 2005-2006 onwards. I think the standards of the mosques have been improved significantly. There has been a lot of focus on having teachers who are very young. I mean, in our times, there were teachers who could not speak the language English which was almost our first language. But the teachers now which have the first language is English. They are natives. The teachers are now more specific in *tajweed*, so I think the standards have improved in the mosques. They have a different curriculum now. [Parent17]

As discussed earlier, the mosques tried to engage children with different extra-curricular activities. This was in line with the conduct of parent-teacher meetings in state schools. They also aimed to involve parents in community engagement activities:

They have time where they colour; they play games, they do activities. So, it's not all just constant. You know, it's that they made it fun and games as well. So, children enjoy it. My children have never said: 'We don't want to go to school. We don't want to go to mosque'. Mashallah. Yeah. [Parent16]

I have witnessed myself in the mosques a lot of posters that children have made about Khana Ka'ba, the Masjid e Nabvi and the five pillars...all that is visible now. It shows a lot of creativity in the mosque. The fun part is also there. [Parent17]

The Quran teacher of our mosque is British born. A religious family has established this mosque; they have also migrated from Pakistan like us. They conduct parents-teachers meetings on monthly basis. They also seek the opinion of parents about better educational outcomes of the children. [Parent9]

Yeah. When they do have like exams, or they do, do exams, and if they've got concerns, they will speak to you, we've got concerns we can speak to the teachers, and like tomorrow, they've got they can have a fun day. They can have Eid party tomorrow, so children are excited to know, yeah, they've got Eid party tomorrow. [Parent16]

The above remarks of 4 participants specified that children's extra-curricular activities are coupled with parents' leisure/engagement activities at the supplementary schools. There were different kinds of religious competitions and celebrations of

Islamic festivals. In this way, the mosques played their role in developing a dialogue with state schools and the Muslim community for a meaningful partnership. Based on such partnership, 8 parents chose secular state schools on the pretext that supplementary schools would fill their Islamic 'gap' left by non-religious state schools. In comparison, 5 parents chose Muslim schools, so their children were educated in an environment that fully supported their children's educational needs.

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has reported Muslim parents' concerns about teaching RE, RSE, languages and single-sex schooling in a culturally sensitive way. RE was generally considered a subject of ethics and morality. The participants had no significant issues with children's questions about Christianity, Christmas, Jesus, and Hinduism. Parents described the similarities as well as the differences between religions to their children through a comparison between Christmas and *Eid*. Studying English and Arabic languages was considered necessary to understand religion and cope with the challenges of modern society. However, teaching heritage languages such as Urdu and Punjabi was considered the responsibility of parents.

Although the participants accepted various contents of the RSE curriculum, however, they emphasised that there was a need to re-design RSE syllabi and teaching approaches in consultation with local Muslim communities. Therefore, sometimes teaching RSE was considered a factor in choosing a Muslim school. Muslim schools offer single-sex schooling. The participants were divided on the option of single-sex schooling. However, some participants preferred single-sex education, especially for their daughters at the secondary level. Divisions were clear on the choice of Muslim schools as they were dependent on 'spoon-feeding' and rote learning derived from religious institutions. These pedagogies were suitable for *hifz* activity but were not making pupils independent learners at Muslim schools.

The divisions were also visible in the choice of supplementary schools, which were mainly chosen on the basis of sectarian affiliation (*Sunni* and *Wahabi*). However, some participants appreciated Gujarati schools and supplementary schools due to the discipline and quality of education. Pakistani parents did not opt to convert themselves to Wahabis to send their children to Gujarati schools and supplementary schools. Therefore, 5 parents chose Gujarati Muslim schools. 8 parents were not in favour of Muslim schooling and viewed that Islamic education should only be reserved for supplementary schools. The quest for admission to Gujarati schools

showed the participants' desire to deviate temporarily from the sectarian affiliation. They were ready to accept the Wahabi-sensitive schooling for the time being for good results.

Chapter 7: Findings – ‘Moments’ of Choice

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the school choice landscape in Blackburn and how all of the factors identified in Chapters 5 and 6 (parents' choice of Church, no-religion, mixed and Asian majority schools, multicultural mixing, culturally sensitive schooling, institutions like the supplementary school, and social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources) frame, enable or constrain the ‘moments’ of school choice, and how this nuance the typology of school choosers provided by Gewirtz et al. (1995). In order to present and discuss the study’s findings, the chapter first factually charts the moments of choice of the 33 participants. Next, it outlines the reasoning underpinning the Asian majority schools chosen by most of the participants. It then directly explains and considers the parents’ criteria for a ‘good school’ revolving around ‘good results’, Islamic ethos and discipline in schools. Further, the broader issues, such as why parents exercise a ‘limited choice’ in the school selection and allocation processes, are discussed in detail.

The case study of Blackburn parents shows that Muslim children attend all types of locally available schools. However, the parents’ criteria for a ‘good school’ enabled the researcher to draw a typology of choosers based on Gewirtz et al.'s work (1995). This chapter presents the distinctive characteristics of parents in Blackburn that are different to Gewirtz’s model. The typology of choosers in Blackburn is framed as: a. informed choosers, b. semi-skilled choosers, and c. constrained choosers. This typology is based on parents’ capitalisation of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources, which influence secondary school choices. This typology has resulted in four types of school choosers in Blackburn such as a. community/Church school, b. ‘mixed’ schools, c. Asian majority schools, and d. Muslim schools.

7.2 Moments of choice

The majority of participants (19 of the 33 participants) were second-generation and educated in England. Before asking them how they chose schools for their children, I found it relevant to ask how their parents chose schools for them. The responses from 18 second-generation participants indicated that distance and the Asian ethnic composition of the school was the main reason for their school selection, as shown in the following extracts:

I think a lot of past generations, that's all they all looked up in terms of school, whatever was the closer, was easier for the children to just go. [Parent6]

My school was chosen by my parents, nearest one to the house. So, at that time, they didn't know how education is. It's just the closest there...them...convenience...yes. [Parent5]

Well, ours was always a locality...so whichever was closest, we were there, and we moved quite a bit, so we were living in other side of the city, so at that time, a Church of England primary school was the closest over there...it was always locality. [Parent6]

Again, it was my parents' choice. It was local, lot of friends went there. I think almost hundred per cent. I think it's almost hundred per cent Muslims. I don't know now. I left in 2005, and it was hundred per cent Pakistani and Indian. [Parent17]

It was very nice. I went to a local Church of England primary school just up the road from where we lived. It was mixed Pakistanis, Indians, English people...very mixed. It's a Church of England school. [Parent24]

I am not quite sure. I've never asked them that, but there was quite a few of Asian community that was going there. It was a community primary school, so we went there. It was my dad's choice. I didn't know [laughter]. [Parent26]

Their choices can be compared to 17 participants in this study who chose Asian-majority schools compared to the 16 parents who chose mixed schools (see Chapter 5). The educational attainments of children did not seem to be a priority for them. Due to socioeconomic reasons, the parents generally selected the closest schools due to the convenience of distance. Such parents were in favour of Asian-majority schools on the pretext that their children's peers would significantly influence their upbringing. Moreover, first-generation parents had less access to 'insider' knowledge and understanding of England's education system, which led them to choose the closest Asian majority schools. They considered safety in numbers; if their children were admitted to a school where Asian children were in majority, there would be little chance of bullying and racism:

There were obviously other options, but they had...it was a bit further out; there were more white people in that school. So, I think my mum

and dad wanted me to go to the school...there was...there was racism back then as well. They wanted me to go to the best of the Asian schools. [Parent14]

The children were usually not consulted during the choice process. The parents preferred the schools where Muslim Pakistani or Asian children were in the majority and where their friends and extended family were attending. Therefore, most of the time, the closest school was their ultimate choice without considering its academic quality. These first-generation parents of the 18 second-generation participants epitomise the characteristics of 'constrained choosers' (Gewirtz et al., 1995). They were mostly living in the ethnic Muslim majority neighbourhoods and were facing economic constraints as they came as labourers to work in the textile industry of northern England.

Only 1 participant of second-generation parents stated that his parents made a 'deliberate choice' of sending him to a White school 'on the other side of Blackburn':

My dad made a deliberate choice of sending me to a school which was, it was a school on the other side of Blackburn, but it was an all-white school, it's a Church of England school...and so it was a school which was really considered to be not the preferred choice for many of the parents who lived in the area where, where I was grown growing up in. In fact, nobody from the neighbourhood went to that school. It was a school which had very few Muslim heritage children, let alone the profile of being a Pakistani; I think there were three in the whole time I was there. So, the reason why my dad chose that, I'm not too sure. But it was one of the better decisions when it came to school. [Parent27]

Parent27 did not know exactly why his parents chose a distant White majority school for him. But he thought it was 'one of the better decisions' in his schooling. He was not sent to the closest Asian majority schools like his siblings:

It's not; it was not close. There are schools which are closer. I didn't go to a school where my brothers and sisters went. It was a school which was considered to be the best school for me at the time. I don't know why. But it was a good school. [Parent27]

The participant believed that it was a 'good school', then he expanded on his idea of a 'good school' as:

It's about academia, and obviously, it's about standards, and it's about proficiency in English, and it's about the readiness to learn. I think it's really important...informed choices about schooling is considered even if it's inconvenient, even though it's not the school nearest to you, even though you've got to travel. [Parent27]

It transpired that the reason behind his school selection being the 'best school' was due to its academic standards. Secondly, he was sent to a White majority school to learn English language while studying with native English speakers. He viewed his parents as making an 'informed choice' by selecting a distant White-majority school having good academic standards (Gewirtz et al., 1995). So, the parents of Parent27 were the only exception, while the rest of parents of second-generation participants preferred the closest Asian-majority schools.

All 33 participants revealed an understanding of the importance of education for the Blackburn Muslim community. They used the ubiquitous language of choice and showed an overall preference for the state schools at the primary level. The following interview extracts represent the reasons expressed by the majority of parents (28 participants), which included convenience of distance, pick and drop issues and the presence of the South Asian Muslim community in the schools:

Yes, distance.... convenience of walk it down and walk it up.
[Parent19]

You have to look at a pick and drop as well because you don't need to parents and husbands working, and then you've got daughter to pick up and a son you have to try to fix, juggle everything up. So hopefully, you have to put a few things in mind being a parent. It's not just that you know, one's here, one's there, you have to think what's best for them, what they want and what you want as a parent for them.
[Parent21]

Yeah. There was another school nearer to us. But this community primary school, it was about twenty minutes. So, it was not very far because it was walking distance. And there was a large Asian community, and I think, maybe ninety-five per cent Asian in the school at the time. It was a nice school. [Parent26]

To be honest, it was near our house. When we applied for it, so that's the first option, we got it. So, that's why, near house. So, that's why for the small children. So, for the primary school, they give you the priority. We live near the school...so we got that school. [Parent8]

I am talking about all state schools. I just chose this school as it was close to my home. I appreciate all state schools. I don't say that this school is good, and that school is bad. [Parent13]

Their school was selected, obviously close to the house...basically, they are so young here, and we were looking for a school because they are at a young age...so it was just what was convenient, convenient close to home really...because they are still at primary school. [Parent16]

The convenience of distance was the main consideration that dominated the parental preference for primary school choice. However, 5 participants highlighted that the consideration of 'closeness' of school preference is now changing. Now parents also consider the academic quality of school along with the convenience of distance:

No, I think before, our parents used to send us to the closest schools nearer our house...but now... nowadays, parents look at the reports of outstanding schools, and they try to send their kids even though if it is not close to home. They can make travel out of town and take them to a different school. [Parent1]

I think location is something which is close to home. So, it is easier to you know travel to and from school. So mainly it was the location....and you know nowadays, standard of education is also looked at. Yes. [Parent20]

I suppose if the school is not good and the distance is less, you think I'd rather just go a bit further down the road and send my children there...[Parent24]

I wasn't really fussed about the mileage, how far or how near a school was. We came across a nearby community primary school which was, it was quite near as well and had a good report. We were quite happy with that. [Parent7]

It is quite far from here, but we chose that because it had good reputation. And we chose obviously we read through the Ofsted report. It has good reputation good records. So, we chose that school instead of local ones. [Parent23]

These second-generation parents demonstrated that the closest school was not their only consideration. They were concerned about the academic quality of the school as well. In this way, they represented the type of 'informed choosers' because they are

'insiders' of the education system and referred to Ofsted reports to see the gradings before making a school choice. Parent24 expressed the view that it was better to travel a distance to gain better education if the local school had a low education standard.

The findings of the study reveal that the parental choice of secondary schools does not necessarily start from Year 6, which is the last year of primary education. They keep making choices throughout Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to Year 6) when the child is between seven and eleven years old. They pass through different moments of choice during Key Stage 2 based on the year-to-year Ofsted rating of schools. Sometimes, parents switch schools from Muslim to no-religion state schools and vice versa, considering the academic standards, bullying and racial discrimination issues. Interviewing the parents whose children were studying in Key Stage 2 helped the researcher explore various secondary school choices. All 33 participants showed concern over choosing secondary schools, which is a 'big thing' for them:

Based on that, but it is a thing we have started thinking about to which school and its year and a half away. Because it's a big thing for us. [Parent1]

That's hard. I have been thinking for that one for a while because there are a few different schools. [Parent6]

Again, something similar, and this is something I have started thinking of, and I am worried... [Parent14]

Yes, it was a local high school which was the other school which also had...it had good reviews. [Parent3]

For Parent6, choosing a secondary school was a 'hard' process due to the availability of various types of schools in Blackburn. However, Parent14 was 'worried' about choosing a secondary school. Later, parents explained that they were worried due to discipline issues because, in secondary schools, it was possible that pupils could become out of control. So, choosing a school with a reputation for having good discipline is necessary.

Participants showed awareness about the choice landscape of Blackburn, and they used market language when making comparisons between different schools. They were the 'informed choosers' and considered themselves 'consumers' of the

commodity of education (Feinberg & Lubienski, 2008). They wanted to complete their search before making a final decision. They used words such as 'reviews', 'Ofsted rating', and 'league tables' while articulating their school preferences:

I spoke to, went to the open days to see the school...spoke to few parents who were there...who had maybe children who are a bit older and there who are going into Year 7...they all said that it was a good school for the boys and the league tables and everything there. [Parent3]

Yeah, of course, you have to...if you are new here, then you have to ask your neighbours: 'which school is better', but mostly, all educational system is similar in every school: same syllabus, same everything. There is no difference. Only the Ofsted rating obviously; school environment. [Parent15]

However, the factor of a school's rating may be coupled with some other factors, such as faith-based education provision. Parent3 favoured a Muslim school not because it has an Islamic ethos but due to its good quality of education. She informed the researcher that the school had a higher place in the 'league tables'; however, the school's Islamic ethos was just considered an added benefit. This resonates with the research conducted by Levitt & Woodhead (2018) in Leicester regarding choosing a faith school with respect to the diversity of pupil rolls as well as academic excellence. Some faith-based schools in Leicester have improved their position in league tables and are rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted. Therefore, they had become the preferred choice for faith communities, as evident in the moments of school choice exhibited by the Blackburn's parents.

7.3 School nomination and school allocation

This section analyses the two factors defining the moments of choice of participants: a. school nomination; b. school allocation. The participants stated that the education system provides them with a 'limited choice' when choosing their preferred school. Of 33 participants, 18 did not favour the school admission policy as they wanted to send their children to their first-choice community school, Church school or Muslim school. They felt disappointed when their child did not get admitted to their priority school:

We don't have a choice. We give some choices on the form...we select two-three schools where we want to go, and the council decides...so which is most suitable...according to the area that which is most suitable for us. They give us choice. It's not that we don't have

a choice. We have to select three-four schools, different schools...then they have to decide which school is the most suitable for a child. [Parent15]

In Blackburn, our local authority is set out where you have three options...and your three options...I can pick any three schools, but they usually get one where you are travelling. So, even the government will say, 'don't go too far'. They pick something closer for you. [Parent6]

There are two choices; one is a local academy high School...although I applied my daughter's admission in Islamic high school, and I did not indicate a second choice. There are also other state high schools. Now, it is up to the education authorities where they grant admission. [Parent11]

We applied in a local Islamic academy high school, but they did not give the admission. My daughter goes an academy high school. She is in year eleven, so my son will also go there. [Parent29]

Yes, they will be going to a secondary school next year. I am thinking about Islamic academy high school due to its Islamic ethos. However, one of my friends did a lot of struggle for the admission of his child in the Islamic academy high school, but the admission was refused. This is very frustrating for me as I intend to send my children to that school. They have a number of pre-conditions for admission which are difficult to fulfil. I think they should relax the criteria. [Parent30]

Parents exhibited their loss of control and agency over the school choice process. They generally believed that school allocation depends upon their postcode and the catchment area (Burgess et al., 2014). However, the quote from Parent15 demonstrated that participants were not without any choice at all, as they were allowed to nominate three schools; however, the schools should be within their catchment area. Therefore, parents were aware that they had a choice but that it was limited in nature. They exercised a limited agency in the matter of school choice due to LA's admission policies.

On the other side, 15 participants were comfortable with this policy, such as Parent3, who got their priority number one school:

It was local school. It was in the catchment area...it was close by...and compared to all the local schools close by, it has the best rating from Ofsted. So, it was my first choice...we got first choice.' [Parent3]

You know, obviously we, you know, the local authorities of the council, ask us for three preferences for secondary schools. This is the policy, and obviously, before they allocate, you know, your child the place, they sort of look at the, you know, preferences and then, you know, they look at; obviously, this is the policy. [Parent25]

When the state takes responsibility of the school admission, then I will be in favour of that school. I will support the school whether it is Islamic or not. A state school has to follow some criteria. I mean, this school has to follow the state directions; they cannot do things on their own. That's why they show good results. [Parent13]

Parent3 considered himself fortunate that he got the school of his first choice, which might explain why he was supportive of the state admission policy. Parent25 and Parent13 accepted the school nomination and allocation mechanism on the pretext that it was a government policy. This situation is reminiscent of the 3 participants who did not favour the teaching of RSE; however, they accepted it because it was a government policy. On one side, the statements of Parent3 and Parent13 indicated a strategy of integration into the wider society by respecting the state policies. However, on the other side, this shows that they do not see themselves as active citizens. They are more likely to view and position themselves as consumers than as participants in the school admission process. They fall in the category of 'semi-skilled choosers' because they trust in state education policies and their choice of schools was irrespective of the academic quality of allotted schools.

The statement of above Parent25 combined with the 'don't go too far' comment (by Parent6 on the previous page) indicated that the choice system was opaque even to these 'informed' choosers. The participants were aware that the school choice process was supervised by the local authority. A local authority has a statutory duty to secure sufficient school places and oversee the admissions process. All preferences are collated, and parents then receive an offer from the local authority at the highest preference school at which a place is available. The authorities consider factors such as a home address, sibling's education, catchment area and social or medical needs of the child. If their first choice is not allotted, parents have the right to appeal against an admission authority's decision. The government asks faith-based schools to provide information regarding how membership or practice of the faith will be demonstrated. In this regard, the admission criteria of Gujarati schools revolve around parents' affiliation to one of Blackburn's four mosques of the *Wahabi* Gujarati

community. In contrast to Gujarati schools, admissions to state schools were a straightforward admission process, as Parent13 stated:

I just chose this school as it was close to my home. I appreciate all state school, I don't say that this school is good, and that school is bad. State is responsible for education system here. Every school is important for the state. The names of the schools can be different; however, the system of education is the same. I am satisfied with all the schools. I chose this school because it was closest to home. [Parent13]

However, when it comes to choosing Gujarati Muslim schools in Blackburn, the matter of school preference surfaces with gravity. They provide single-sex schooling, and Muslim parents prefer these schools, especially for their daughters. They are generally over-subscribed and have long admission queues. As already discussed in Chapter 6, a majority of parents (20 participants) wanted Muslim schooling but could not get admission due to the faith-based admission criteria of Gujarati schools.

They've got some mosques down there...and if my daughter was going to one of their mosques, and we were a member with their mosques and that she would have hundred per cent got a place there because they take...all the members who are going to their mosque.... that's a sort of what council decided. I even went to the appeal but no luck. I was told before that there's a big NO; there's no chance. [Parent21]

A section of participants preferred to educate their children in Gujarati schools because of Islamic ethos and an overall South Asian culture. Even though the Gujaratis belong to a different sect, Pakistani parents were impressed by their higher level of discipline and religiosity. However, the participants' perceptions about being discriminated against at Gujarati schools created frustration among them. They thought that admission criteria supported the propagation of *Wahabism*. To get admission into these schools, the parents had to be members of one of the Gujarati mosques in Blackburn. Therefore, the selection of Gujarati supplementary schools is also a factor in the choice of Gujarati-run primary or secondary schools.

Against this backdrop, parents in Blackburn face the dual challenge of multicultural mixing. The first challenge is mixing with White British and non-Muslim communities. The second challenge is the mixing with *Wahabi* Gujaratis in Blackburn, wherein good quality Gujarati schools accept only those families affiliated with *Wahabi*

mosques in the town. However, 5 participants (all were *Sunnis*) decided to admit their children to Gujarati schools. These 5 parents did not trade off their sectarian affiliation and did not convert to *Wahabism*. However, they accepted the *Wahabi* ethos temporarily for the sake of 'good results' for their children.

7.4 Criteria for a 'good school'

The research question, 'what are your criteria for a good school'? was one of the most interesting questions in the interview guide. This question helped bring forth a variety of answers and viewpoints, which the researcher did not anticipate. For a majority of participants (15 participants), the key criterion for a good school was 'good results'. However, the parents mentioned several other factors which constituted their 'criteria for a good school' such as Islamic ethos (4 participants); discipline and behaviour management (4 participants); inclusive schools (2 participants); motivated teachers (2 participants); proficiency in English language (2 participants); no awareness about criteria for a good school (1 participant), and a welcoming school with good facilities and a clean and tidy environment that safeguards the children (3 participants);

A good school is a school that looks after children...safeguards the children...has very good environment. That's my criteria of a good school. [Parent17]

Well, it should be nice, clean, and tidy and a new school looks nice. [Parent19]

The participants were concerned with the physical infrastructure of schools. They indicated they wanted a 'safe' school that 'safeguards' their children. Moreover, a 'good school' should have a warm and welcoming environment. These preferences show that the participants were concerned about the safety of their children. The safeguarding of the children is their first and foremost criterion before considering a school for final selection.

4 participants stressed discipline and opined that a 'strict' school is a good school. The teaching of the national curriculum should infuse discipline and community values among children. They were emphatic that while choosing a school, they considered the level of discipline in the school and linked school discipline with good results:

The closest one is a prominent state high school where I am not a big fan of behaviour there...the behaviour management more than anything. [Parent6]

I did my research, so I spoke to people and found out that it's a strict school and it's a lot of hard work, but it's a good school that gets good results. [Parent3]

Criteria of a good school.... discipline in the school. Obviously, good teaching, there are the two main reasons for me and my family's understanding, you know if there's any questions, it should be helpful, any concerns, better communication as well. [Parent26]

A second-generation mother (Parent21 below) expressed her concern over the issue that some schools have no discipline, and the pupils do banter with teachers. As a result, the pupils do not learn values from the school, which is a significant obstacle to multicultural education. Discipline and behaviour management were the qualities of a 'good school' for 3 other participants:

In quite a few of the schools we have, whereas some Catholic and academy high schools, I think they let the children do banter when you allow them to do banter, and I think they take advantage and then you don't have got that respect for your teacher. So yeah. [Parent21]

A second-generation mother who attended a girls' Muslim secondary school run by the Gujarati Muslim community stated that a school should be inclusive - welcoming to all communities. She said that some Muslim schools do not generally admit students from other religions, sects and ethnicities. For her, an ideal school was an inclusive school that welcomes children from all ethnicities and cultural backgrounds:

Well, I suppose a school that's warm, welcoming, you know, nurtures the children who has a good ethos who teaches the subjects in a, you know, a nice environment that's going to be helpful to them. Who has a good liaison with the parents and has a parent's involvement? Who is accepting of everyone? Because you do have schools, they say that they accept everyone, but they don't. [Parent24]

In addition to these remarks, another parent (Parent25) believed that a good school should respond to its pupils' academic and social needs. The curriculum should teach diversity, social justice, and respect to the pupils to become multicultural citizens of the country where they are residing:

Good school, in my book, is one that kind of caters for the needs of its young people, and academically, but also socially, I think it's very, very important to develop young people to become good citizenship, citizens of the country that we live in. [Parent25]

15 participants were mainly concerned about 'good results' for their children. Their main selection criterion was to choose a school that has high academic standards:

A school should have good results. Their environment should be good. Our religion is Islam which is always our focus...the children should be given Islamic ethos at their place of study. [Parent11]

A high standard of quality of teaching and learning, the results are good, people take more risks, and then you become very creative with the way you work and work with children. So, they can get the best deal, and you send your child to school to keep them safe. Yes, you send your child to school to keep them happy. But ultimately, you send your child to school to get the best of the education that you can get them to get them to the next stage. [Parent27]

We will look for a school that has decent results...look at the calibre of the children that attend that school because obviously they are going to be her peers, and they are going to have a massive influence...which I think that's another big issue for me, and I think that's why I am struggling already [laughs].... [Parent14]

Where I send my children...that school is quite far off where I live....I have to travel...It takes me an hour to just go and come back, but the grades are good, the staff is fantastic, and they have got good GCSE results. [Parent5]

There is high school as well as sixth forms. So, your further education is done within the same establishment. I know people have been there, and their results are amazing. The education there it's just something else. [Parent28]

We wanted the best school and the one that could offer my daughter a real holistic education, not just in terms of academic, you know, scores and results. [Parent25]

The participants perceived that while 'good results' were the basic criteria of a 'good school', a child should not achieve good results by compromising the spirit of Islamic beliefs and identity. A school should focus on providing a friendly environment where they can practice their faith with freedom. Moreover, it should give the children the

necessary skills and knowledge to strengthen their identity and enable them to resist external influences which may be non-Islamic in their very nature.

The opinions of Muslim parents revealed that they were not an amorphous group totally united on all issues. They displayed a range of ideas and complexities of views on the acceptance of Ofsted reports. Ofsted school inspection reports emerged as one of the parents' indicators of a good school. Ofsted reports were the primary source of information about the school's academic performance because 'school quality' is a key to children's educational attainments and success prospects in later life (Ansari, 2004). Out of 33 participants, 12 participants showed increased awareness about the usefulness of Ofsted reports in choosing a school. However, 21 participants did not emphasise using Ofsted reports in school selection. Out of these 21 participants, a minority of 4 participants did not value Ofsted reports, while 1 participant reported that he had no awareness of an Ofsted report. 16 participants did not trust the grading system of Ofsted. They maintained that they did their independent search and relied upon their social networks and religious contacts to exercise their school choices.

It is interesting to note that out of 12 participants who were in favour of Ofsted reports, 10 of them were from the second generation, 1 from the third generation and 1 from the first generation. This may be because the second-generation and third-generation participants were educated in England. They are informed choosers who have good knowledge of the dynamics of the local education system as compared to the majority of first-generation parents:

It's the Ofsted report. Every parent's going to look at the Ofsted report before they send the child to that school. Unless that child doesn't want to go there. [Parent19]

Why. No, there's no reason, but as I said before, the Ofsted reports...that Church of England school was better. They have better results.... education, schools, staffing...for that purpose. [Parent19]

Yes, the Ofsted report that comes through on a yearly basis. Every time there is an intake, they send a report...so yeah, we look at them. [Parent1]

So, yeah. It will be just where I know he is not in a minority...and where it's got good Ofsted. I will really look at what Ofsted say, and yeah...just behaviour side of it as well. [Parent6]

Ofsted reports [h] I think the primary schools just need to be good; have a good Ofsted report...outstanding. [Parent3]

Primary, secondary...basically, I looked at Ofsted rating.... [Parent7]

It is quite far from here, but we chose that because it had good reputation. And we chose obviously we read through the Ofsted report. It has good reputation good records. So, we chose that secondary school instead of local ones. [Parent23]

Ofsted reports influenced the school choice of these 12 participants. They consulted Ofsted's reports, whether it was a community, Church or Muslim school choice. Whereas primary school choice was primarily a matter of convenience of distance, secondary school was taken more seriously due to its importance for a smooth transition to quality education (Parent23). Some parents, such as Parent3, were more concerned about the Ofsted grading at the primary level; however, Parent7 preferred to consult the Ofsted report in general, whether it was a matter of primary school or secondary school choice. It was clear that there was a difference in the level of acceptance and engagement with the Ofsted report amongst the study participants.

For 12 participants, Ofsted grading seems to be a fundamental criterion for the selection of a school; however, 1 first-generation participant (secondary migrant) knew nothing about Ofsted reports:

Question: All right. For the selection of schools, the government also issues Ofsted reports. Are you aware of that?

Response: I have no idea of Ofsted report. I have never received such a report or a letter.

[Parent32: a first-generation father who recently emigrated from Italy]

The participants were divided on the acceptance of Ofsted reports. A majority of 20 participants did not believe in the usefulness of Ofsted reports as they assumed that the quality of education in state schools was almost the same. They thought that the

Ofsted reports were responsible for creating difference among the schools, which may not be justified:

Teaching and learning, as I told you, there is same levels. There is no difference [laughter]. You can't differentiate; one school is higher level...just from the Ofsted, there are different criteria. You have to keep in mind which is outstanding; why it is outstanding. There is some difference between outstanding and good. So, preference is for the outstanding. [Parent15]

And:

Yeah, of course, you have to...if you are new here, then you have to ask your neighbours: 'Which school is better' but mostly, all educational system is similar in every school: same syllabus, same everything. There is no difference. Only the Ofsted rating obviously; school environment. [Parent15]

These extracts are interesting instances of parental opinions about an overall trust in the state education system. Parent15 stated that teaching and learning processes are almost uniform in state schools.

The following participants did not believe in the acceptance of Ofsted inspection reports. They based their argument on the pretext that the Ofsted visits are 'pre planned' and they 'don't see the real':

I am of the opinion that Ofsted has no benefit because their visits are not surprise visits. [Parent10]

I don't believe in Ofsted reports because they know beforehand and you always...the parents get a letter, please keep your child well-dressed, well-behaved because Ofsted obviously, they are coming around so no...they don't see the real.....their visits are pre-planned visits. [Parent5]

I don't really know. I think the results what they show on Ofsted and stuff like that are very high. But they're questionable, because it's the way they are at ninety-eight per cent pass rate, the highest grades within the UK, which is a bit...once I've done my research. [Parent28]

For these parents, if the inspection visits are pre-planned and the schools know about the visits 'beforehand', such visits have no utility. If the school authorities know

about the inspection day, they can do homework and prepare themselves for a visit. A participant who was the owner of a restaurant in Blackburn compared this scenario with the inspection of his restaurant by the health authorities:

Good reports...as told you earlier, when you know everything in advance, then you can manage things. For example, if you inform me before coming to my house, I will keep everything clean and tidy before your arrival. Same is the case with the Ofsted visit of the schools. I run a restaurant in the town. The health officials visit my restaurant at any time during a year. However, they inspect the restaurant without any prior intimation; it's a surprise visit. If they intimate me in advance, then I would try to clean everything and make special efforts to make their visit successful...if they give me a prior notice, I will keep my restaurant clean for the visit, but I may keep it dirty for the rest of the year. Same is the case with the Ofsted school inspection. [Parent10]

In the instance cited above, the parent has formed an opinion about Ofsted inspection visits on the basis of his daily experiences. For Parent10, a school (like his restaurant) should always be in a state of readiness to be inspected by the authorities on any day of the year. Ofsted inspection should not be a special event. In his opinion, a surprise visit may be a better inspection mechanism to enhance the academic standards of schools.

The findings of this study indicate that a majority of parents (20 participants) did not accept the Ofsted reports. In contrast, 12 parents showed faith in the grading system and the findings of the Ofsted inspections. It is worth mentioning that the way 20 parents talked about the issues involved in the Ofsted inspection regime indicated that they were well aware of the working of Ofsted. They considered Ofsted reports, along with other parents' voices, as a source of information gathering that gave them agency to formulate an opinion about schools. This finding supported the Casey Review (2016) that the Ofsted report continued to serve as a source for parents in making school choices. The researcher argues that the reality of Ofsted inspections, however, is that they look at longitudinal data on things schools have to record on an ongoing basis. Interestingly, the parents focus on outward appearances, the uniforms and behaviour of pupils, which they also identified earlier in the previous chapter (see Chapter 6, Section 6.6).

7.5 The 'Asia-isation' of state schools

The participants of this study showed an overwhelming desire to 'mix' (see Chapter 5 for detailed discussion). However, along with this desire, the different experiences of Muslim parents produced various educational concerns within a segregated context. As already discussed in Chapter 6, a majority of the participants (25 participants) wished to send their children to Muslim schools because of an Islamic ethos. Of 25 participants, 5 were able to secure admissions to Gujarati Muslim schools (see Chapter 6). However, 8 participants did not favour educating their children at Muslim schools. They did not support the functioning of Muslim schools. They believe that Islamic education should be restricted to Muslim supplementary schools. As a result of admission challenges, 28 parents were left to choose either community schools or Church schools. Out of 28 participants, 19 parents preferred their children to be educated at a state school, and 9 participants chose Church schools:

I mean, it's a very good school...rest of the Blackburn community is also attending the same school. There are few White children...majority of the children are from Pakistani and Indian heritage. That's why I chose this school. [Parent9]

So, I wouldn't want him to go somewhere where he is not in a majority. Where he feels singled out...and yeah. That's a bit of a tricky one. [Parent6]

There are the; there are two Muslim schools.... but there are other schools, state high schools. They've also got over fifty per cent of the students are also Muslim heritage. So, I think I think that's not a problem. Again, the limited space is there. So, I wouldn't know life is a problem. But all I can say is that these schools have got fifty-sixty per cent of Asians as well [Parent17]

These quotes illustrated a pattern that ran through the parental preference for choosing a state school due to the majority of Asian Muslim pupils. Parent17 stated that these schools are meant to provide an experience of mixed schooling with children from different religions, communities, cultures and backgrounds. Parent17, as well as Parent9, viewed community schools in Blackburn have transformed into Asian-majority schools, with pupils from Pakistani and Indian Gujarati heritage. Church schools are also a preferred choice of participants, as shown by Parent22, who stated that his child did not get admission into a Muslim school. He selected a

Church school because they have discipline and a religious ethos which may not be essentially Islamic, but 'some faith is better than no faith':

Church schools have a discipline because they believe in Jesus. Yeah. They have things like most Muslims do as well. Some faith is better than no faith; that how I look at it. You know what I mean. They have some faith. They follow discipline lot of discipline to keep the kid the right way. That's why, I think, it's no difference to, if you take them to Islamic school or a local Catholic school because I personally think, I personally think...you know. [Parent22]

The remarks of Parent6 illustrated a significant point about mixing. She would consider getting her child to a school where Muslim children are in the majority. Compared to a majority of 16 parents who chose mixed schools (as indicated in Chapter 5), the statement of Parent6 seems exclusive and contradicts parents' general desire for mixing. Simultaneously, she stated that 'mixing' is a 'tricky' matter. Similarly, Parent25, whose daughter went to a Muslim school, wanted her to mix into wider society. He proposed to the government to have more mixed schools:

...kind of maybe putting, you know, diverse people, you know, so not not having hundred per cent white schools, not having 100% Asian or Muslim schools. [Parent25]

It is argued that 25 participants of the study wanted Islamic schooling for their children. They wished their children to be admitted to only Muslim schools, but at the same time, they wanted them to mix into wider society. In this scenario, multicultural mixing does not seem possible as most of the interaction will be among Muslim children within the school premises.

The community or Church schools are also a preferred choice for Muslim parents as they provide *halal* food to Muslim children. The provision of *halal* food in state schools also emerged as one of the moments of school choice, especially at the primary school level:

I think the main issue is food. I personally think you know like it when you have more majority...in a primary school, I mean, they get a hundred per cent Halal but in high school because the boys or girls are older. Right? [Parent6]

In a primary school, I look at the basic...your own culture and your own, because the kids don't know what they're doing the age you know, maybe you can give anything they eat they whatever...personally you know.... [Parent22]

2 participants above stated that the provision of *halal* food was also a matter of great concern. For Parent6, *halal* food provision was the 'main issue' for choosing an Asian-majority school. She believes that if most children are from a Muslim background, then the school respects the specific individual needs of Muslim children. The school administration provides *halal* food to all children, including non-Muslims. The parents thought that in primary school, children are too young to differentiate between *halal* and non-*halal* food. Therefore, taking care of their dietary needs was more important at the primary level. However, children are older in secondary school and are better positioned to choose their meals. When the children reach high school, the responsibility of the parents regarding the provision of *halal* meals is significantly reduced. In this situation, a state primary school with a majority of Muslim pupils is a safe option.

The participants related their own experiences of schooling in state schools when there was a majority of White British children. However, over time, the White community has shifted to the outskirts of Blackburn, and the schools in the town centre have transformed into Asian-majority schools:

When we were at school, there was nothing but goras (White British) is there, at that time English.... there was a different time in 1970s. Totally different then, they are becoming minority, and it is changing. [Parent19]

They (parents) wanted me to go to the best of the schools...so the one I went to a state high school and that had about hundred per cent White people in there. [Parent14]

These statements are from two second-generation fathers. They gave a detailed account of their schools as they were educated in Blackburn during the 1970s. They recalled that the White children were in the majority in their school; however, now they have become a minority. The ethnic composition of the schools has changed, and now they are dominated by Asian-heritage children.

While the majority of parents talked about the Asian culture of the state schools, however, one participant emphasised the 'Muslim culture' and not the 'Asian culture':

Not Asian culture but Muslim culture. [Parent6]

The recognition of Asian culture may include the non-Muslim culture of the Hindu community from India. Parent6 is a third-generation parent and is an 'informed chooser'. She was a trainee teacher and an 'insider' of the education system. She was aware of the fact that the majority of the Gujarati community living in Blackburn embraced the religion of Islam. However, she explicitly made it clear that her priority was Muslim culture, which should not be confused with any other culture on the basis of sameness in a racialised context. The participants considered themselves Asians and South Asians as they have family connections in Pakistan. Therefore, by choosing Asian majority schools, they assumed that their children were connected to the Asian culture as they communicate and interact with Asian children in schools:

Communication is the key...that's what our Asian family lack, communication. They don't like to talk. They don't like to talk to their children or the parents.... So, yeah, an Asian school is a good choice. [Parent6]

I was born there, so my nationality is British, so am I supposed to say South Asian, or would I say I am a South Asian heritage, not South Asian...my parents are South Asian because they were born in Pakistan, but I was born here so I think I am British. I think it is South Asian heritage, and it's good to attend an Asian school. [Parent3]

Parent6 stated that members of Asian families do not communicate among themselves. That is why she sent her child to an Asian-majority state school so that he may communicate with children of the same heritage. Further, the statement of Parent3 stipulated that he wanted his children to mix with children from the South Asian community as he was born in South Asia (Pakistan). However, this seemed a mere assumption that children considered themselves South Asian because they were born in Britain and they are British, as stated by Parent31:

The Asian heritage children who are born here, they consider themselves as the British: 'We are born here, and we are British'. I have not observed such level of belongingness in other countries of Europe. [Parent31]

The analysis uncovers a combination of parental concerns about safety, culture, Asian heritage, racism, and the general desire for mixing that has compelled the participants to choose the state schools (Smit et al., 2004).

Over time, the ethnic composition of state schools in Blackburn town has changed, and they have transformed into Asian-majority schools. The choice of Asian majority state schools is a reflection of parental desire to mix their children with the wider Asian community or Blackburn community. This aspect of mixing has serious implications because the parental desire to 'mix' their children among Asian heritage children can negatively affect their integration into the multicultural society. However, the parents are more concerned about saving their children from un-Islamic influences to keep them as faithful Muslims. As a result, the 'Asia-isation' of state schools is taking place and admitting a child to an Asian-majority school is like sending him to a Muslim school due to the Muslim majority pupils at the school.

The parents' social networks are also responsible for the 'Asia-isation' of schools. The parents rely on social networks during moments of choice, such as immediate and extended family. Friends and colleagues are other sources of information. The participants also mentioned neighbours and acquaintances and people at the mosques. 9 of the 33 participants stated that they chose a school on the recommendation of their relatives and extended family; 10 parents acted upon the advice of friends in their social network; 6 parents did their own search; 4 parents chose a school due to their affiliation with the faith-based networks such as the mosques and religious organisations; 3 parents chose schools during the open days, and; 1 parent chose school due to his prior contacts with the teachers in schools:

When parents and children meet at social occasions, they talk about the schools. They say, 'This school is good, or that school is good'.
[Parent2]

Because a lot of people have said, 'it's a good school'...Ofsted reports are good and our family, my cousins...she, her children go there, and she said, 'it's a good school'. So basically, just feedback from other parents that we know. [Parent16]

I spoke to, went to the open days to see the school...spoke to few parents who were there...who had maybe children who are a bit older and there who are going into Year 7...they all said that it was a good school for the boys and the league tables and everything there.
[Parent3]

It was the closest school to my house, and my whole family, including myself, went to that primary school. It has got very good education. We know all the teachers over the years because myself I've been going, my sisters went to that school, my nieces and my nephews went to that school, so I want them to be in that school. [Parent28]

....so that was a reason why I chose that, and because children's cousins were also, quite a few of their cousins were also going to the other school. So, I did want them just to be with cousins all the time...wanted to, like you know, concentrate on education more than just playing with cousins...mix with other friends and other people. [Parent16]

The source of school information for the above parents is social networks. Most of the time, the parents sought advice from other parents, neighbours, relatives, and support groups in the area. Social networks emerge as an important component in the data as a school information gathering mechanism. When parents meet on social occasions, they talk about different schools, compare the results and discuss teachers' attitudes. This was called 'hot' knowledge by Ball and Vincent (1998, p. 380), which is gathered through the way people talk about schools' reputation. This knowledge is disseminated through the 'grapevine' in contrast to the 'cold' knowledge gained through Ofsted reports and league table positions of the schools (Ball and Vincent, 1998). The above quotes from Parent16 and Parent28 exemplified the parents who consulted their extended family; they usually chose Asian-majority schools. However, the participants who have friends among White British and outside of the Muslim community tended to choose mixed schools:

Yeah, yeah. Other communities as neighbours, where we live in the area. My own...when I went in school, I have got lot of English friends...still now my children as well. We all keep in touch, no issue whatsoever...we are grown up together as a child and up to this age...their parents as well...we know. They know ours as well. [Parent8]

'...when our parents they didn't have friends from English friends or Christian friends or Indian friends or Hindus, but these children they see that obviously, our parents have friends in them walks of life due to work or just acquaintances. [Parent28]

I went to a mixed community comprehensive high school, and there were majority Asians...there was a few English people, they were good friends with me, and that was fine. [Parent14]

These quotes indicate that for parents who had friendships with White British and other non-Muslim communities, mixed schools carried more weight than Asian majority schools. These parents did not believe in racial and ethnic stereotypes and had established good relationships with non-Muslim friends. This is significant because the parents who do not have friends from non-Muslim communities limit their capacity to choose mixed schools.

As already discussed, 20 participants wanted Muslim schooling but could not get admission due to the faith-based admission criteria of Gujarati schools. In this regard, the parents also sought advice from other parents and their extended family on how to get admission to Gujarati schools. However, when their friends were unsuccessful, they become frustrated and formulate their own strategies to gain admission:

Yes, they will be going to a secondary school next year. I am thinking about Islamic academy high school due to its Islamic ethos. However, one of my friends did a lot of struggle for the admission of his child in the Islamic academy high school, but the admission was refused. This is very frustrating for me as I intend to send my children to that school. [Parent2]

4 parents mentioned that they considered their children's opinions along with their social networks while selecting a school:

We have to consider the choice of the child as well. If three cousins are going to one school, they enjoy together...if the child is sent to some other school, he may become unhappy. [Parent9]

...children apply for the admission to those schools where their friends want to go. In this case, the matter of school choice comes down to the level of the children themselves. [Parent9]

When we are looking for a secondary school, my daughter's opinion is definitely going to count...I am sure she would want to go where her friends are going, which for me, yes, I will work hard if you have got decent friends. [Parent14]

She has two friends at that school, so she wants to follow them. But she needs to learn not to follow friends; she should make more friends. [Parent1]

The participants were comfortable sending their children where their cousins (extended family) were going. They considered that this way, the children could network and remain safe in the school. The children also wanted to 'chase' their friends at school most of the time. However, Parent1 wanted their children to make new friends besides chasing old friends.

Parental perceptions also revealed that school choice depended on how schools present themselves to the general public:

We've had an open evening from a local high school, they came to the primary school to do a presentation, and I was very impressed with what they are offering at the moment. She (her daughter) is only in Year 5, that she has another year after this year. So, we'll make that decision closer to the time. Insha Allah. [Parent24]

Actually, we ended up in meeting the teacher who came to a local high school, oh sorry, local primary school. He came for a talk, and he introduced his school. And I just liked the way he introduced his school to us, and the way he...they were talking about their achievements, how important it is for them, for every child to progress at the same level. So that's why we decided to do that. [Parent23]

These statements explain the institutional response given by secondary schools to gain enrolment through the primary schools in the catchment area. This strategy shows the complex ways in which education service delivery mechanisms work. The secondary schools present themselves by highlighting their academic achievements. Parent 24 attended the event in advance, as her daughter was in Year 5, and she still had one more year to go before moving to secondary school. It showed that such parents were 'informed choosers'. They planned to select a 'good' secondary school well ahead of time. They engaged with schools, whether in the form of parent-initiated school visits, meetings with headteachers or informal community meetings to gather information about secondary schools.

7.6 Typology of school choosers

The empirical findings of the study showed that the participants were not a homogenous group of Pakistani Muslims in Blackburn. They showed varied school preferences and differed in their capacity to navigate England's education system. Access to information about school quality is influenced by their affiliation to social networks, employment status, educational levels, immigrant generation, and social,

religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources (see Chapter 5, Table 9 for demographics and choices of study participants). During moments of choice, differences in parental capacities to understand choice signals (for example: the ability to distinguish quality, accepting Ofsted inspection results, struggle for admissions to performing Gujarati schools) and in levels of parents' understanding of the range of available schools emerged during the interviews. While some of the more subtle signals are known and understood by parents with a certain level of education and knowledge of England's education system, others are more widely perceived.

Gewirtz et al. (1995) emphasised parents' utilisation of economic and cultural capital while choosing various secondary schools in London. They identified a parents' typology of choosers such as privileged-skilled, disconnected-local and semi-skilled choosers on the basis of their possession of cultural and economic capital. However, this study considered the social, religious and ethnic resources alongside cultural and economic resources. As a result, the researcher developed their own typology of informed, constrained, and semi-skilled choosers among Blackburn's Pakistani Muslim parents (Table 10).

The table represents the broad strokes of choice differences among participants based on their social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources. The various characteristics and resources at the disposal of participants were analysed. The analysis revealed that out of the 33 participants, 17 were informed choosers, 7 were constrained choosers, and 9 were semi-skilled choosers. The analysis here is structured by presenting three types of school choosers identified within the qualitative data acquired through semi-structured interviews of 33 British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. These types of choosers represent specific patterns, trends and relationships in the qualitative data and their demographics.

Moreover, these types also show a social class relation. Thus, the constrained choosers are mostly working-class parents; the informed choosers are from middle-class professionals or business owners and are over-represented within this group. However, the semi-skilled choosers tend to be from various socio-economic statuses; they may be store owners as well as store workers. The central point of analysis is that choice is thoroughly a social process that is influenced by parents' complex lives, family values, religious orientation and their position within the social networks of Blackburn.

Table 10: Typology of school choosers in Blackburn

Typology	Participants characteristics	Social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources	Type of school choosers
17 Informed choosers	Middle-class parents. Second or third-generation parents. Have command over English language. Strong capacity to engage with the English school system. Knowledge of LAs' admission policies. Knowledge of school practices.	Have college or university education. Business owners. White-collar professionals. 'Insiders' of the education system. Connected to religious circles. Evaluate and discuss the school choice with family and networks.	Choosers of performing 'distant' state schools', 'mixed' schools', or Gujarati Muslim schools.
7 Constrained choosers	Working-class parents. First-generation parents. Recent immigrants from Pakistan/Europe. Lack of knowledge of England's education system. School choice determined by convenience. Lack of English language proficiency. Lack of access to information.	Low levels of education. Economic constraints; mostly labour class parents. Prefer to live in ethnic neighbourhoods. Weak communication in the English language. Weak social networks.	Choosers of closest community schools, Church schools, or Asian majority schools. (Irrespective of quality consideration).
9 Semi-skilled choosers	Working-class parents. The second or first-generation parents. Show inclination for choice. Limited capacity to engage with the English school system. Rely on the experiences and information of others. Limited search and choice process	Some education. They have economic constraints. Rely on opinions of social networks. They are not education 'insiders'. Generally, they have trust in state education system.	Choosers of local community schools, Church schools, or Asian-majority schools. They also struggle to get their children into Gujarati Muslim schools)

Source: Adapted from Gewirtz et al. (1995).

7.6.1 Informed choosers

There are four key qualities to this type of choosers. Firstly, they showed an inclination and desire to choose. They valued the idea of choice and comparing quality differentials among schools. They were aware of school admission processes; however, some parents noted certain disadvantages associated with the choice process. Secondly, these parents displayed a marked capacity to engage with the choice process. They showed readiness to utilise social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources to maximise the possibilities of choice. These parents were active in their family/social networks and tended to engage with school leadership

and teachers; critically evaluate the school information; collect, scan and interpret various sources of information. They were in a position to understand and 'decode' the dynamics of school systems and religious organisations; discriminate between schools in terms of policies and practices while having the capacity to ask questions and challenge, if necessary.

Thirdly, for the informed choosers, the school choice emerges as a complex process of various moments of choice. Sometimes, it is confusing as it is an interplay of various parental aspirations and anxieties about the future of their children. Further, there are multiple sources of information and inspiration, and often in such circumstances, it is more challenging to choose a 'good' school. The more you know about schools, the more apparent it is that no one school is perfect and that all schools have various strengths and weaknesses. Questions such as school distance, travel and safety are all important here, like the semi-skilled and constrained choosers (Ball et al., 1996). However, informed choosers are more concerned about these questions and remain sceptical about their chosen schools. Fourth, in common with many other choosers across all of these types, informed choosers identified their personal responses about various schools derived from family/social networks, parent-initiated school visits or open evenings. They used these factors for choosing or eliminating the final schools.

17 informed choosers in the sample were parents with a college or university-level education, one or both of whom were professionals. Most of them were state employees, teachers or business owners and showed characteristics of education 'insiders'. The majority of them were second or third-generation immigrants. Professional middle-class parents used their position to gain an advantage for their children. They showed an increased awareness of the admission criteria of performing Gujarati Muslim schools. They could also use their economic resource to move into the catchment areas of performing schools. They maintained contact with 'outstanding' community schools and Church schools. For example, Parent14 is an 'informed chooser', where the husband is a solicitor, and the wife is a business owner. Similarly, Parent27 is a headteacher at a local Muslim school. Using their resources, they have secured their children's admissions to Gujarati Muslim schools and mixed schools in Blackburn's White neighbourhoods.

7.6.2 Constrained choosers

For constrained choosers, the choice is a compromise between necessity and desire. Their choice is often a process of confirmation rather than comparison among schools. The interview narratives of these choosers indicated that their choice was more or less pre-determined; they stated the reasons for choosing a particular school rather than giving an account of the process. These parents had little awareness about the schools within their locality; they made little or no attempt to collect information about other schools. The school choice in this category has different connotations than informed or semi-skilled choosers. Generally, this type of chooser left school early themselves and has little confidence in their ability to understand or interpret the language of teachers. They are more confident with the material realities of buildings, as stated by Parent13:

A school is essentially a building; that building contains a school which is like a home. Children just move from one home to the other. Those schools don't have proper sports facilities, no extracurricular activities. That's why I don't give so much importance. Obviously, everyone has his independent thinking; I am just expressing my thoughts. [Parent13]

Their cultural and social capital are of limited relevance. They seek community knowledge and authoritative accounts from within social networks rather than from sources of 'public' information, such as Ofsted reports. The researcher observed during interviews that the informed choosers often had two possible preferences in mind if the school of their first choice was not allocated by the LA. While the constrained choosers mostly start with two options and make themselves limited to one school, and the other school is kept as an alternative. These would be the closest and often Asian-majority schools and part of their social community. They often had incomplete information about schools and were satisfied with the distance factors because pick and drop issues and the cost of travel were more important issues for them than the quality of schools. These factors imposed definite limits on the 'reality' of their choice.

7 constrained choosers in this study were low-income, low-education, working-class parents. The majority of them are first-generation parents from Pakistan and 'secondary migrants' from Europe. They did not understand England's education system and were not confident in gaining an advantage. They perceived their role as providing a supportive environment for their children to study and were passionate

about sending them to good supplementary schools for Islamic and Quranic education. They lacked economic resources and English language proficiency to navigate England's education system. Most were taxi drivers, factory workers, labourers and takeaway workers. For example, Parent15 was a recent immigrant from Pakistan and was running a small shop, and Parent31 was a recent European immigrant and takeaway worker. They preferred to live in Muslim-majority neighbourhoods to choose the closest community schools, Church schools or Asian-majority schools.

7.6.3 Semi-skilled choosers

The semi-skilled choosers are the parents who have a strong inclination but limited capacity to engage with England's education system. 'Their cultural capital is in the wrong currency, and they are less able to accumulate the right sort' (Gewirtz et al., 1993). Their family histories have not provided them with experiences or inside knowledge of the school system. Moreover, their social networks and cultural skills are not so sharpened to help them choose performing schools. Their cultural resources and affiliations with religious organisations are also in imbalance. But they are by no means incompetent.

However, semi-skilled choosers are defined as much by their difference from the informed and constrained choosers by some inherent qualities. These families have a strong inclination to choose but lack the social competence and cultural capability of the informed choosers. They can articulate and justify their choice of school. They are a part of social and religious networks and are eager to gather information about schools' through gossip, rumours and media reporting. They often have strong views based on their own experiences at school; the schools they attended. But they are less confident and do not feel secure in the school choice system than the informed choosers.

The interviews of these 9 parents revealed that their accounts are simple and plain than the informed choosers. In the most obvious sense, they are shorter and less detailed. Complexity is often reduced, and schools are portrayed in terms of general qualities – good or not good. There is an appearance of certainty in the judgements being made, but frequently this is derived from a limited informational base. However, there is also a degree of confusion and uncertainty surrounding the parents' own perception of schools. These parents talk about potential school choices as outsiders, often relying on the perceptions of others. They were mostly second-

generation, working-class parents. They tried to mimic the behaviour of 'informed choosers', but they mainly were frustrated that they could not get their children into their school of the first choice.

They showed an inclination for choice but lacked the economic and cultural resources to admit their children to good quality 'distant' schools. For example, Parent13, a shopkeeper, sent his child to the closest primary school on the pretext that all state schools had a uniform quality of education. He was aware of Ofsted's reports but did not want to consult them. Similarly, Parent9 exhibited a passive engagement with the school choice process. Most parents in this category include store owners, community workers and shopkeepers. They preferred to admit their children to local community/Church schools or Asian-majority schools. Some tried to get admission into Gujarati Muslim schools but could not succeed due to their weak affiliation with religious organisations and 'strict' faith-based admission requirements.

In summary, the informed choosers are more confident about their choices of school than the semi-skilled or constrained choosers. The informed choosers find quality education differentials along with the difference between schools, such as distance, facilities, safety, locality and convenience. They also consider the child's personality development, peer grouping, school policies, and cultural sensitivities in curriculum and teaching methods. Constrained choosers want a 'good' education for their children in their closest available school, but they do not see the need, nor do they necessarily have the resources to search for and choose distant performing schools. The socio-economic status of parents plays a significant role in school choice. Choice intensifies the differences between various socio-economic groups as parents do sorting of schools according to their ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds, and schools also do the sorting of pupils (Howell & Peterson, 2002). The typology of choosers may create further segregation in schools as the pupils from low socio-economic backgrounds would be concentrated in schools with low academic standards. This would result in low educational attainments for Muslim children and can increase social inequalities in education (Brasington & Hite, 2014).

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the factors considered significant by the participants during the 'moments' of school choice. It described ethnicity, religion, Asian heritage, mixed schooling, single-sex education, culture, distance, Ofsted reports and academic standards as significant moments of choice. The parents were not unanimous on

several issues. Divisions are visible on topics such as single-sex schooling, the acceptance of Ofsted reports, the functioning of Muslim schools and the criteria for a 'good' school. However, these moments of choice helped to classify the various types of schools chosen by the participants.

The typology of school choosers given by Gewirtz et al. (1995) provided an opportunity to frame Blackburn school choosers as informed, constrained and semi-skilled choosers. The informed choosers are confident about their choices, while constrained choosers lack cultural and social resources to choose 'good schools'. The semi-skilled choosers are by no means incompetent; they have a strong inclination to choose but lack the social competence and cultural capability of the informed choosers. The empirical findings revealed significant diversity in what Muslim parents wanted. They mainly attend four types of schools: community/Church schools, 'mixed' schools, Asian-majority schools and Muslim schools.

The mixed school choosers wanted to give their children to mix with the different communities and children from various backgrounds to gain multicultural competence. However, most of the 'mixing' is limited to the school premises. While Asian majority school choosers found safety in numbers, they considered the ethnic composition of schools while admitting their children to such schools. These schools are generally perceived to show respect for the religious and cultural needs of Muslim pupils. A minority of parents could secure admissions into Gujarati Muslim schools which exhibited *Wahabi* ethos. However, the parents accepted the philosophy of a different sect for the time being for better educational attainments for their children. A majority of Muslim children were attending community and Church schools due to their local availability and varying degrees of accommodating the specific educational needs of Muslim children. They were also perceived as providing proficiency in English. Figure 5 shows the different moments of choice of four types of schools chosen by the Blackburn parents' typology of choosers:

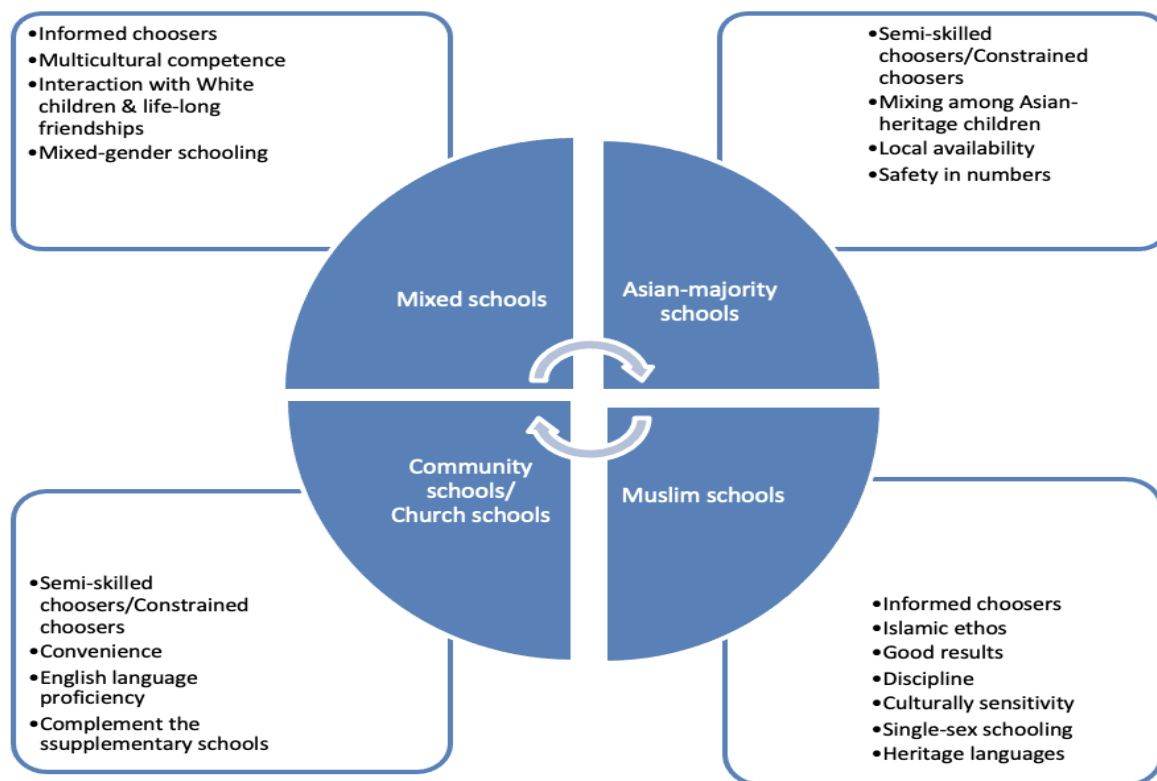


Figure 5: Reasons for diverse school choices of Muslim parents in Blackburn

Source: Based on the findings from this study.

The parents' criteria for a 'good' school varies from available local schools to 'distant' schools with good results, Asian majority schools to mixed schools, and schools with good Ofsted ranking to schools with good discipline and behaviour management. The figure 5 shows that in Blackburn, 'mixed' schools and Muslim Gujarati schools are chosen by the informed choosers mostly, while community/Church schools and Asian majority schools are chosen by the semi-skilled as well as constrained choosers, based on the reasons mentioned therein. The preference for Asian-majority schools shows the desire to interact with Asian communities and the wider Blackburn community. As a result, the demographics of the state schools have been changed beyond recognition; Blackburn's state schools are transformed into Asian-majority schools. However, Blackburn's dominant schooling pattern for Muslim children is sending them to a community/Church school during the day and a supplementary school in the evening to give them worldly education alongside religious education.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This case study set out to explore the factors that influenced Pakistani Muslim parents' choices of secondary schools for their children in Blackburn. The study used a qualitative methods approach and aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn: a town in northern England with ethnic and residential segregation?
2. How do the British multiculturalism policy developments impact parents' school choices?
3. What are the characteristics associated with various types of school choosers?

The preceding three chapters presented and discussed the various factors involved in the school choices of the participants. The impact of multicultural mixing, culturally sensitive schooling and moments of choice were discussed in detail. The findings were analysed and boiled down to the typology of choosers presented by Gewirtz et al. (1995). Some of the nuanced interpretations of the typology of informed, constrained and semi-skilled choosers in the context of utilising the social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources were discussed. As a result, it was revealed that the participants chose four types of schools for their children to provide a 'good education'. This chapter draws together the synthesis of the previous chapters by summarising the key findings of the study. It discusses the implications of the study, the contribution to knowledge, limitations and suggestions for further research, and ends with a conclusion, including some reflections on the study.

8.2 Summary of findings

Chapter 5 discussed the 17 parents who chose Asian-majority schools and the 16 parents who chose mixed schools. A key finding was about what mixing means and how it differs from the policy and scholarly literature on multiculturalism. Although at the government level, Blackburn was labelled as one of the most segregated towns in the UK (Cantle, 2001), posing challenges to 'community cohesion' efforts. However, all participants agreed that Blackburn town was a 'good' place to educate their children because of the Islamic environment that is due to the ethnic residential concentration of Muslims in certain Asian-dominated neighbourhoods of the town.

The Muslim parents from Blackburn who participated in this study demonstrated a versatile understanding of the diverse choice landscape of Blackburn schools. While grappling with the segregated life in northern England, they were keen to preserve their distinctive Muslim culture and Islamic religious beliefs. It was evident from the interviews that in secular England, the participants examined their own community more critically to re-evaluate the complex notions of 'mixing' and choosing 'good' schools for their children. There was a continuum of views, with parents who saw Muslim schools as the embodiment of 'good schools', where the children learnt about Islam at one end, and those who felt Muslim education should be reserved for evening supplementary schools and that children should be educated in secular state schools at the other end. Some parents preferred mixed schools, while a majority of parents preferred Asian majority schools for the social integration of children in Blackburn and wider society.

A significant finding confirms that the participants showed a clear preference for mixing their children in the community; however, children had a 'hectic' routine, and their day was full of activities such as schooling, after-school activities, evening classes at the mosques, having dinner, homework, and finally going to sleep, was a significant obstacle. This also created a burden for parents because they had to make arrangements for pick and drop to day schools and supplementary schools. Therefore, most Muslim children mix within the school premises through extracurricular activities, sports and group work.

Findings from this study suggested that attention needs to be paid when the terms such as 'mix', 'mixing' or 'mixed' are applied uniformly in different contexts and situations. The participants attached different meanings to these terms, be they schools, supplementary schools, neighbourhoods, Blackburn or wider society. There is a lack of clear official language when talking about multiculturalism in the UK. Government lacks the formal language to describe diversity. Although the participants belonged to Pakistani heritage and were Muslim, but they attributed different meanings to the term 'mixing', such as:

- a) Mixing of different ethnicities
- b) Mixing with the White British community
- c) Mixing with Gujarati Muslim community
- d) Mixing of gender in schools.
- e) Mixing of sexes at schools

Every country has some central myths, i.e., those basic stories which help a nation construct its identity. In the story of British Pakistani Muslim parents of Blackburn, religion occupies a central place because their erstwhile homeland, Pakistan, was established in the name of Islam. In this study, the participants sometimes used religion and culture interchangeably, like the notions of race and ethnicity. There is confusion over the different dimensions of religion, culture, ethnicity, and race, which has challenges for multicultural mixing. The researcher argues that it is not the religion but the cultural beliefs that may discourage Muslims from mixing with non-Muslims. This study found that the previous generations confused religion with culture and faced issues in their integration into society. However, second and third-generation parents intend to mix their children in society due to their education and interaction with the wider society. However, they are still careful and exercise 'limits' to mixing as most of the mixing is limited only within the school premises.

The participants were aware of the fact that they were portrayed negatively in media since the September 11 and the London 7/7 incidents. This study revealed that the parents thought the government was not doing 'enough' to support them. Participants were divided on their level of satisfaction with the efforts of the government in supporting Muslims in schools and society in England. Almost half of the participants were satisfied with the overall support of the government extended to the Muslim community. Some participants felt alienated from society. This factor has negatively affected the self-esteem of Muslims and their willingness to integrate into society. Participants emphasised that they should be accepted and given opportunities in employment, education, health and other sectors so that they could become a contributing stream to 'community cohesion'.

Chapter 6 focussed on 5 parents who chose to send their children to Muslim schools compared to 8 parents who chose Asian majority state schools or Church schools. The school choice was based on the extent to which schools are culturally sensitive towards religious education, relationships and sex education, languages and single-sex schooling.

A key point related to participants' engagement with schools was primarily to be kept informed about their reputation and results. However, parental participation in local Gujarati Muslim schools, as opposed to state schools, was observed more frequently in terms of lobbying for the children's admissions because Muslim schools were mostly oversubscribed. A majority of participants wanted to educate their children at

Gujarati Muslim schools, even though Gujaratis belonged to a different sect. However, a minority was able to send their children to these schools after meeting their 'strict' faith-based admission criteria. That does not mean that these parents have been converted to *Wahabism*; however, they have accepted the other sect temporarily to the extent of 'good' results and the successful future of their children.

The 'Asia-isation' of schools was taking place in Blackburn because the majority of parents were sending their children to state schools (mostly community schools and Church schools). However, they were divided on choosing mixed schools and Asian-majority schools. Just over half of the parents were happy with the Asian majority schools. At the same time, another half did not agree with this consideration, and they preferred education in a mixed school environment. There was a perception among a minority of parents that there was a lack of discipline at the state schools. At the same time, most participants praised state schools for their discipline, mainly because Muslim children were in most of these schools.

The empirical findings indicated that single-sex Muslim schooling sometimes has adverse impacts on young people. According to the parents, the children who graduated from single-sex Muslim schools failed to adjust to further education and became 'lost children'. However, advocates of mixed-sex education stressed that co-educational schooling help prepare young people to face the problems of 'the real world'. However, this area of research needs more evidence that co-educational schooling improves children's academic achievements and that single-sex schooling adversely impacts education or vice versa.

Mixed-sex education is a subject of contestation and debate. The participants believed that mixed education brings a lack of concentration – as opposite genders attract each other, so the progress of their studies is negatively affected. They also viewed mixed-sex education as causing sexual harassment in schools. The researcher argues that 'gendered' education may be the product of the communities' adherence to their social and cultural values. Sometimes, cultural values become so dominant that they are considered religious. As a result, a section of the Muslim community admits that separating the genders in education may negatively affect their social skills, such as communication and interaction with the wider community.

Given the findings reported in Chapter 6, participants viewed RE in state schools as a subject of ethics and a basic overview of the world's major religions. Therefore,

they had no objection if RE was taught to their children. However, a minority believed that RE teaching was contrary to the principles of Islam. The Christian ethos of RE was a matter of concern for participants that reflects RE as a 'critical point of dialogue' between the state and matters of religion within education. Generally, the participants did not feel threatened by RE as they believed that mosques had the potential to balance the effects of RE by imparting Islamic religious education.

Feedback from participants on teaching certain components of RSE is in opposition to Muslim culture and family values. RSE is sensitive to the Muslim community. Some parents believe that RSE should be taught firstly by parents and then by the school as part of the curriculum. However, the question remains about how it should be informally taught and what an agreed curriculum should be. Participants believed that RSE needs to have a reciprocal and two-way partnership. The school and community should work together in a shared space. In this way, both can determine the appropriate contents and modes of instruction of RSE, which are suitable to the Muslim community' specific needs as well as the overall aims of education. Parents who expressed dissatisfaction with the teaching of RE and RSE were confident in their knowledge of pedagogical matters and asserted their opinions within the community.

The participants praised the services rendered by evening supplementary schools. However, they agreed that the availability of British-born, fluent English-speaking teachers was one of the serious issues afflicting the supplementary education sector. As far as attending supplementary schools is concerned, the participants considered supplementary schools were doing a reasonable job within the constraints of their limited resources. The supplementary schools were transforming themselves; however, there were issues, including the lack of qualified staff. The parents were aware of the limitations of the supplementary schools, but they did not criticise them too severely as there were no real alternatives. However, supplementary schools were in the formative phase of adapting to accommodate the Islamic religious educational needs of second and third-generation Muslim children.

Chapter 6 demonstrates that to promote the Islamic culture, the parents wanted the LAs to recognise the specific educational needs of Muslims. Most participants praised Blackburn's no-religion state schools for making significant efforts to meet their children's specific cultural and religious needs. Some schools offered *halal* food, and the other schools provided prayer rooms. In the past, a Blackburn school with a

high concentration of Pakistani children even offered Urdu as MFL in their curriculum. Undoubtedly, the provisions of these need-based facilities met some of the demands of the Muslim community, but from a Muslim perspective, they did not address the significant issue of accommodating the religion of Islam by reaching subjects such as Islamic history and civilisation, Muslim culture, Islamic studies, heritage languages, and Arabic language.

Chapter 7 addressed the research question of moments of choice and the resultant typology of school choosers in Blackburn. This chapter focused on the school choice landscape in Blackburn and how all of the factors identified in the previous chapters frame, enable or constrain the 'moments' of school choice. A key accomplishment in Chapter 7 was to make nuances in the typology of school choosers presented by Gewirtz et al. (1995). The findings showed that access to information about school quality is influenced by parents' generation, educational levels and social and family networks. Further, the choice process was strongly linked to the effective capitalisation of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources (see Table 10).

The findings showed that the participants were not a homogenous group of Pakistani Muslims. The characteristics and resources at the disposal of the study participants revealed that informed choosers showed an inclination to choose and a readiness to utilise the resource at their disposal to make a 'good' choice. Constrained choosers were low-income, and for them, choice is a compromise between necessity and desire. While the semi-skilled choosers had a strong inclination but limited capacity to engage with England's education system. they exhibited a passive engagement with the education system with a lack of information about the quality of schools.

In the case of Blackburn, the social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources were mobilised during moments of choice, and the typology of informed, constrained and semi-skilled choosers mainly chose four types of following schools (see Chapter 7, Conclusion 7.6, Figure 5):

1. Participants choosing community and Church schools
2. Participants choosing Muslim schools
3. Participants choosing 'mixed' schools
4. Participants choosing Asian-majority schools

Cultural and economic resources were most evident in their institutionalised state in the interview transcripts: parental educational attainment (years of schooling), their experience of education (biographies), their employment status, their own inherited and lived histories and experiences of the education system - played a significant role in determining their capacity to understand the availability of schools, and the possible outcomes of schooling for their children. In a segregated setting with a variety of school availability, the 'insider knowledge' takes on added importance.

The findings in Chapter 7 suggested certain similarities in the formation and expression of parental preferences. For the majority of participants, the key criterion for a good school was 'good results'. However, the school choice on the basis of children's safety issues (discipline, bullying), academic achievement issues (progress), and systemic issues (concerning the school leadership and parents' contact with schools) was also reported, predominantly the participants talked about the environment where children are in the majority and feel safe.

One of the key findings is around social networks that emerged as an important source of information about the availability, academic standards, and reputation of schools. In the presence of institutionalised mechanisms of Ofsted reports, league tables and school rankings, 'hot' knowledge and 'insider information' gathered through the grapevine were the primary sources of information. These findings mirror those by Ball and Vincent (1998) for schools in England, wherein family ties, friends, neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances represent networks of varying degrees of trust, strength and reciprocity. The participants of this study make up a diverse community, and they possess a varying degree of fungibility of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources is evident during their moments of diverse school choices in Blackburn.

In summary, during Key Stage 2, the parents were more aware of opportunities available within England's education system – the knowledge of Ofsted grading system, the knowledge of 'good' teachers, different supplementary schools, and teaching of heritage languages. The findings chapters indicate that school choice for Muslim parents is a high-priority area and a struggle to get recognition in the public sphere. Although the degree of struggle varied among various types of choosers; however, all participants emphasised culturally sensitive schooling: educating their children according to their specific religious and cultural needs. In this context, a

'good education' is the ultimate goal of parents. The study reflected that the participants attached different meanings to the notion of 'good education', such as:

- Islamic knowledge: A 'good education' aims to give knowledge to Muslims so they can protect their religion and live their lives according to the guidelines given by Allah -The Creator.
- Religious values: A 'good education' creates an enabling environment for Muslims which respects and promotes Muslim culture and religious values in schools and overall policies.
- Arabic language education: A 'good education' also entails teaching classical Arabic, which is the language of the Holy Quran. Arabic language learning is equally important for children from all Muslim communities in order to read, write and understand the Quran.
- A combination of religious and secular education: A 'good education' is one that delivers a good combination of secular and Islamic knowledge.

In summary, the possible evaluation of 'good education' was the parental concern for success in *deen-o-dunya*, which meant 'religion' and 'this world' (Iqbal, 2018). They desired their children to receive the '*deen*'²⁵ (religion/religious education) and '*dunya*' (world/worldly knowledge). Islamic religious education is significant for Pakistani parents; however, the state schools are secular and impart non-religious *dunyavi* (worldly) education. This compels Muslim parents to look for institutions that provide *deeni* (religious) education. Islamic religious education is provided by the supplementary education sector and Muslim schools. The cumulative effort of parents is set out to fill the gap left by secular education. Thus, on one end of the continuum were parents who saw a combination of Muslim schools and supplementary schools as the embodiment of 'good' education, where children learn about Islam. Some parents wanted the school curriculum to be taught in a culturally sensitive manner in the state schools so that children may succeed in this world and the hereafter.

8.3 Implications of study

The findings from this research study may prove useful for developing future multiculturalism policies and decisions around providing educational opportunities to

²⁵ Mean 'way of life'. Islam is a *deen* and therefore much more than a 'religion'. It is the way of life decreed by Allah that meets the *fiṭrah* (human nature). All questions can therefore be referred to the Islamic sources and Islam should guide all human endeavours, individual, social and corporate.

ethnic minorities such as Muslims. The implications which have emerged from this research are relevant to policymakers, school choice, the Gewirtz typology of choosers, culturally sensitive schooling, and the study's theoretical framework. Given a segregated setting of school choice, parental strategies are expected to follow predictions made by Gewirtz et al. (1995). The study has argued that differences in possession of social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources mediate the capacity to navigate the education system as well as the formation and expression of parents' moments of choice. The findings suggest that social and cultural resources play a crucial role in identifying available 'good schools', judging their suitability on the basis of the Asian majority, 'mixed' schooling, single-sex education, language education and securing access to education which recognises the specific educational needs of Muslim children.

Blackburn town presents a context where participants rely on gossip, rumour, media reporting and discussions with family and social networks to make opinions about schools' reputations. They also consult Ofsted reports and the primary sources of information about the academic standards of schools. The acceptance of Ofsted reports and effectiveness of these networks varies with the social positions, and parents differ considerably in their capacity to choose performing schools. Therefore, the quality reporting of Ofsted will help parents understand Blackburn's school landscape and make the best choices.

The findings of this case study are generated from a relatively small group of 33 participants in Blackburn, generalisations for policy prescriptions are precluded, and causal inferences are difficult. Having said that, findings from the study highlight aspects of mixing based on religion and ethnicity, which are currently absent from policy discussions around multiculturalism. The emphasis of government is on a broad 'community cohesion' agenda. Therefore, this study repositions religiosity more centrally within the debates about education provision by understanding how policies translate into Muslim parents' lives and affect their moments of choice. This becomes even more crucial after the emergence of the 'community cohesion' agenda and the post-multiculturalism era after the alleged 'death' of multiculturalism.

Findings from this study are useful for policymakers in central government and local authorities to graduate from conventional strategies of smaller multicultural accommodations to frame a single coherent multiculturalism policy. The policy may help identify the potential barriers to Muslim education and the effectiveness of

Muslim participation in wider society. Then, the government may consider the dynamics of recognising the Muslim community in public spaces. This study is also a signpost for government officials to involve the community in dialogue to feed into the development of more innovative and interactive approaches towards diverse communities.

To recognise cultural diversity in schools, it might be better if attention is paid to implementing multicultural elements in the national curriculum. It is argued that an international curriculum may be developed to cater for the educational needs of the multicultural society (Brayboy & Castagno, 2008). Indeed, the formulation and implementation of an international curriculum may take time to develop a consensus between the government and Muslim communities. This curriculum would enable the children to perceive and evaluate diverse traditions, beliefs, ideas and people from various cultural perspectives.

Access to 'good education' is contingent upon meeting religious and cultural needs of Muslim children. Culturally sensitive schooling can affect parental moments of choice and create quality differences among schools. The different aspects of culturally sensitive schooling, such as teaching RE, RSE, MFL, EAL, Arabic and heritage language, single-sex schooling, and Muslim schooling, should be duly considered during education policymaking. This would help feel Muslims a part of England's education system and expand choices for them.

8.4 Contribution to knowledge

For the researcher, the starting point for this study was a general interest in the education of the Pakistani immigrant community in England. I am a Pakistani citizen and was associated with the education sector in Pakistan. I was interested in the school choices of British Pakistani Muslim parents. The documentary analysis helped to gather knowledge about the evolution of multiculturalism policies and the gaps therein. The documents helped to shape the research as a case study of school choices of 33 Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn. The case study highlighted the challenges faced by parents in getting their children to different schools replete with segregated education. Further, how the Muslim parents negotiate with the segregated education and ethnic residential concentration in Muslim-dominated neighbourhoods in northern England.

The researcher found that most government reports focused on specific ethnic groups, such as the Swann Report (1985), which discussed the educational needs of the African Caribbean community. The Casey Report (2016) highlighted the deprivation of the Pakistani community along with other communities such as Indian, Bangladeshi, and Polish. The moments of choice of the Muslim community, especially Pakistanis in English northern towns such as Blackburn, have not been studied before. Therefore, fresh research on educational challenges for Muslim parents with a renewed focus in the post-multiculturalism era was considered necessary. This study was also crucial in the backdrop of the rise of Islamophobia and the community cohesion debates such as Cattle Report (2001) and Clarke and Woodhead (2018).

An important contribution of the study is to engage with the model of typology of choosers identified by Gewirtz et al. (1995). The differential in parental capacities to navigate the education system gave rise to informed choosers, semi-skilled choosers, and constrained choosers. This is one of the original contributions to knowledge in the context of the British Pakistani Muslim community of Blackburn.

The exploration of culturally sensitive schooling in relation to the teaching of RE, RSE, language education and single-sex education gave a perspective on how the Muslim community and schools can forge a partnership to respect the religious and cultural sensitivities of Muslim children. This aspect was significant to my research as previous studies such as Banks (1979), Banks & McGee (2001), Gay (2004), Gibson (1976) and Race (2018) emphasised the needs and importance of multicultural education instead of exploring the school choices based on parental concerns for specific educational needs of Muslim children.

The study participants showed an overwhelming desire to mix to make children 'well-rounded individuals'. However, there were limits to 'mixing' because a difference was found between 'mixing' and 'making friends'. Most of the mixing among children took place within the school premises. Children's interaction was kept minimum with the community outside of school. However, children were allowed to mix and make friends among Muslim children at evening supplementary schools.

The supplementary schools were showing harmony with state primary schools. The curriculum of supplementary schools was designed in such a way that Quran education and related religious teachings are completed during the primary schooling

of children. Muslim children graduate from primary schools and supplementary schools at the same time. It helps them pay full attention to their studies at the secondary level when they are no longer required to attend supplementary schools.

Due to participants' South Asian heritage, just over half of the parents opted for Asian-majority schools, while the other half preferred education in mixed schools. The latter were mainly community schools run by LA and the Church schools administered by the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church. The presence of a majority of Asian children has transformed the ethnic composition of pupils rolls these schools, especially in central Blackburn. In this study, this phenomenon has been called the 'Asia-isation' of state schools of Blackburn. However, this phenomenon is further segregating the already divided society of Blackburn.

This is the first study which includes the Pakistani 'secondary migrants' who migrated from Europe. The primary reason for their migration is the availability of an Islamic environment, such as Muslim schools, mosques, supplementary schools, and the residential concentration of Pakistani Muslim community in Blackburn.

The findings also contribute to the Islamic environment of Muslim schools, which do not support mixing of genders, both boys and girls. As a result, pupils face challenges in further education and higher education, and their chances of success in future life are compromised. This scenario has resulted in the phenomenon of 'lost children' who feel alienated after attending a single-sex school. This issue is growing and is a matter of serious concern for Pakistani Muslim parents in Blackburn.

Almost half of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with the government's support to recognise their religion in schools and society. Their expectations of social integration from the government and society were not met. Therefore, this study gives insights to policymakers, educational experts, school administrators, school inspectors, local authorities, and the White British community about eliminating segregation and striving for 'community cohesion'.

The research methodology adopted for this study remained very helpful. This study was a case study of 33 British Pakistani Muslim participants in Blackburn. The in-depth semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis helped generate 'thick descriptions' of participants' viewpoints on Muslim education in Blackburn. The participants were recruited through the Blackburn business community, a religious organisation, and the local council. I was interested to tap into parental constructions

of reality. Therefore, the use of qualitative research methods of semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis aligned with the social constructionism approach - which provided the epistemological basis for the study. A thematic analysis approach supported my interpretivist approach to understanding participants' experiences, behaviour, and opinions of the study participants.

I believe this study was well timed and hope it has contributed to multiculturalism and education at a stage when British Muslims are repositioning themselves, in the post-multiculturalism era, after almost two decades following the 9/11 incident.

8.5 Limitations of and further research

Like all research projects, this study is finite in its scope; further research and reflections are needed. The researcher cannot say that the experiences of these migrants would be similar to the migrants elsewhere. Further, the experience and choice of Gujarati schools were unique and difficult to be found in other contexts and influences they might have on Pakistani parents' school choices.

This research used a case study with limited scope as the findings are confined to particular cases. The 33 Muslim parents of Pakistani heritage in Blackburn constituted the sample for this study. However, conducting the study this way has provided deep insights into the school provision, school segregation and residential segregation in Blackburn. This research adopted a case study approach due to time and resource limitations and focused on the participants at a particular point in time. Although this research design allowed the examination of school choices to be evaluated and provided an insight into parents' criteria for 'good schools', it is recommended that future researchers adopt other forms of case studies to explore parental choices in more detail. For example, a pre-post case study approach (which examines cases at the beginning and the end of the school admission cycle) or a longitudinal case study approach (which follows cases throughout the parents' moments of choice during Key Stage 2) could be adopted. These different case study approaches could allow other moments of choice to be explored, which could not be considered here as the study is limited in depth and size. This study offered a snapshot of one year between October 2018 and September 2019, as it was conducted during this period.

There are several other limitations identified in this study. As indicated earlier in the methodology (Chapter 4), the first limitation was getting state primary schools to

agree to participate. Despite efforts, the researcher could not gain access to these schools. This limitation impacted the research process to the extent of how to contact the study sample for data collection. This limitation led to a change in the method of participants' recruitment. Afterwards, participants were recruited directly from the Pakistani Muslim community in Blackburn instead of state primary schools. However, the source of satisfaction was that the overall research methodology, design, and instruments did not change.

Initially, it was difficult to contact Blackburn's Pakistani Muslim community. It was felt that investigating sensitive issues such as religion, race, ethnicity, religious education, and sex education was another limitation. It became the main reason behind not getting easy access to the community for data collection. However, contacts were established with the Blackburn business community, a religious organisation, and the local council, and participants were recruited.

There is an enormous body of research and official government literature which examines parental school choice. However, this does not generally focus on pupils' school preferences; hence they remain invisible. Conventionally, it is parents who are seen to be the key players. Further studies should be conducted to establish children's preference for secondary schools because they are the ones who are directly affected by the choice process.

This study is limited to British Pakistani Muslim parents' opinions. It does not include the views of other Muslim communities from South Asia, such as Bangladesh and India. Gujarati Indian Muslims are discussed only from the perspectives of Pakistani Muslims. Moreover, it does not include the voice of Muslims from Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean. Further, only parents' views are explored. It would be useful to conduct further research on the school experiences of Muslim pupils in segregated schools. Lastly, teachers' voice is also missing regarding culturally sensitive schooling and its impact on the teaching-learning processes in classrooms.

This study employed a semi-structured qualitative interview method, which provided deep insights into parents' perceptions about school choices. Due to resource limitations and time constraints, this study focused on 33 parents' school choices during the study period. Research may be conducted during the time of admission into schools, which should document parents' perceptions at the beginning and end of the admission cycle. It will highlight whether the parents' priority schools are

allotted to them. If not, how do parents navigate the system to send their children to the schools of their second or third choice?

There is a greater need for participatory research to be conducted in coordination with the Pakistani Muslim community. The research instruments such as questionnaires, surveys and interview guides may be co-produced and co-designed both by the researchers and the community. This study will have clear advantages as the researchers sometimes use words and phrases unfamiliar to the participants. In this way, Muslims will define their own terms and identify their own research priorities. This will lead to the co-construction of knowledge by the researchers and the community. Further, using qualitative methodology and case study methods, future researchers may conduct cross-case comparisons in other parts of England, the UK, Europe and other Western countries where Muslim minorities reside.

8.6 Conclusion

Set in Blackburn, a small, segregated town in northern England, this case study focused on understanding the factors that influenced the school choices of Pakistani Muslim parents. The findings showed that parents' capitalisation on social, religious, ethnic, cultural and economic resources, that resulted in a typology of choosers such as informed, constrained and semi-skilled choosers, which informs Gewirtz et al.'s (1995) typology of choosers - grounding it more closely in the 'reality' of choice. The thesis argues that school choice is a multidimensional concept, and parental decisions and strategies are supported or constrained by these resources. The parents capitalise on their resources to find a 'good education' as the schooling arena in northern England is replete with diverse school options. Owing to the difference in educational priorities, this typology chose four types of schools in Blackburn: a. community/Church schools, b. 'mixed schools', c. Asian-majority schools, and d. Muslim schools.

This study began by suggesting the reasons for the migration of Muslims to the UK. The post-war migration gave birth to various discourses and multiculturalism policies to deal with immigrant communities. It has analysed multiculturalism policy developments previously around the recognition and accommodation of religion within state schools, especially for Muslims. The current policies around parental choice of schools in England are facing challenges such as school admission policies and pupil sorting, which are exacerbating school segregation as well as ethnic residential segregation.

Since the 1980s, government education reform policies have aimed to enhance choice and competition to improve the educational attainments of pupils. It has supported the faith-based sector by encouraging the establishment of Muslim and Church schools. This policy has promoted diversity in education and increased schooling options. Church schools are also a preferred choice for Muslim parents as they believe these schools emphasise religious values and discipline. The majority of parents choose Asian majority schools, which makes state schools the best option in the segregated Blackburn. The choice is a complex process. Sometimes, various reasons inform the same school choice. For example, a Muslim school could be chosen because of multiple factors such as the convenience of distance, Islamic ethos, or only for good results.

This study found that the British multiculturalism policies have disregarded the place of religion in society. This is in line with the current discussion on 'community cohesion', which has ignored the notions of religion and ethnicity. Now, the shift of the government is towards a localised approach of building 'Integrated Communities' in the targeted ethnic minority areas of England, that includes Blackburn town. In the wake of the 'death' of multiculturalism, contemporary discourses and policies are based on non-religious beliefs to accommodate minority groups. As a result, religion faces exclusion, and England is a country where 'no religion' is the new religion (Levitt & Woodhead, 2018). It is feared that the alienation of religion from multiculturalism policies may isolate minority groups in society and negatively affect their sense of belonging. What is required at the state level is a language that understands Muslims, their heritage, and educational aspirations that have currency in the mainstream.

While exploring school choices and multiculturalism policies, during the conduct of semi-structured interviews, the researcher developed a theoretical understanding of parental opinions, behaviours and experiences, as well as of their own self as a researcher (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. xiii):

Learning to reflect on your behaviour and thoughts, as well as on the phenomenon under study, creates a means for continuously becoming a better researcher. Becoming a better researcher captures the dynamic nature of the process. Conducting research, like teaching and other complex acts, can be improved; it cannot be mastered.

Reflections and reflexivity became a part of this qualitative case study research, which helped explore the phenomena under study and considered the assumptions and behaviours of participants and the researcher (Giddens, 1984). The researcher explored their own perspective at every stage of the research, such as fieldwork, data collection, interviews' transcription, data analysis and presentation of findings. Therefore, undertaking this research study has been an invaluable learning experience. The researcher gained some understanding of the nature of research and the cyclical, sometimes messy, nature of the research process. It was learned, for example, that things do not fit neatly into categories and that research can be frustrating and sometimes tedious, yet at other times immensely rewarding and even exhilarating. This study, despite numerous challenges, succeeded in achieving its proposed objectives by exploring British Pakistani Muslim parents' school choices and the educational challenges they faced in segregated Blackburn town in the North of England.

References

- Abbas, T. (2000). *How South Asians achieve education: a comparative study of Bangladeshis, Indians and Pakistanis in Birmingham schools and colleges* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).
- Abbas, T. (2005). Recent developments to British multicultural theory, policy and practice: The case of British Muslims. *Citizenship Studies*, 9(2), 153-166.
- Abughosh, B. S., & Shaqra, W. Z. (1992). *A glossary of Islamic terminology*. London: Ta-Ha Publishers.
- Acocella, I. (2012). The focus groups in social research: advantages and disadvantages. *Quality & Quantity*, 46(4), 1125-1136.
- Adams, L., & Kirova, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Global migration and education: School, children, and families*. London: Psychology Press.
- Adler, M. (1997). Looking backwards to the future: Parental choice and education policy. *British Educational Research Journal*, 23(3), 297-313.
- Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (1987). *Membership roles in field research* (Vol. 6). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ahmed, G. E. (2013). Muslim parents at crossroads: Choosing the right school for their Children/Parents musulmans à la croisée des chemins: Choisir la bonne école pour leurs enfants. *Comparative and International Education*, 42(2), 1.
- Al-Hawamleh, M. S. (2003). *Muslim secondary schools in England and the teaching of Islamic studies*. Manchester: University of Manchester.
- Allen, C. (2007). 'Down With Multiculturalism, Book-burning and Fatwas' The discourse of the 'death' of multiculturalism. *Culture and religion*, 8(2), 125-138.
- Allen, C. (2015). A critical analysis of Britain's living, dead and Zombie multiculturalism: From 7/7 to the London 2012 Olympic Games. *Social Sciences*, 4(1), 18-33.
- Alsubaie, M. A. (2015). Hidden curriculum as one of current issue of curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(33), 125-128.
- Andrade, A.D. (2009). Interpretive research aiming at theory building: Adopting and adapting the case study design. *The Qualitative Report*, 14 (1), pp.42-60.
- Angrosino, M. V. (2005). Recontextualizing observation: Ethnography, pedagogy, and the prospects for a progressive political agenda. In Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (p. 729–745). London: Sage Publications.
- Ansari, H. (2004). *The infidel within: Muslims in Britain since 1800*. London: Hurst.

- Anzar, U. (2003). Islamic education: A brief history of madrassas with comments on curricula and current pedagogical practices. *Paper for the University of Vermont, Environmental Programme*.
- Appleyard, B. (2006, December 17). Eureka. *The Sunday Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/article755989.ece>
- Archer, L. (2010). 'We raised it with the head': The educational practices of minority ethnic, middle-class families. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 31(4), 449-469.
- Archer, L., & Francis, B. (2006). *Understanding minority ethnic achievement: Race, gender, class and 'success'*. London: Routledge.
- Arghode, V. (2012). Qualitative and quantitative research: Paradigmatic differences. *Global Education Journal*, 2012(4).
- Arthur, J., Waring, M., Coe, R. and Hedges, L. (2012). *Research methods and methodologies in education*. London: Sage Publications.
- Arunasalam, N. (2019). Transcription, analysis, interpretation and translation in cross-cultural research. *Nurse researcher*, 27(2).
- Asselin, M. E. (2003). Insider research: Issues to consider when doing qualitative research in your own setting. *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development*, 19(2), 99-103.
- Association of Muslim Schools (AMS) UK. (2021). Directory of schools. Retrieved from <https://ams-uk.org/>
- Association of Muslim Social Scientists. (2004). Muslims on education: A position paper. UK: AMSS.
- Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., & Delamont, S. (2003). *Key themes in qualitative research: Continuities and changes*. Rowman Altamira.
- Attia, M., & Edge, J. (2017). Be(com)ing a reflexive researcher: A developmental approach to research methodology. *Open Review of Educational Research*, 4(1), 33-45.
- Awan, I. (2014, May 19). The Trojan Horse: The moral panic, terror and Muslims in Birmingham. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/imran-awan/trojan-horse-the-moral-pa_b_5336612.html?guccounter=1
- Aydin, H. (2014). *Encyclopaedia of human services and diversity: Multiculturalism*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Baker, S., & Edwards, R. (2012). *How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research*. Southampton: National Centre for Research Methods.

- Bagley, C. (2006). School choice and competition: a public-market in education revisited. *Oxford Review of Education*, 32(3), 347-362.
- Baldwin, P. (2017, September 29). Apartheid on the streets of Blackburn: How political correctness killed integration. *Express*: Retrieved from <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/673789/Blackburn-Islam-muslim-community-rise-of-the-burka-Koran-religion>
- Baldwin, T. (2004, April 3) 'I want an integrated society with a difference' Interview with Trevor Phillips. *The Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/britain-must-scrap-multiculturalism-mt2vhmfpgwd>
- Ball, S. (2003). *Class strategies and the education market: The middle classes and social advantage*. London: Routledge-Falmer.
- Ball, S., & Vincent, C. (1998). 'I heard it on the grapevine': Hot knowledge and school choice. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 19(3), 337-400.
- Ball, S. J., Bowe, R., & Gewirtz, S. (1996). School choice, social class and distinction: the realization of social advantage in education. *Journal of education policy*, 11(1), 89-112.
- Banks, J. A. (1979). Shaping the future of multicultural education. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 48(3), 237-252.
- Banks, J. A. (1994). *Cultural diversity and education: Educations, curriculum and teaching*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Banks, J.A. (1998). Multiculturalism's five dimensions. *NEA Today*, 17(1), pp.1-8.
- Banks, J. A., & McGee, C. A. (Eds.). (2001). *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Barnardos. (2010). *Unlocking the gates: Giving disadvantaged children a fairer deal in school admissions*. Essex, London: Barnardos' Policy & Research Unit. Retrieved from http://www.barnardos.org.uk/unlocking_the_gates.pdf
- Barnes, L. P. (2014). Religious studies, religious education and the aims of education. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 37 (2): 195–206.
- Bauer, M. W., & Gaskell, G. (Eds.). (2000). *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook for social research*. Sage.
- Brasington, D. M., & Hite, D. (2014). School choice: Supporters and opponents. *Contemporary Economic Policy*, 32(1), 76-92.
- Basit, T. N. (2012). 'My parents have stressed that since I was a kid': Young minority ethnic British citizens and the phenomenon of aspirational capital. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 7(2), 129-143.

- Bauch, P. A. (2000). Do school markets serve the public interest? More lessons from England. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 36(2), 309-323.
- Becker, H. S. (1970). Field work evidence. In H. Becker. *Sociological work: Method and substance* (pp. 39-62). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Berglund, J. (2015). *Publicly funded Islamic education in Europe and the United States*. Retrieved from <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A800459&dswid=3874>
- Bhandari, P. (2020). An introduction to qualitative research. Scribbr. Published on June 19, 2020. Revised on July 30, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-research/#:~:text=Qualitative%20research%20involves%20collecting%20and,generate%20new%20ideas%20for%20research.>
- Bhattacharyya, G., Ison, L., & Blair, M. (2003). *Minority ethnic attainment and participation in education and training: The evidence*. Nottingham: Department for Education and Skills.
- Bhatti, G. (1999). *Asian children in school: An ethnographic study*. London: Routledge.
- Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education. (2021). *Schools*. Retrieved from <https://www.bdeducation.org.uk/schools/>
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council. (2009). *Blackburn Young Pakistanis Achievements Commission (BYPAC) report of the board*. Blackburn: BwD Council.
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council. (2019). *Facts and figures: population*. Blackburn: Blackburn Council.
- Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. London: Sage Publications.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In Cooper, H. (Eds.). *Handbook of research methods in psychology: Vol. 2. Research designs*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, pp.57-71.
- Brayboy, B. M. J., & Castagno, A. E. (2008). How might native science inform 'informal science learning'? *Cultural Studies of Science Education*, 3(3), 731-750.
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burgess, R.G. (1984). *In the field: An introduction to field research*. London: Unwin Hyman.
- Burgess, S., & Briggs, A. (2010). School assignment, school choice and social mobility. *Economics of Education Review*, 29(4), 639-649.
- Burgess, S. M., & Slater, H. (2006). *Using boundary changes to estimate the impact of school competition on test scores*. Centre for Market and Public Organisation, University of Bristol.
- Burgess, S., & Wilson, D. (2005). Ethnic segregation in England's schools. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30(1), 20-36.
- Burgess, S., Briggs, A., McConnell, B., & Slater, H. (2006). School choice in England: Background facts. *DP*, 6, 159.
- Burgess, S., Greaves, E., Vignoles, A., & Wilson, D. (2011). Parental choice of primary school in England: what types of school do different types of family really have available to them?. *Policy Studies*, 32(5), 531-547.
- Burgess, S., Greaves, E., Vignoles, A., & Wilson, D. (2014). What parents want: School preferences and school choice. *The Economic Journal*, 125(587), 1262-1289.
- Burgess, S., McConnell, B., Propper, C., & Wilson, D. (2004). Sorting and choice in English secondary schools. *Centre for Market and Public Organisation Working Paper*, 4(111), 531-547.
- Burgess, S., McConnell, B., Propper, C., & Wilson, D. (2005). The Impact of School Choice on Sorting by Ability and Socio-economic Factors in English Secondary Education (CMPO, University of Bristol, Bristol).
- Burgess, S., Propper, C., & Wilson, D. (2007). The impact of school choice in England: Implications from the economic evidence. *Policy Studies*, 28(2), 129-143.
- Burgess, S. M., Wilson, D., Briggs, A., & Piebalga, A. (2008). *Segregation and the attainment of minority ethnic pupils in England*. Centre for Market and Public Organisation, University of Bristol.
- Burgess, S., Wilson, D., & Lupton, R. (2005). Parallel lives? Ethnic segregation in schools and neighbourhoods. *Urban studies*, 42(7), 1027-1056.
- Burns, E., Fenwick, J., Schmied, V., & Sheehan, A. (2012). Reflexivity in midwifery research: The insider/outsider debate. *Midwifery*, 28(1), 52-60.
- Burr, V. (2003). *Social constructionism*. London: Routledge.

- Butler-Sloss, E. (2015). *Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the Common Good. Report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life*. Cambridge: Woolf Institute.
- Byrne, B. (2006). In search of a 'good mix': 'Race', class, gender and practices of mothering. *Sociology*, 40(6), 1001-1017.
- Byrne, B. (2009). Not just class: Towards an understanding of the hiteness of middle-class schooling choice. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32(3), 424-441.
- Byrne, B., & De Tona, C. (2012). 'Trying to find the extra choices': Migrant parents and secondary school choice in Greater Manchester. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 33:1, 21-39.
- Byrne, B., & De Tona, C. (2014). Multicultural desires? Parental negotiation of multiculturalism and difference in choosing secondary schools for their children. *The Sociological Review*, 62(3), 475-493.
- Cameron, D. (2011). PM's speech at Munich security conference. In *Number 10*. Retrieved from <https://www.uk.gov/government/organisations/prime-ministers-office-10-downing-street>
- Campbell, C., Proctor, H., & Sherington, G. (2009). *School choice: How parents negotiate the new school market in Australia*. Allen & Unwin.
- Cantle, T. (2001). *Community cohesion in Britain: A report of the independent review team*. Chaired by Ted Cantle. London: Home Office. Retrieved from <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/14146/1/communitycohesionreport.pdf>
- Cantle, T. (2005). Self-segregation is still divisive. *The Guardian* 21, January 26.
- Cantle, T. (2012). *Interculturalism: The new era of cohesion and diversity*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Casey, L. (2016). *The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration*. London: DCLG.
- Castleberry, A., & Nolen, A. (2018). Thematic analysis of qualitative research data: Is it as easy as it sounds? *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching & Learning*, 10(6), pp.807–815.
- Cazden, C. B., & Leggett, E. L. (1981). Culturally responsive education: A response to remedies. *Culture and the Bilingual Classroom: Studies in classroom ethnography*, 69-86. Rowle, MA: Newbury House.
- Chavez, C. (2008). Conceptualising from the inside: Advantages, complications, and demands on insider positionality. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(3), 474-494.
- Clarke, C., & Woodhead, L. (2015). *A new settlement: Religion and belief in schools*. London: Westminster Faith Debates. London. Retrieved from <https://faithdebates.org.uk/education/policy-pamphlet/>

- Clarke, C., & Woodhead, L. (2018). *A new settlement revised: Religion and belief in schools*. London: Westminster Faith Debates. Retrieved from <http://faithdebates.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Clarke-Woodhead-A-New-Settlement-Revised.pdf>
- Clotfelter, C. T. (2001). Are Whites still fleeing? Racial patterns and enrollment shifts in urban public schools, 1987–1996. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management: The Journal of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management*, 20(2), 199-221.
- Cohen, G., Salomon, I., & Nijkamp, P. (2002). Information–communications technologies (ICT) and transport: Does knowledge underpin policy? *Telecommunications Policy*, 26(1-2), 31-52.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education*. London: Routledge
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education* (5th ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Coldron, J., Cripps, C., & Shipton, L. (2010). Why are English secondary schools socially segregated?. *Journal of Education Policy*, 25(1), 19-35.
- Commission on Multi-Ethnic Britain (CMEB). (2000). *The future of multi-ethnic Britain: Report of the Commission the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain*. London: Runnymede Trust.
- Comte, A. (1973). *Systems of positive policy* (revised ed.), New York: B. Franklin (original work published in 1875).
- Conroy, J. C., Lundie, D., & Baumfield, V. (2012). Failures of meaning in religious education. *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 33 (3): 309–323.
- Crandell, J. L., Voils, C. I., & Sandelowski, M. (2011). Bayesian approaches to the synthesis of qualitative and quantitative research findings. In Hannes K, Lockwood C, (Eds). *Synthesizing qualitative research: Choosing the right approach*, 137-159.
- Crawford, M., Maxwell, B., Coldron, J., & Simkins, T. (2022). Local authorities as actors in the emerging “school-led” system in England. *Educational Review*, 74(4), 788-804.
- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. London: Sage Publications.

- Croft, J. (2004). Positive choice, no choice or total rejection: The perennial problem of school catchments, housing and neighbourhoods. *Housing Studies*, 19(6), 927-945.
- Crozier, G. (2000). Parents and schools: partners or protagonists (Stoke on Trent, UK, Trentham).
- Crozier, G., & Davies, J. (2006). Family matters: A discussion of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani extended family and community in supporting the children's education. *The Sociological Review*, 54(4), 678-695.
- Crozier, G., Reay, D., James, D., Jamieson, F., Beedell, P., Hollingworth, S., & Williams, K. (2008). White middle-class parents, identities, educational choice and the urban comprehensive school: Dilemmas, ambivalence and moral ambiguity. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(3), 261-272.
- Cullum-Swan, B. E. T. S., & Manning, P. (1994). Narrative, content, and semiotic analysis. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 463-477.
- Curdt-Christiansen, X. L., & La Morgia, F. (2018). Managing heritage language development: Opportunities and challenges for Chinese, Italian and Pakistani Urdu-speaking families in the UK. *Multilingua*, 37(2), 177-200.
- Dagkas, S., & Benn, T. (2006). Young Muslim women's experience of Islam and physical education in Greece and Britain: A comparative study. *Sport Education and Society*, 11(1), 2138.
- Darby, J. (2001). *SW London–Muslim Schools*.
- Daun, H., & Walford, G. (2004). *Educational strategy among Muslims in the context of globalisation: Some national case studies*. Lieden. The Netherlands: Koninklijke Bill NV.
- Dearing, R. (2001). The way ahead: Church of England schools in the new millennium. *The National Society for Promoting Religious Education*. Accessed August 17, 2012.
- Dembry, C. (2011). *Lancashire dialect grammar: a corpus-based approach* (Doctoral dissertation, Lancaster University).
- Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide: For small – scale social research projects* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Denscombe, M. (2008). Communities of practice: A research paradigm for the mixed methods approach. *Journal of mixed methods research*, 2(3), 270-283.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). *The good research guide: For small – scale social research projects* (4th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *The good research guide: For small – scale social research projects* (5th ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- Denzin, N. K. (1996). Post-pragmatism. *Symbolic Interaction*, 19(1), 61-75.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (Vol. 2). London: Sage Publications.
- Department for Children, Schools and Families. (2008). *The composition of schools in England*. Statistical Bulletin: National statistics. June 2008: DSCF. Retrieved from <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000796/TheCompositionOfSchoolsInEnglandFinal.pdf>
- Department for Children, Schools and Families. (2010). *Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010*. DSCF.
- Department for Education. (1992). *White paper: Choice and diversity*. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
- Department for Education. (2016). *Schools that work for everyone: Government consultation*. Retrieved from <https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/schools-that-work-for-everyone/>.
- Department for Education. (2017). *House prices and schools: Do houses close to the best performing schools cost more? Ad hoc research note*. March 2017. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/600623/House_prices_and_schools.pdf
- Department for Education. (2020). *English proficiency of pupils with English as an additional language. Ad hoc notice*. DfE. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/868209/English_proficiency_of_EAL_pupils.pdf
- Department for Education and Skills. (2005). *Aiming high: Guidance on the assessment of pupils learning English as an additional language* (Ref: 1469-2005DOC-EN) London: Department for Education and Skills.
- DfES. (2006). *Education and Inspections Act 2006*. London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Dhami, R. S., Squires, J., & Modood, T. (2006). *Developing positive action policies: Learning from the experiences of Europe and North America* (Research Report No. 406). Department for Work and Pension: Corporate Document Services
- Dobson, J. (2008). Pupil mobility, choice and the secondary school market: Assumptions and realities. *Educational Review*, 60(3), 299-314.

- Dodgson, J. E. (2019). Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(2), 220-222.
- Dooley, L. M. (2002). Case study research and theory building. *Advances in developing human resources*, 4(3), 335-354.
- Durkheim, E. (1938). *The rules of sociological method*. New York: The Free Press (First published in 1895).
- Durkheim, E. (1970). *Suicide: A study in sociology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (First published in 1897).
- Dutton, D. (1978). *Lanky Spoken Here: A Guide to the Lancashire Dialect*. M. and J. Hobbs.
- Dworkin, S. (2012). Sample size policy for qualitative studies using in-depth Interviews. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*, 41 (6), pp. 1319–1320
- Education Act (1944). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/7-8/31/contents/enacted>
- Education Act. (1980). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/20/contents>
- Education Act. (2005). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO).
- Education and Skills Act. (2008). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/pdfs/ukpga_20080025_en.pdf
- Education Reform Act. (1988). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents>
- Effendi, D. I. (2020). The Identity Construction of Da'wah Leadership on Jama'ah Tabligh Movement. *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 14(1), 133-150.
- Elbih, R. (2012). Debates in the literature on Islamic schools. *Educational Studies*, 48(2), 156-173.
- English, R. (2009). Selling education through “culture”: Responses to the market by new, non-government schools. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 36(1), 89-104.
- Equality Act. (2010). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Epple, D. N., & Romano, R. (2003). Neighborhood schools, choice, and the distribution of educational benefits. In *The economics of school choice* (pp. 227-286). Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Etherington, K. (2004). *Becoming a reflexive researcher: Using ourselves in research*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- European Commission. (2021). *Secondary movements of migrants*. Brussels: European Union Migration and Home Affairs: Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/glossary_search/secondary-movement-migrants_en
- Fairclough, N. (2013). Critical discourse analysis. In *The Routledge handbook of discourse analysis* (pp. 9-20). Routledge.
- Faist, T., & Kivisto, P. (Eds.). (2007). *Dual citizenship in global perspective: From unitary to multiple citizenship*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan
- Feinberg, W., & Lubienski, C. (Eds.). (2008). *School choice policies and outcomes: Empirical and philosophical perspectives*. Suny Press.
- Fine, M. (1993). [Ap] parent involvement: Reflections on parents, power, and urban public schools. *Teachers College Record*, 94(4), 1-19.
- Finney, N., Harries, B., Rhodes, J., & Lympelopoulou, K. (2019). The roles of social housing providers in creating 'integrated' communities. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 45 (17): 3207–3224.
- Fitzgerald, T. (2012). Documents and documentary analysis. *Research methods in educational leadership and management*, 3, 296-308.
- Flick, U. (2009). *An introduction to qualitative research* (4th ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Flint, J., Dinham, A., Furbey, R., & Lowndes, V. (2009). Faith-based schools: institutionalising parallel lives?. *Faith in the Public Realm: controversies, policies and practices*, 163-182.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), pp. 219-245.
- Francis, B., & Hutchings, M. (2013). *Parent power? Using money and information to boost children's chances of educational success*. London: The Sutton Trust. <http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/1parent-power-final.pdf>.
- Fraser, K. (2014). Position paper: Defeating the 'paradigm wars' in accounting: A mixed-methods approach is needed in the education of PhD scholars. *International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches*, 8(1), 49-62.

- Gair, S. (2012). Feeling their stories: Contemplating empathy, insider/outsider positionings, and enriching qualitative research. *Qualitative health research*, 22(1), 134-143.
- Gardner, J. (2011). Educational research: What (a) to do about impact! *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(4), 543-561.
- Gay, G. (2000). The importance of multicultural education. *Educational Leadership*, 61(4).
- Gay, G. (2004). The importance of multicultural education. *The curriculum studies reader*, 315, 320.
- Gewirtz, S., Ball, S. J., & Bowe, R. (1993). Values and ethics in the education market place: the case of Northwark Park. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 3(2), 233-254.
- Gewirtz, S., Ball, S. & Bowe. R. (1995). *Markets, choice, and equity in education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Gholami, R. (2017). Beyond myths of Muslim education: A case study of two Iranian 'supplementary' schools in London. *Oxford Review of Education*, 43(5), 566-579.
- Gibson, M. A. (1976). Approaches to multicultural education in the United States: Some concepts and assumptions. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 7(4), 7-18.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Gillham, B. (2000). *Research interview*. A&C Black.
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). Being there: Developing understanding through participant observation. *Becoming Qualitative Researchers: An Introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman, 39-61.
- Gokulsing, K. M. (2006). Without prejudice: An exploration of religious diversity, secularism and citizenship in England (with particular reference to the state funding of Muslim faith schools and multiculturalism). *Journal of Education Policy*, 21(4), 459-470.
- Goodman, J. H. (2004). Coping with trauma and hardship among unaccompanied refugee youths from Sudan. *Qualitative health research*, 14(9), 1177-1196.
- Gordon, M. (2002). *Islam: Origins, practices, holy texts, sacred persons, sacred places*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- Gov.uk website. (2019). *GCSE results ('Attainment 8')*. Retrieved from <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and->

[training/11-to-16-years-old/gcse-results-attainment-8-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest](#)

Gov.uk website. (2020). Star academies - establishment group: Multi academy trust. Retrieved from <https://www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/Groups/Group/Details/4903#list>

Govt.uk. (2020). *Type of schools: Faith schools*. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/print>

Grafton, J., Lillis, A. M., Malina, M. A., Norreklit, H. S., & Selto, F. H. (2011). Lessons learned: advantages and disadvantages of mixed method research. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*.

Gray, D.E. (2004). *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage Publications.

Gray, D. E. (2013). *Doing research in the real world*. London. Sage Publications.

Gray, P., McAnulty, U., & Keenan, M. (2009). Moving towards integrated communities in Northern Ireland: New approaches to mixed housing. *European Journal of Housing Policy*. Volume 9, 2009 – Issue 3. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616710903138791>

Green, A., & Preston, J. (2001). Education and social cohesion: Recentering the debate. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 76(3-4), 247-284.

Griffith, A. I. (1998). Insider/outsider: Epistemological privilege and mothering work. *Human studies*, 21(4), 361-376.

Grillo, R. (2007). An excess of alterity? Debating difference in a multicultural society. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), 979-998.

Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In Rutherford, J. (Eds.). *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

Hall, S. (2000) Conclusion: The multi-cultural question. In Hesse, B. (Eds.). (2000). *Un/settled multiculturalisms: diasporas, entanglements, transruptions*. London: Zed Books.

Halstead, J. M. (1994). Parental choice: An overview. In J. M. Halstead (Eds.). *Parental choice and education*. London: Kogan Page.

Halstead, J. M. (1997). Muslims and sex education. In *Journal of Moral Education*, 26, 3, September, pp. 317–330.

Halstead, J. M. (1989). *Education for Muslim children in the UK: A critical analysis of some issues arising from contrasting liberal and Islamic approaches to contemporary problems*. (PhD thesis: University of Cambridge, Cambridge, England).

- Halstead, M. J. (2005). *Muslims in the UK and education*. Hungary: Open Society Institute.
- Hammersley, M. (2000). The relevance of qualitative research. *Oxford review of education*, 26(3-4), 393-405.
- Haq, M. (2000). Muslim education in Britain. London: The King Fahd Academy. *Muslim Education Quarterly*. 17,2, Winter, pp. 69–72.
- Haw, K. (1998). *Educating Muslim girls: Shifting discourses*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hawe, K. (1994). Muslim girls' Schools – a conflict of interests? *Gender and Education*, 6:1 (1994), 63–76.
- Heath, A., & Brinbaum, Y. (2007). Guest editorial: Explaining ethnic inequalities in educational attainment. *Ethnicities*, 7(3), 291-304.
- Hewer, C. (2001). Schools for muslims. *Oxford review of Education*, 27(4), 515-527.
- Hockey, J. (1993). Research methods: Researching peers and familiar settings. *Research papers in Education*, 8(2), 199-225.
- Hodder, I. (1998). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In Denzin, N. K., & Hodgson, N., & Ramaekers, S. (2020). Digitisation, securitisation, and upbringing: Interrelations and emerging questions. *Ethics and Education*, 15(4), 391-412.
- Holdaway, J., Crul, M., & Roberts, C. (2009). Cross-national comparison of provision and outcomes for the education of the second generation. *Teachers College Record*, 111(6), 1381-1403.
- Homan, R. (2013). Separate schools. In *Cultural diversity and the schools* (pp. 59-72). Routledge.
- House of Commons. (2004). Social Cohesion. Sixth report of session 2003-04, Vo1. 1 report. London: The Stationery Office.
- Howarth, C., & Andreouli, E. (2012). *Has multiculturalism failed? The importance of lay knowledge and everyday practice*. Retrieved from http://www.lse.ac.uk/socialPsychology/About-Us/faculty/caroline_howarth/Howarth-and-Andreouli-paper-FINAL.pdf
- Howarth, D. (2000). *Discourse*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Howell, W. G., & Peterson, P. E. (2006). *The education gap: Vouchers and urban schools*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press.
- Hughes, I. (1997). *Action research electronic reader: Introduction*. Action Research & Action Learning Web site.

- Innes, R. A. (2009). 'Wait a Second. Who Are You Anyways? The insider/outsider debate and American Indian Studies. *American Indian Quarterly*, 33(4), 440-461.
- Iqbal, K. (2017). *British Pakistani boys in Birmingham schools: Education and the role of religion* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).
- Iqbal, K. (2018). *British Pakistani boys, education and the role of religion: in the land of the Trojan Horse*. Routledge.
- IQRA Trust. (1991). *Meeting the Needs of Muslim Pupils: advice for teachers and LEAs*. London: IQRA Trust.
- Jenkins, R. (1967). Racial equality in Britain. In Lester, A. (Eds.). *Essays and Speeches by Roy Jenkins*. London: Collins.
- Jensen, J. L., & Rodgers, R. (2001). Cumulating the intellectual gold of case study research. *Public administration review*, 61(2), 235-246.
- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2019). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. Los Angeles: Sage publications.
- Johnston, R., Burgess, S., Wilson, D., & Harris, R. (2006). School and residential ethnic segregation: An analysis of variations across England's local education authorities. *Regional studies*, 40(9), 973-990.
- Johnston, R., Manley, D., & Jones, K. (2016). In search of Britain's Muslim ghettos. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 48(9), 1684-1690.
- Johnston, R., Wilson, D., & Burgess, S. (2005). England's multiethnic educational system? A classification of secondary schools. *Environment and Planning A*, 37(1), 45-62.
- Joppke, C. (2004). The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: Theory and policy. *The British journal of sociology*, 55(2), 237-257.
- Kanuha, V. K. (2000). "Being" native versus "going native": Conducting social work research as an insider. *Social work*, 45(5), 439-447.
- Karsten, S., Ledoux, G., Roeleveld, J., Felix, C., & Elshof, D. (2003). School choice and ethnic segregation. *Educational policy*, 17(4), 452-477.
- Kelly, A. (2007). *School choice and student well-being: Opportunity and capability in education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Khan-Cheema, M. A. (1996). British Muslims in state schools: A positive way forward. *Issues in Islamic Education*. London: The Muslim Education Trust, 83-90.

- King, C. (2010). Faith schools in pluralistic Britain: Debate, discussion, and considerations. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 25(2), 281-299.
- Kitzinger, J. (2005). Focus group research: using group dynamics. *Qualitative research in health care*, 56, 70.
- Klaassen, C. A. C., Smit, F. C. G., Driessen, G. W. J. M., & Vroom, X. D. (2005). Minority Parents, Integration and Education in a Changing Society: The Netherlands as an Example. *Family-school community Partnerships Merging into Social Development*, 373-390.
- Klausen, J. (2004). Is There an Imam Problem? *Prospect*, May 2004.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). Reliability in content analysis: Some common misconceptions and recommendations. *Human communication research*, 30(3), 411-433.
- Kundnani, A. (2001). From Oldham to Bradford: The violence of the violated. *Race and Class*, 43(2), 105-105.
- Kundnani, A. (2002). The death of multiculturalism. *Race & class*, 43(4), 67-72.
- Lacey, A., & Luff, D. (2007). Qualitative research analysis. *The NIHR RDS for the East Midlands/Yorkshire & the Humber*. University of Sheffield: National Institute for Health Research.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American educational research journal*, 32(3), 465-491.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in US schools. *Educational researcher*, 35(7), 3-12.
- Lancashire County Council (2020). Children, education and families. Lancashire: Lancashire County Council.
- Lareau, A. & Weininger, E. (2003). Cultural capital in educational research: A critical assessment. *Theory and Society*. 32 (5/6), 567.
- Lentin, A., & Titley, G. (2011). *The crises of multiculturalism: Racism in a neoliberal age*. London: Zed Books.
- Levitt, M., & Woodhead, L. (2018). Choosing a faith school in Leicester: Admissions criteria, diversity and choice. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 42(2), 224-241.
- Lewis, J., & Knijn, T. (2001). A comparison of English and Dutch sex education in the classroom. *Education and Health*, 19(4), 59-64.

- Li, J. (2001). Expectations of Chinese immigrant parents for their children's education: The interplay of Chinese tradition and the Canadian context. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 26, No. 2: 477-494.
- Limerick, B., Burgess-Limerick, T., & Grace, M. (1996). The politics of interviewing: Power relations and accepting the gift. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 9(4), 449-460.
- Loeb, S., Valant, J., & Kasman, M. (2011). Increasing choice in the market for schools: Recent reforms and their effects on student achievement. *National Tax Journal*, 64(1), 141-163.
- Long, R. (2020). Relationships and sex education in schools (England). Briefing Paper Number 06103, 17 March 2020. London: House of Commons Library.
- Long, R., & Bolton, P. (2018). House of Commons Library: Briefing paper: Number 06972, 6 June 2018: Faith Schools in England: FAQs.
- Long, R., Danechi, S., & Loft, P. (2020). Language teaching in schools (England). England: House of Commons Library.
- Lundie, D. (2017). Religion, schooling, community, and security: Exploring transitions and transformations in England. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 11(3), 117-123.
- Lundie, D. (2018). Is RE still not working? Reflections on the Does RE Work? Project 5 years on. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 40(3), 348-356.
- Maqsood, R. W. (2005). *The role of the mosque in Britain*. London: The Muslim Parliament of Great Britain.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2014). *Designing qualitative research*. London: Sage publications.
- Marshall, M. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*. 13 (6), pp. 522-526.
- Martin, J., Ranson, S., & Vincent, C. (2000). *'Little Politics': Schools, Governance and Parental Participation: Exploring Parental Voice in Schools*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Martin, P., Bhatt, A., Bhojani, N., & Creese, A. (2006). Managing bilingual interaction in a Gujarati complementary school in Leicester. *Language and education*, 20(1), 5-22.
- Mary, K. G., & Charlotte, U. (1998). *Teacher/ethnographer in the workplace: Approaches to staff development*. ERIC Number: ED423721, 1998-Sep. Grayslake: Illinois: Lake County Coll.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative researching* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Matemba, Y. H. (2015). Mismatches between legislative policy and school practice in religious education: The Scottish case. *Religious Education*, 110 (1): 70–94.
- Mawhinney, A., Niens, U., Richardson, N. & Chiba. Y. (2010). *Opting out of religious education: The views of young people from minority belief backgrounds*. Belfast: School of Law and School of Education, Queen’s University Belfast.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2010). Using numbers in qualitative research. *Qualitative inquiry*, 16(6), 475-482.
- McCreery, E., Jones, L., & Holmes, R. (2007). Why do Muslim parents want Muslim schools? *Early years*, 27(3), 203-219.
- McCulloch, G. (2004). *Documentary research: In education, history and the social sciences* (Vol. 22). London: Routledge.
- McIntosh, I., & Wright, S. (2019). Exploring what the notion of lived experience might offer for social policy analysis. *Journal of Social Policy*, 48(3), 449-467.
- Meer, N. (2007). Muslim schools in Britain: Challenging mobilisations or logical developments? *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 27(1), 55-71.
- Meer, N. (2009). Identity articulations, mobilization, and autonomy in the movement for Muslim schools in Britain. *Race ethnicity and education*, 12(3), 379-399.
- Meer, N. (2010). *Citizenship, identity and the politics of multiculturalism: The rise of Muslim consciousness*. Springer. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Meer, N., & Modood. T. (2009). The multicultural state we’re in: Muslims, “multi-culture” and the “civic rebalancing” of British multiculturalism. *Political Studies* 57(3): 473-497.
- Merriam-Webster, M. W. S. C. (2003). *Webster’s eleventh new collegiate dictionary*. Merriam-Webster Inc.
- Merton, R. K. (1972). Insiders and outsiders: A chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American journal of sociology*, 78(1), 9-47.
- MHCLG. (2019). *Integrated Communities-Action Plan*. London: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/696993/Integrated_Communities_Strategy.pdf
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). Drawing valid meaning from qualitative data: Toward a shared craft. *Educational researcher*, 13(5), 20-30.
- Miller, J. M. (2000). Language use, identity, and social interaction: Migrant students in Australia. *Research on language and social interaction*, 33(1), 69-100.
- Miller, P. J., Hengst, J. A., & Wang, S. H. (2003). Ethnographic methods: Applications from developmental cultural psychology. *Psychology*.

- Miller, S. P. M. (2018). *Thematic analysis. Salem Press Encyclopaedia*. New York: Salem Press.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2019). *The English indices of Deprivation 2019 (IoD, 2019)*. London: Ministry of Communities and Local Government.
- Modood, T. (2005). *Multicultural politics: Racism, ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain* (Vol. 22). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Modood, T. (2007). *Multiculturalism: A civic Idea*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Modood, T. (2010). *Multicultural citizenship and Muslim identity politics*. UK: Routledge.
- Modood, T. (2013). *Multiculturalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Modood, T., Berthoud, R., Lakey, J., Nazroo, J., Smith, P., Virdee, S., & Beishon, S. (1997). *Ethnic minorities in Britain: Diversity and disadvantage* (No. 843). London: Policy Studies Institute.
- Modood, T., & May, S. (2001). Multiculturalism and education in Britain: An internally contested debate. *International journal of educational research*, 35(3), 305-317.
- Morgan, D. L. (2008). Snowball sampling. In Given, L. M. (Eds.). *The Sage encyclopaedia of qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage: 816–817.
- Musharraf, M. N. (2015). Islamic education in Europe – A comprehensive analysis. *Australian Journal of Humanities and Islamic Studies Research (AJHISR)*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, Jul-15 to Dec-15. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283056842>
- Musharraf, M. N., & Nabeel, F. B. (2015). Schooling Options for Muslim Children Living in Muslim-Minority Countries--A Thematic Literature Review. *Online Submission*, 3(4), 29-62.
- Musset, P. (2012). *School choice and equity: Current policies in OECD countries and a literature review*. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Directorate for Education Working Paper No. 66. EDU/WKP(2012)3.
- Naples, N. A. (1996). The outsider phenomenon. In Smith, C. D., & Kornblum, W. (Eds.). *In the field: Readings on the field research experience* (2nd ed.), pp. 139-149). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- National Association of Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC). (2015). *Local EAL services which can provide EAL information and support*(March 27, 2015). NALDIC. Retrieved from <https://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/ealservicesites/>

- Neale, J., Miller, P., & West, R. (2014). Reporting quantitative information in qualitative research: guidance for authors and reviewers.
- Nelson, J. (2019). Meaning-making in religious education: A critical discourse analysis of RE departments' web pages. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 41:1, pp. 90-104.
- Neuman, W. L. (2000). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Nielsen, J. R. S. (1991). A Muslim agenda for Britain: Some reflections. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*: Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 467-475.
- Nielsen, J. S. (1989). Muslims in English schools. *Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs. Journal*, 10(1), 223-245.
- Nightingale, D., & Cromby, J. (1999). *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice*. UK: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Noguera, P. A. (2004). Social capital and the education of immigrant students: Categories and generalizations. *Sociology of Education*, 77(2), 180-183.
- Northey, M., Tepperman, L., & Russell, J. M. (2002). *Making sense: Social sciences: A student's guide to research and writing*. Canada: Oxford University Press.
- Ochs, E. & Capps, L. (2001). *Living narrative. Creating lives in everyday storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Office for National Statistics. (2011). *Census 2011*. Retrieved from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census>
- Ofsted. (2013). *Religious education: Realising its potential*. Long report.
- Ofsted. (2016). *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2016/17*. Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 121 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsted-annual-report-2016-17>
- Olive School. (2019). Allocation of places 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.oliveblackburn.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Olive-Blackburn-Final-v2.pdf>
- Ouseley, H. (2001). Community pride not prejudice: Making diversity work in Bradford. Bradford: Bradford Vision. Retrieved from <http://www.bradford2020.com/pride/report.pdf>
- Palmer, C., & Bolderston, A. (2006). A brief introduction to qualitative research. *Canadian Journal of Medical Radiation Technology*, 37(1), 16-19.
- Parekh, B. (2000). *The future of multi-ethnic Britain: Report of the commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain (CMEB)*. UK: Profile Books.

- Parker- Jenkins, M. (2002). Equal access to state funding: The case of Muslim schools in Britain. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 5 (3), 273-289.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Phillips, D. (2006). Parallel lives? Challenging discourses of British Muslim self-segregation. *Environment and planning D: society and space*, 24(1), 25-40.
- Phoenix, A. (2019). Negotiating British Muslim belonging: A qualitative longitudinal study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 42(10), 1632-1650.
- Platt, L. (2005). *Migration and social mobility: The life chances of Britain's minority ethnic communities*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Pole, C., & Morrison, M. (2003). *Ethnography for education*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Pool, R. (2017). The verification of ethnographic data. *Ethnography*, Vol. 18(3) 281–286. The Netherlands: University of Amsterdam.
- Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. G. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigrant second generation*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press and Russell Sage Foundation.
- Presseurop. (2010). *Mutti Merkel handbags Multikulti*. Retrieved from <http://www.presseurop.eu/en/content/article/364091-mutti-merkel-handbags-multikulti>
- Punch, K. (2009). *Introduction to research methods in education*. London: Sage Publications.
- Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School website. (2021). *Welcome from the Headteacher*. Retrieved from <http://www.queenelizabeths.kent.sch.uk/185/welcome-from-the-headteacher>
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act. (1965). Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1965/73/pdfs/ukpga_19650073_en.pdf
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act. (1968). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/71/contents/enacted>
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act. (1976). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/74/contents>
- Race Relations (Amendment) Act. (2000). Retrieved from <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/34/2001-04-02>
- Race, R. (2015). *Multiculturalism and education* (2nd ed.). London: Continuum.

- Race, R. (2018). Advancing Australian dialogues in multicultural education. In *Advancing multicultural dialogues in education* (pp. 235-256). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ragin, C. C., & Becker, H. S. (1992). *What is a case?: Exploring the foundations of social reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rattansi, A. (1992). Changing the subject? Racism, culture and education. *Race, culture and difference*, 1, 11-48.
- Reay, D. (1996). Contextualising choice: Social power and parental involvement. *British Journal of Education Research*, 22(5), 581-594
- Reay, D. (2002). Shaun's story: Troubling discourses of White working-class masculinities. *Gender and education*, 14(3), 221-234.
- Reay, D. (2004). Exclusivity, exclusion, and social class in urban education markets in the United Kingdom. *Urban education*, 39(5), 537-560.
- Reay, D. (2008). *Class out of place. The White middle classes and intersectionalities of class and 'race' in urban state schooling in England*. In Weis, L. (Eds.) *The way class works: Readings on school family and the economy*, 87–99. New York: Routledge.
- Richardson, R., & Wood, A. (2004). The achievement of British Pakistani learners: Work in progress. RAISE Project. *Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books*.
- Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (2003). *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research: A resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Robson, C. (2011). *Real world research* (3rd ed.). Chichester: Wiley.
- Rosowsky, A. (2008). *Heavenly readings: Liturgical literacy in a multilingual context* (Vol. 9). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Russell, G. M., & Kelly, N. H. (2002). Research as interacting dialogic processes: Implications for reflexivity. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* (Vol. 3, No. 3).
- Sam, D. L., & Berry, J.W. (2010). Acculturation: When individuals & groups of different cultural backgrounds meet. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5, 472-481.
- Sandelowski, M. (2001). Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research. *Research in nursing & health*, 24(3), 230-240.
- Sanderson, T. (2007). President of the National Secular Society (NSS), Interview with Nasar Meer.

- Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. (2013). *Qualitative research: the essential guide to theory and practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Scantlebury, K. (2009). Gender bias in teaching. In Anderman, E. (Eds.). *Psychology of classroom learning: An encyclopedia*. (pp. 221-224). Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA.
- Schegloff, E. A. (1999). Discourse, pragmatics, conversation, analysis. *Discourse Studies*, 1(4), 405-435.
- Scott, J. (1990). *A matter of record*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Seabrook, J. (2018, July 2). Blackburn: The town that stopped working. *New Statesman*. Retrieved from <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2018/07/blackburn-town-stopped-working>
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. Columbia University, New York: Teachers' college press.
- Serrant-Green, L. (2002). Black on black: Methodological issues for black researchers working in minority ethnic communities. *Nurse Researcher (through 2013)*, 9(4), 30.
- Shah, S. (1998). Flash-backs-and-forth: Rethinking the roots. In K. Haw, *Educating Muslim Girls: Shifting discourses* (pp. 43-62). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Shah, S. (2008). Leading multi-ethnic schools: Adjustments in concepts and practices for engaging with diversity. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(5), 523-536.
- Shah, S. (2012). Muslim schools in secular societies: Persistence or resistance! *British Journal of Religious Education*, 34(1), 51-65.
- Shah, S., & Conchar, C. (2009). Why single-sex schools? Discourses of culture/faith and achievement. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 39 (2), 191-204.
- Shain, F. (2003). *The Schooling and Identity and Asian girls*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books.
- Shepherd, J. (2010, January 20). England's schools are becoming more diverse in some cities, children from ethnic minorities remain clustered in just a few schools, say researchers. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/jan/20/schools-more-diverse>
- Siddiq, B. (2018, January 22). Blackburn: A town still divided? *BBC News*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-42766211>

- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. London: Sage Publications.
- Smit, F., Driessen, G., Slegers, P., & Hoop, P. (2004). *Expectations and wishes of ethnic minority parents regarding education and schooling*. Paper 12th International Roundtable on School, Family, and Community Partnerships (INET), San Diego, CA, 12 April 2004.
- Stark, S. & Torrance, H. (2005). Case study. In Somekh, B & Lewin, C. (Eds.). *Research methods in the social sciences*. London: Sage.
- Stronach, I. (2011). *Unbridging the gap between data and theory*. British Educational Research Association online resource.
- Sturman, A. (1994). Case study methods. In Keeves, J. P. (Eds.). *Educational research, methodology, and measurement: An international handbook*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Swann, M. M., & Swann, M. S. B. (1985). *Education for all: The report of the committee of inquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups* (Vol. 9453). HM Stationery Office.
- The Guardian. (2005, September 19). Britain 'Sleepwalking to Segregation'. The Guardian. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2005/sep/19/race.socialexclusion>
- The Muslim Council of Britain. (2007). *Towards Greater Understanding - Meeting the needs of Muslim pupils in state schools*. London, UK: MCB. Retrieved from <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/mcb-launches-towards-greater-understanding-meeting-the-needs-of-muslim-pupils-in-state-schools/>
- The Muslim Council of Britain. (2015). *British Muslim in numbers: A demographic, socio-economic and health profile of Muslims in Britain drawing on the 2011 Census*. London: The Muslim Council of Britain. Retrieved from https://www.mcb.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf
- Thomas, G. (2011). *How to do your case study*. London: Sage.
- Thomas, P (2011). *Youth, Multiculturalism and Community Cohesion*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Thomas, P. (2020). Britain's Prevent strategy: Always changing, always the same?. In Busher, J., Jerome, L. (Eds.). *The Prevent duty in education*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Thomas, P., Busher, J., Macklin, G., Rogerson, M., & Christmann, K. (2018). Hopes and Fears: Community cohesion and the 'White working class' in one of the 'failed spaces' of multiculturalism. *Sociology*, 52(2), 262-281.

- Thomas, R., & Purdon, S. (1994). Telephone methods for social surveys. *Social Research Update*, 8, 1-6.
- Thorne, S. (2009). The role of qualitative research within an evidence-based context: can meta synthesis be the answer. *International Journal of Nursing Studies* 46, 569-575.
- Tomlinson, S. (1991). Home-school partnerships. *Teachers and parents (Education and training paper No. 7)*. London: IPPR.
- Verkuyten, M. (2007). Social psychology and multiculturalism. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 1(1), 280-297.
- Verma, G., & Mallick, K. (1999). *Researching education: Perspectives and techniques*. London: The Falmer Press.
- Vincent, C. (1996). *Parents and Teachers: Power and Participation*, London: Falmer. *Search in*.
- Vincent, C. (2001). Social class and parental agency. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(4), 347-364.
- Vincent, C., & Martin, J. (2002). Class, culture and agency: Researching parental voice. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 23(1), 108-127.
- Walford, G. (2001). *Doing qualitative educational research: A personal guide to research process*. Cornwall: Continuum-3PL.
- Walford, G. (2004). English education and immigration policies and Muslim schools. In *Educational Strategies among Muslims in the Context of Globalization* (pp. 209-228). Brill.
- Walford, G. (2008). Faith-based schools in England after ten years of Tony Blair. *Oxford Review of Education*, 34(6), 689-699.
- Weekes-Bernard, D. (2007). *Educational decision-making among black and minority ethnic parents*. London: Runnymede Trust.
- Weiss, G., & Wodak, R. (Eds.). (2007). *Critical discourse analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Weiss, R. S. (1994). *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*. Simon and Schuster.
- Weldon, M. P. (2017). *School Choice, competition and ethnic segregation in Lancashire: Evidence from structural models of two-sided matching* (Doctoral dissertation, Lancaster University).
- Weldon, M. (2018). *Secondary school choice and selection: Insights from new national preferences data*. London: Department for Education.

- Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. London: Continuum.
- Wellington, J. (2015). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Whitty, G., Power, S., & Halpin, D. (1998). *Devolution and Choice in Education*, Buckingham: Open University.
- Wight, D., & Abraham, C. (2000). From psycho-social theory to sustainable classroom practice: Developing a research-based teacher-delivered sex education programme. *Health Education Research, Theory & Practice*, Volume.15 no.1 2000, pp. 25–38.
- Wilkinson, S., & Kitzinger, C. (2013). Representing our own experience: Issues in “insider” research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 37(2), 251-255.
- Wilson, D., Burgess, S., & Briggs, A. (2011). The dynamics of school attainment of England’s ethnic minorities. *Journal of Population Economics*, 24(2), 681-700.
- Woodhead, L. (2013). *New poll shows the debate on faith schools isn’t really about faith*. <https://www.secularism.org.uk/news/2013/09/opinion-poll-shows-big-opposition-to-faith-schools>
- Wright, A. (2000). *Spirituality and the curriculum*. London: Falmer Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). Designing case studies. *Qualitative research methods*, 5(14), 359-386.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). California: Sage.
- Yin, R. (2014). *Case study research: design and methods* (5th ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. (2018). *Case study research and applications: design and methods* (6th ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Appendices

Appendix A: Definitions of terms

7/7	a reference to the 7 th July 2005 terrorist attacks in London.
9/11	a reference to the 11 th September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York.
Academies	academies are funded directly by the central government, instead of receiving their funds from a local authority. They have more freedom than other state schools over their finances, the curriculum, and teachers' pay and conditions.
Church of England school	they are state-funded schools under the control of the Church of England, a diocesan board of education or other religious authority. In Church of England schools, where pupils and staff come from all faiths and none, religious education is a highly valued academic subject Church schools may be voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, special agreement or foundation schools.
Community schools	the schools under the control of the local authority which employs the schools' staff, owns the lands and buildings, and has primary responsibility for admissions. They are the schools without a religious character and vast majority of them are co-educational.
Culturally sensitive schooling	it is valuing all cultures equally and imparting a schooling experience that would emphasise that all communities have a contribution to make to the development of a tolerant society in this country. In essence it is a term applied to teach about minority cultures and religions where it is necessary to teach about these things.
Ethnic minorities	it is a broad umbrella term used with reference to a wide variety of ethnic minority groups in England. Where greater precision is required, reference to specific component groups within the ethnic minority population is made in the text. There is, inevitably, considerable debate and disagreement on the question of race, ethnicity and nomenclature.
First generation	Pakistani migrants who immigrated to Britain after the Second World War, predominantly in the 1950s & 1960s.
Free school	free schools are state-funded schools, independent of local authorities, set up by parents, charities and other groups.
Independent school	independent schools are fee-charging schools, some endowed and governed by a board of governors and some in private ownership - independent of many of the regulations and conditions that apply to state-funded schools.

Islamophobia	a useful shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam, and, therefore, a fear or dislike of all or most Muslims (Runnymede Trust).
Multiculturalism	refers to the coexistence of people from different backgrounds, of diverse cultural or ethnic origins, living in England. Multiculturalism is based on equality, harmoniousness, and tolerance of diverse cultures, languages, and religions.
Muslim schools	Muslim schools are mainly independent (i.e., fee-paying) schools, but few now have State funding as voluntary aided schools/academies; at secondary level, virtually all are single sex.
Pakistanis	people who have roots in Pakistan. Some children whose parents were born and brought up in England are still considered to be Pakistani though they may have only a tentative link with Pakistan.
Punjabi language	a major language in Pakistan. It is widely spoken in the rural areas of the Punjab.
Racial minorities	a group of people that have common ties of language, culture or place of origin. A term generally applied to Asians or Afro-Caribbean in England.
Racism	to discriminate against somebody on the basis that they belong to a different racial group.
Roman Catholic school	Catholic schools are pre-primary, primary and secondary educational institutions administered under the aegis or in association with the Catholic Church.
Second generation	the children of first-generation settlers, most of whom were born in Pakistan and then came over as young children to Britain in the late 1970s and early 1980s when family reunification took place.
Secondary migrants	people who are migrating to the UK after having spent some years in a country different from Pakistan, especially mainland Europe.
Secularism	the separation of religion and state including educational institutions.
State-funded schools	state-funded schools, commonly known as state schools, provide education to pupils between the ages of 3 and 18 without charge. Since 1998, there have been various types of state-funded school in England such as community schools, academy schools, free schools, faith schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, and voluntary controlled schools (DCSF, 2008).

Third generation	the British born children of the second-generation Pakistanis.
Trust school	trust schools are local authority-maintained schools which are supported by charitable trusts which appoint some of the governors, but they remain part of the local authority
Urdu	the official language of Pakistan. It is widely spoken in Indian Sub-continent by Muslims.
Voluntary aided school	voluntary aided schools are those schools where the state/local authority supplies funding but a religious foundation or trust [mainly church-related] has significant influence in the running of the school.
Voluntary controlled school	voluntary controlled schools are faith [mainly church] schools which are both funded and largely controlled by the state/the local authority.
White	'White' is used to refer to 'White British'. However, as with the term 'ethnic minority', the generic label 'White' should be used with some caution. The existence of distinctive ethnic groups within the 'White' category is gradually being acknowledged. Notably, in the UK National Census, people of Irish descent are recognised as a separate ethnic group.

Appendix B: Interview guide

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in the interview. This study is about your experiences as a parent of educating your child in Blackburn. What are the factors you would consider when selecting a secondary school? I am also interested in finding out your thoughts on living with other communities in the British multicultural society.

- I will start with the question of how long you are living in Blackburn or England?
 - Are you the first immigrant generation?
 - What is your profession?
 - Did you get your education in England? If so, how was your school selected?
- How many children you have?
 - Do they go to the same school?
 - Did you do home schooling for your child?
- Please tell me which primary school your child is attending?
 - Why did you choose this primary school?
 - How did you choose this primary school?
 - Did you consult other parents, friends, relatives etc.?
 - Suppose there was a difference of opinion between you and your child. How did you resolve it?
- What are your criteria for a *good school*?
- Which is the preferred secondary school for your child when he progresses to the secondary level?
 - Do you have any idea about the environment and community of that school?
 - Do you have any idea about the admission criteria of that school?
 - What would be your alternative choice if the admission is not secured in the school of your priority?
- Did you consider sending your child to an Islamic school?
- Do you send your child to the mosque in the evening?
 - Do you think the mosque fulfils the religious education needs of your child?
 - Are the mosques educating the Muslim children as useful British citizens?
- Is your child learning any European language in school?
 - Do you think the Arabic language should be offered in community schools?
 - Would you like your child to learn other language(s)?
- Does your child take part in extra-curricular activities?
 - Do you encourage your child to mix with children from other communities?
- What are your views on sex and relationships education in schools?

- What are your views on religious education in the community school?
 - Do the children come home with questions about religion?
 - How did you answer such questions?
- How would you describe your overall experience of educating your child in Blackburn?
- How would you prepare your child to become a successful citizen in British society?
- How would you identify yourself as a Muslim in British society?
- Do you think the government is doing *enough* to support the religious and cultural identity of British Pakistani Muslims?

The interview is coming to an end. However, before this, I would like to ask you if there is anything else you would like to share or any other thoughts on your child's schooling that we have not talked about today.

Thank you for your time!

End of interview.

Appendix C: Participant information sheet

Plymouth Marjon University

Faculty of Education, Enterprise and Culture

Derriford Road, Devon, Plymouth, PL6 8BH.

Dated:

1. TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

'School Choices of Muslim Parents in relation to British Multiculturalism Policy'

Name of Researchers:

Muhammad Naeem

What is the purpose of the study?

This study is about your experiences as a parent of educating your child at a primary school. What are the reasons for choosing a particular primary school and what are your preferences regarding a secondary school? I am also interested to find out your thoughts on the schooling of your child in multicultural British society.

Why have I been invited?

You have been identified as a potential research subject because you are one of the Pakistani Muslim parents whose child is studying in Key Stage 2 of the primary school and you are looking for a secondary school for your child.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in the study is purely voluntary. If you are interested in taking part in the study, please complete the attached consent form.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- You will be requested to spare time for a semi-structured interview.
- The duration of interview will be around one hour.
- The interview will be audio-taped, if you agree.
- The interview will be transcribed, and real names will be removed, so that individuals cannot be identified

- You will be allotted a code – if you wish your anonymous responses to be removed from my study, please contact me with this code.

Expenses and payments

- No expenses or payments are given

What are the advantages of taking part?

- Through your participation in the project, you have the opportunity to support academic research in the field of multiculturalism and Muslim education which may have implications for public policy formulation in Britain.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

- The level of risk involved in the research is anticipated as low. If you feel uncomfortable or distressed, the interview will be stopped immediately at any time, and you will be given the option to quit the interview if you wish. The interviews will be audio-recorded with your informed consent. Your confidentiality as the participants will be ensured during the audio-recording and the introduction section. Your name will not be recorded. Audio-recording will begin after your introduction.
- The confidentiality of your opinion will be maintained at every stage of the research. During the research, the interviews of parents belonging to different regions of Pakistan as well as different religious sects will be carried out. Furthermore, I will not discuss, share or identify individual parents' response in toto or on a particular question to other parents while asking the same question(s).

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

- The researcher will protect the confidentiality and anonymity of all participants and their data at all times. There shall be no risk to anonymity. However, the names of Blackburn town and Tauheedul Education Trust schools will be mentioned as they are considered as identifiable.
- Your participation in the research is purely voluntary
- The collected data will be stored securely by Plymouth Marjon University in accordance with the provisions of The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and Marjon's Data Protection Policy. The data will remain stored for a period of two years after the submission of the PhD dissertation then destroyed securely.
- The digital audio files will remain password protected and will be totally anonymised by allotting a code.
- All data collected during these interviews would be strictly used for the research purpose only. The data would not be used for any other studies. Your personal information will not be shared in writing and anywhere.
- The recording will be transcribed and analysed for the purpose of the research. For this purpose, Plymouth Marjon University's Transcription Guidelines will be followed in letter and spirit.

- Personal data shall be handled strictly in accordance with the provisions of The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, Plymouth Marjon University's Data Protection Policy v1.6 September 2017 and Research Ethics Policy and Code of Conduct 2017.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

- You can choose to withdraw at any stage of the study before 30-09-2019. However, after this date, you will not be able to withdraw as the data analysis will have started and your identity will be anonymised to the point that I, as a participant cannot be identified.

What if there is a problem?

- If you have a problem about any aspect of this study, you can speak to me, and I will do my best to answer your questions and address any problem

What will happen to the results of the research study?

- Mainly, the results of the study will be submitted in the form of a PhD Thesis.
- The results may also be published in a peer-reviewed journal.
- The results may be presented at conferences in the form of a paper.
- The outputs or derivatives will not be commercialised.
- No participants or organisations will be identified in any published results.

Thank you for taking time to read the information sheet. If you decide to participate, you will be given a copy of the information sheet to keep, and your consent will be sought.

My contact details are:

Name: Muhammad Naeem

University address: Plymouth Marjon University, Derriford Road, Devon, Plymouth PL6 8BH.

Email: Naeem.M@pgr.marjon.ac.uk
muhammadnaeem1975@gmail.com

Contact number: 07798504775.

Appendix D: Consent form

Plymouth Marjon University

Faculty of Education, Enterprise and Culture

Derriford Road, Devon, Plymouth, PL6 8BH.

Dated

2. TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

'School Choices of Muslim Parents in relation to British Multiculturalism Policy'

Name of Researchers: Muhammad Naeem

- I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet dated ---
----- in respect of my taking part in the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have these answered satisfactorily.
- I understand that my participation is purely voluntary.
- I am free to withdraw at any stage before 30-09-2019 without providing a reason. However, after this date, I will not be able to withdraw as the data analysis will have started and my identity as a participant will be anonymised to the point that I, as a participant cannot be identified.
- During the interview, If I feel uncomfortable or distressed, the interview will be stopped immediately at any time, and I will have the option to quit the interview.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that the interview will include questions about my race, ethnicity, class, religious affiliations and thoughts.
- I understand that results of the study may be published and or presented at meetings or conferences and may be provided to research funders. I give my permission for my anonymised data to be disseminated in this way.
- I understand that the data management shall be carried in the following manner:
 - My confidentiality and anonymity will be protected at all times. However, the names of Blackburn town and Tauheedul Education Trust schools may be mentioned as they are considered as identifiable.
 - The data will remain stored for a period of two years after the submission of my PhD dissertation in order to address post-submission questioning (if any).
 - The data collected will be available only to the named investigators.
 - Afterwards, all paper data will be destroyed securely. The electronic data will also be destroyed securely.
 - My interview will be strictly used for research purposes only. The data will not be used for any purposes for which consent has not been given here.

- The recording of my interview will be transcribed and analysed for the purpose of the present research by following Plymouth Marjon University’s Transcription Guidelines.
- Personal data shall be handled strictly in accordance with the provisions of The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, the Plymouth Marjon University’s Data Protection Policy v1.6 September 2017 and Research Ethics Policy and Code of Conduct 2017.
- I agree to take part in the above study

Signed (Research participant)

Print name

Date

Name of person taking consent

Date

Signature

1 copy for participant; and 1 copy to be placed in researcher ‘s file.

Appendix E: Interview transcript

1 **Question: Thank you very much for your time. I will start with the question**
2 **that for how long you are living in UK or Blackburn?**

3 Response: So, forty-four and I've lived in the UK for forty-four years.

4 **Forty-four years.**

5 Yeah.

6 **You're the first generation of migrants here?**

7 Yeah. The youngest of the first generation. Good times.

8 **Good. So, you got your education from**

9 Yeah. Got my education from from Blackburn. Yeah.

10 **And how was your school selected?**

11 To be honest with you, I felt like my primary schooling was, was a Catholic
12 school. My dad made a deliberate choice of sending me to a school which was,
13 it was a school on the other side of Blackburn, but it was an all-White school, it's
14 a Church of England school...and so it was a school which was really
15 considered to be not the preferred choice for many of the parents who lived in
16 the area where, where I was grown growing up in, and in fact, nobody from the
17 neighbourhood went to that school. It was a school which had very few Muslim
18 heritage children, let alone the profile of being a Pakistani, I think there were
19 three in the whole time I was there. So, the reason why my dad chose that I'm
20 not too sure. But it was one of the better decisions when it came to school.

21 **It may be close to your home?**

22 It's not it was not close. There are schools which are closer. I didn't go to a
23 school where my brothers and sisters went. It was a school, which was
24 considered to be the best school for me at the time. I don't know why? But it
25 was a good school.

26 **So, what's your criteria of a good school? You just mentioned it was a**
27 **good school?**

28 For me, it's about academia and obviously, it's about standards and it's about
29 proficiency in English and it's about the readiness to learn and about, about
30 smashing the, the benchmarks at which age-related expectations are. So, it's
31 about a school which is driven by academic excellence. So, you know, you, you
32 want to be able to thrive or have your children thrive in an environment where
33 there is a true passion. Because you know, where there is good there is a high
34 standard of quality of teaching and learning, the results are good, people take

35 more risks, and then you become very creative with the way you work and work
36 with children. So, they can get the best deal, and you send your child to school
37 to keep them safe. Yes, you send your child to school to keep them happy. But
38 ultimately you send your child to school to get the best of the education that you
39 can get them to get them to the next stage. And Primary School is very
40 important because if you've got a secure outstanding primary school, you build
41 the foundations for secondary. And, you know, I think it's really
42 important...informed choices about schooling is considered even if it's
43 inconvenient even though it's not the school nearest to you, even though you've
44 got to travel from A to B, it's is very important to get the the profile of the school
45 right to be able to then say that: 'I've put my child in the best place for them to
46 be able to move from point A to point B'.

47 **So, did all of your children, they attended the same school or different**
48 **schools?**

49 My older boys went to a local Catholic school. It was a school which is not too
50 far from here. But it was, I couldn't...I went for an outstanding school and where
51 I lived there were no outstanding schools where I could form part of the
52 catchment....so, we went to an underrepresented out outstanding School,
53 which was outside of Blackburn which was down there in Lancashire. So, it was
54 a seven-mile round trip journey. And then I started working for the organisation I
55 work for now, and I was able to get my child into an Islamic academy free
56 primary school. For me, that is an outstanding educational-

57 **(overlapping) Outstanding, from which perspective?**

58 From Ofsted's and it was its ranked within the top one percent of all private
59 schools nationally.

60 **So, did you do some home-schooling of your children also before sending**
61 **them to nursery or to school?**

62 I worked hard with them. They had a level of proficiency in reading and writing,
63 a number recognition before they went to school. So, they were able to, you
64 know, count up to fifty or they were able to write the names and identify letters
65 and still at the age of four, so they could access to learning from day one, yeah.

66 **What is your what will be your preferred secondary school for your child**
67 **who is studying in at the primary level?**

68 It's going to be Islamic boys' high school. For me, it's going to be this school
69 only. There will be no other choice. He will, he will come, he will go to the same
70 high school.

71 **Okay, I mean because of the academic excellence?**

72 Yeah, because of the academic excellence because of the faith-based
73 provision, because of it being a single sex school, all these factors, their

74 specialism is on leadership. So, it really does develop those leadership of
75 performance of moral and civic leadership duties. And it creates a **well-**
76 **rounded individual** who is really confident about knowing where they want to
77 go into so many of the boys who leave Islamic boys' high school boys, they go
78 on to do step based A level subjects Engineering, Maths, Chemistry, Physics,
79 some of some of the most renowned educational providers within Lancashire,
80 and then they always aspire to go to one of the Russell Group universities. So,
81 the children's mindset is very open to wanting to go to a red brick Russell Group
82 University from the age of twelve thirteen. So, the language which the children
83 are immersed in is quite academic from a very early age.

84 **So, you are quite confident confident that you will meet the criteria for**
85 **admission in that school?**

86 Absolutely.

87 **Because I have learnt that the criteria is very hard. You should be from the**
88 **catchment area. You should be you should have some membership of the**
89 **particular mosques which are attached to that community, I think.**

90 Yeah. Children of staff are part of the admissions criteria. So, there is there is
91 there it comes before distance so there is.

92 **So, do you have some number two choice also?**

93 I have not had to consider number two and I don't I'm not considering number
94 two because I will get, my son we'll get in under the sibling and then there's that
95 the son of a member of staff at the school because he's brothers there...so,
96 hundred percent of the siblings have got in and hundred percent of the the
97 children of this staff have got in so because of that, there is there is no
98 alternatives school.

99 **So, does your child also attend the mosque, mosque in the evening.**
100 **Which mosque and how did you choose that mosque and why?**

101 The mosque is a bit different when it comes to selection...for, for for *masjid*,
102 there was more of convenience, there was more of longevity. So, I was looking
103 at the kind of provision, which was post sixteen because they, there's a
104 *madrassah* curriculum in the main course offers at thirteen. So, I was looking at
105 the madrasahs, which could offer some sort of educational provision past
106 thirteen.

107 **So, do you think that the mosques, they are, they have a contribution for**
108 **producing productive citizens of in British society. I mean, they are**
109 **playing some part...the mosques.**

110 Absolutely, because there is no doubt if there's an attachment with faith, there's
111 an attachment with discipline, there's a connection and a sense of belonging
112 and that will make you a good person. And they will create that sense of good

113 character, that sense of road to respect, commonality and humanity. So, yeah,
114 the *masjids* have got a huge connection to the profile of young person.

115 **Nice. So, so from mosque, we come to the school...in school, there is RE,**
116 **you know, the religious education content. So, what are your comments**
117 **on the religious education which is imparted in primary schools?**

118 I think, if you, if you were to consider religious education is being a subject of
119 humanity and about values, then there is no contradiction or there is no issue. It
120 creates opportunities to discuss boundaries, about etiquettes, social norms, and
121 therefore it reinforces if you've got a faith identity, it will reinforce what you
122 consider to be the values of your own faith. And part of learning about your own
123 faith is to learn about others and their faith to to only learn about one, you will
124 never know what the other, he is practising and why you're practising, which
125 would then be enforced your own religion. So, I think having a balanced RE
126 curriculum is key. Obviously, where you would always substantiate the, you will
127 always substantiate the curriculum. As a parent you would substantiate the
128 curriculum under the faith-based aspect, from an Islamic perspective, so if if you
129 teach or when you're teaching Christmas, I would always take the time to teach
130 my own children about the about the importance of the clay pigeons and *Hazrat*
131 *Essa* (Jesus) that the and what the Muslim interpretation is? So, saying that we
132 don't negate what the Christians believe. But our interpretation is a little bit
133 different. We don't believe that Jesus is the son of God, this is what he's
134 different. This is what is he is similar, but we don't ever say that they are wrong,
135 we just say we look at things differently. And therefore, our viewpoint is, this is
136 where we have got things in common, and this is where things are different. So,
137 they are taught about the faith, but then they have their own faith reinforced.

138 **Yeah, exactly. Because I think the children they will be coming home with**
139 **a lot of questions from their RE classes and you have to explain all these.**

140 Absolutely, and this is where the interest in education is key because all
141 websites all all school website, they will have published curriculum on there,
142 which will tell you at which stage in the academic year children are studying
143 what? So, to inspire and infuse, I'm being a parent of boys, boys need a little bit
144 more support with their curiosity, girls tend to be independent learners and boys
145 need to be boys need that nourishment of excitement of engagement. So, the
146 more the engaging the parent is, the chances are that their boys will thrive
147 because they're what they're one step ahead. So if the parents have got a real
148 insight into doing the Vikings or they're doing the Anglo Saxons, and they're
149 doing it in a February to Easter, then they can start taking them to the library,
150 getting the books, taking them to the museums, and all that enrichment will
151 connect the learning in the home to the to the one of school, so if parents can
152 preempt what is being studied by taking the time to look on line, and to look at
153 the published curriculum from the primary schools. Then the chances are that
154 they will be ready for the conversations which their children are ready to have.
155 And if the children don't ask, then the parents can ask, and it can be a little bit
156 deeper then, 'how was your day today'? It was: 'you are learning about this.
157 What did you learn today?' and, 'do you agree with it?' And that's where the
158 challenge and the high road of thinking can come in.

159 [disruption] [off the record]

160 **Okay, so did you ever consider some online Islamic education for your**
161 **children to consult some online sources?**

162 No.

163 **So, they must be learning some European languages also in the schools.**

164 Yeah. But when you say you European, there is French and then there is Arabic
165 which is not European, yeah.

166 **So, do you think that Arabic should be offered to every Muslim Student in**
167 **UK. I mean as an option to study Arabic, if they want.**

168 When you're looking at it from a comparative performance point of view, Arabic
169 is one of the hardest subjects to get any form of results with show that it is a
170 successful subject because you're competing with the Emiratis. So, when their
171 Arabic is next level, so our children will never get to that stage. So, our children
172 won't get the A stars and the As in Arabic in comparison to the children who are
173 from Dubai and Oman and places, they'll just fly through. So that's their, that's
174 their native language and they will fly so I think it's a very good subject and it's a
175 very modern subject. It's, it's considered to be a subject which will open the
176 doors for the boys in the school where I am, and I know that I encourage my
177 own boys to engage with it. Its parents think that is a language which could
178 open their understanding to the Quran but it's not to that level. This is not this is
179 this is a different level of Arabic, compared to the standard needed to be able to
180 interpret the Quran.

181 **Interesting.**

182 So when parents feel that there's a presumption, you know, and I'm a strong
183 believer in saying that if you keep the the child's brain engaged and my own
184 children I've got one who's in college now, he still goes to the masjid is that if
185 you keep them going, the learning journey is just is just complements it, so I'm
186 really against having children leaving *masjid*. I hear some parents say he's
187 leaving *masjid* because he's doing these GCSE. I will say, I will send mine for
188 longer because the discipline of time, the discipline of transferring the skills of
189 learning, so I have a son who is doing *hifz* Quran, but his memory skills have
190 helped him in his GCSE. And he knows that if he's got to go to *masjid*, so when
191 it was Ramadan and he had to go from five till nine, he had to finish his
192 revisions for his GCSE before and after, you know, and I know that if he was at
193 home all the time, he would have just gone to bed. So, it's just about being able
194 to have that time discipline...which complements it.

195 **Exactly. So, does your child also takes part in some extracurricular**
196 **activities, like swimming, something like that?**

197 Yeah. To have an all-rounded, I'm very mindful of some of the schools which
198 my child attends. They're predominantly Muslim heritage, Pakistani Indian
199 heritage. So, I will expose them to activities which get them to go on it engage
200 and interact with the wider community. So, whether that be the swimming on
201 Saturday or the *karate* on Sunday and the football. They're having to go outside
202 their social circle to be able to represent a local team and that gives them the
203 skills of leadership, teamwork.

204 **So, you encouraged him to mix with other communities.**

205 Absolutely. Yeah, yeah. So that they don't see anything. Because the more you
206 mix, the less you see, the less you mix the more you see.

207 **Interesting.... so, now I want to discuss something about sex and**
208 **relationship education at the secondary level. So, so do you see any**
209 **moral foundation of sex education at the secondary level?**

210 All I would like to say at this point is, if everything is taught which is age related,
211 and is of relevance to a person's age, then there needs to be an opportunity for
212 in in a sensitive way. That there is a forum to be able to do it. Where its age
213 related is dealt with in a sensitive way where the information is going to come
214 from somewhere. And there is no secret to say that ignorance is no defence.
215 You, you have to take the time to be able to educate....and if you are averse of
216 the schools educating through the SRE, then as a parent, you you've got to take
217 the responsibility of saying, I will take the opportunity of educating or making my
218 child aware with some of what is needed in order for them to be able to deal
219 with some of what are the dilemmas. This is just a personal it's not a generic, to
220 be able to say I'm not going to come across this with any of my children or any
221 of my family members, and therefore we don't need to touch it. That would be
222 the ideal blessing and the and the kind of the blessing showered upon by the
223 mighty that this is not anything which is going to call upon you, but you always
224 have to be prepared for if it does, how you're going to deal with it, are you going
225 to deal with it so you're really reactive and deal with it. You know you either stop
226 a fire from flaming or you have to deal with the fireworks. It's like my mentalities.
227 Don't let the fire start in the first place. Just talk and if you can't talk to your
228 children about these things, who you can you talk to? From my own point of
229 view, I've got a very open and honest relationship with my boys, but we've
230 talked about nearly everything, but what they want to know on what I consider
231 to be age related. So, so...you know, there are mixed vibes. There is a there is
232 a very young NSPCC programme, which is known as PANTS. My son is, my
233 youngest son is six. I went through with him. I know I have friends who said
234 what are you doing? He's crazy but I said my little six-year-old knows about
235 what if somebody was to ask anything about getting near his underwear? He
236 would know what to say now that, you know, I have been I've had some sorts of
237 conversations to say nobody should ever ask you any of these questions, and
238 nor should, nobody should ask you to remove your underwear, nobody should
239 ever be anywhere near your underwear, apart from your mommy and myself,
240 there should be nobody and he knows that. So, it's those kinds of, you know, I
241 felt reassured that having had that conversation with him that I protected him. I
242 don't know he's out of the house for ten twelve hours a day from school and
243 then *madrasah* and we know that there are people in every organisation who

244 may get it, who may not be the trusted person who. So, these kinds of informed
245 choices, but I tend to make these choices with my wife, and we tend to make
246 them so that they are age related. So, there is a there is room for an element of
247 education, which is linked to this, which is based on sensitivity around the age
248 of the child, the faith of the child, you know, who is dealing with it? So for me if it
249 was boys, it or is this somebody who is in a male capacity as a role model to be
250 able to deliver it, you wouldn't want somebody who was male delivering
251 something on SRE to a group of females, which is to avoid the awkwardness.
252 That's my viewpoint.

253 **So how would you prepare your child to become a successful citizen in**
254 **the modern British society?**

255 I think faith is important for me and if you've got the if you've got the values of
256 faith, you will be a good citizen. You will be a good citizen because you've got
257 universal values, if you're a good person, you will be the best son, the best
258 husband, the best neighbour, no divisions, deal with humanity and therefore is
259 using positive. It's not using fear, it's using positivity. You know, don't don't class
260 people based on who they are, you know, class people for what they are, you
261 know, and then get them to appreciate through social action projects and
262 through service yourself. The concept of service is huge. So if they if they come
263 into contact with the homeless or if they're coming into contact with the elderly,
264 well, that's good, because then they and I live with my parents and I'm let them
265 know that this is that this is a real blessing for us that we have got this facility.
266 And so therefore, it's about knowing and being aware of being proud that
267 people don't judge you for having the best car or the best house, or the best
268 clothing, people judge you for the old lady, you helped, offered the offered the
269 kindness you showed somebody who was destitute, and you know, and that I
270 believe the concept of service, it diminishes arrogance, and it promotes humility.
271 And then the kind of characteristics which get people to be the best and, you
272 know, I see it from from where, where I work, our we've got a huge focus on
273 service and so these social action projects, whether it's cleaning the streets,
274 whether it's visiting old people's homes through the *khidmat* (social service)
275 project, whatever we do, there is a sense of responsibility. And that sense of
276 responsibility makes you a good, a good citizen. And then respect. You know,
277 we respect the law of the land. If there is a contradiction between the law of the
278 land what you as a family believe, you don't go out and express your views in a
279 way which are insensitive. Everybody's got an entitlement to hold their own
280 views. But you have to live within the framework of the country and the law of
281 the land where you live. And there is a way to ask and there is a way to get your
282 point across. This is not about shouting. It's not about being insulting. It's about
283 conversing in a neutrally engaging forum, which is non-threatening, and it
284 embraces all points of view.

285 **Exactly. That takes me to the next and last question. You have partly**
286 **answered this question that how you identify yourself as a Muslim in**
287 **British society.**

288 How do I identify myself?

289 **It's a very generic question. I'm interested to, to hear your views on it.**

290 [Pause]

291 Just repeat the question for me please.

292 **How you identify yourself as a Muslim in British society?**

293 I consider myself.

294 **Yeah. What's your identity actually?**

295 I'd like to be known. I'd like to be known as a person who's is of good character,
296 fairly good character, a person with integrity and honesty. And then if you
297 consider to be a person who is working within those kind of boundaries, then for
298 me, *Alhamdu Lillah*, being Muslim people will attach some of the profile of how I
299 display my character because of my faith. So, and then that will then penetrate
300 into the viewpoint of a British citizen. But in whatever role I carry or wherever
301 identity I carry, there is no difference. So, I will not be different because I'm a
302 British citizen, in comparison to if I if I'm a Muslim however, portray myself as a
303 Muslim, I will try and be as a Muslim will be how I would prepare myself as a
304 British citizen because there is there is no contradiction. There is universal
305 values. So, if you're going to, if I'm going to be proud to be a Muslim person
306 who can do the practical elements of the faith, I will do that as a British citizen,
307 and I'll do it. But then if I'm going to, you know, try and improve a
308 neighbourhood while I'm doing it, because it's going to be something which
309 would then also fall within your faith and fall within your duty as a British citizen.
310 So, there is there is no real distinction for me. I find that answer quite difficult to
311 answer. Only because I'm finding that there is. There is a huge overlap.

312 **Yeah, there is, but you answered it quite beautifully. So, my interview, I**
313 **mean you gave very beautiful and comprehensive answers. My interview**
314 **is coming to an end. If you would like to add anything, you're welcome.**

315 All I would say is we're very fortunate to have a very comprehensive education
316 system. How people want to use it as a tool is very much down to them.
317 *Alhamdulillah*, the schooling and education system has moved on so much that
318 the presumption was that the responsibility for the child's education was
319 primarily at the school' door and I think it's the communities and the
320 generational kind of movement takes place. There is a real realisation that what
321 you can instil in a child between zero and seven is far more than they can ever
322 achieve for the rest of the life so that that mother's love in influencing, and that
323 father's input in influencing is phenomenal as the basis of kind of the the
324 foundations for the future for that young person, you know, so it's an
325 investment. And if you want to invest not in banks, or if you want to invest not in
326 properties, but you want to invest in your children, the biggest contributor is
327 time. And one of the things you will get if you input time with your children, is
328 comprehensive and successful education. Because they will then that
329 engagement is all through learning, that the children have a thirst for learning,
330 and they are so used to learning that they will go to anybody to acquire that
331 learning, whether it be the teacher, whether it be *ustaad* (religious teacher) in
332 the masjid, whether it be the aunty whether it be the dad that thirst and

333 acquisition hunger for for knowledge and learning has been instilled by the
334 parents. So, that it's about that engagement. And the the the one area which I
335 feel there needs to be some work on with parents is it's about having an
336 awareness that devices, it's again personal, a personal belief that engagement
337 through devices and there is no substitute and therefore you can have whatever
338 app or you can have whatever channel to educate your child on how to learn
339 English or how to count to fifty. But the power of the parent can never be
340 substituted. And, and sometimes we get a little bit lost with our business. So, as
341 we strive to, to become more, more affluent and spend more time in our working
342 lives so that we can achieve greater things and have better material lifestyles.
343 We don't want to set ourselves by going back. We're at a stage now where our
344 children should be lifted to be able to get to wherever they want to get to within
345 education. And those and those kind of jobs, which, which we're about for our
346 Pakistani heritage in the main kind of community and cohorts, this shouldn't be
347 there now for the majority of our children. I'm not saying there's anything wrong
348 with them, but we should not see another generation fitting in certain jobs,
349 because we should have come passed that now. There is nothing to hold them
350 back.

351 **Okay.**

352 Okay. Thank you

353 **Thank you very much for your time.**

354 No problem.

355 End of interview.

Appendix F: Ethics approval

12/05/2021

Gmail - EP063 Decision



Muhammad Naeem <muhammadnaeem1975@gmail.com>

EP063 Decision

Tomasina Oh <toh@marjon.ac.uk>

Wed, Nov 14, 2018 at 5:45 PM

To: "'Muhammad Naeem' (muhammadnaeem1975@gmail.com)" <muhammadnaeem1975@gmail.com>, Naeem Muhammad <Naeem.M@pgr.marjon.ac.uk>

Cc: Lystra Hagley-Dickinson <LHagley-Dickinson@marjon.ac.uk>, Susan Cooper <scooper@marjon.ac.uk>, "David Lundie (lundied@hope.ac.uk)" <lundied@hope.ac.uk>, Kass Gibson <kgibson@marjon.ac.uk>, Ethics Panel <EthicsPanel@marjon.ac.uk>, EDO <edo@marjon.ac.uk>

Dear Muhammad,

Thank you for submitting your amendments on EP063 **School Choices of Muslim Parents in relation to British Multiculturalism Policy** for consideration.

Previously the Panel had agreed to grant your application conditional approval subject to the requests for clarification and modifications outlined in our letter to you dated 24th August 2018. After careful consideration of your responses the Panel is happy that you have addressed our points satisfactorily; however in the process of you making those changes there are two further minor amendments that need to be made (described below). However, these can be made without your application having to come back for consideration.

We are therefore pleased to let you know that we are happy to issue a favourable ethical opinion of the above research study on the basis described in your application form, protocol and supporting documentation including the minor amendments described below. This review is for the period starting today till 30th September 2019. If the timelines for your research indicated in your application require an extension beyond this period, or if there are changes to your project which affect the Ethics approval, please ensure you submit a renewal/amendment request as appropriate in good time to the Panel. Following the end date you should complete and submit a study closure form.

Please note the University Research Ethics Panel will be undertaking an audit at the end of every academic year and your application may be randomly selected for this purpose. Please ensure you keep a record of your Ethics and any relevant documentation. You will be informed if your application is selected for audit.

The minor amendments you are required to make:

1. On page 28 of your protocol form you state: "My interview will be strictly used for the research purpose only. The data will not be used for any other studies"
 - Please remove "the" and replace "purpose" with "purposes". Replace "any other studies" with "any purposes for which consent has not been given here".
2. Draft Letter. See "If you are happy for your school to take part in the study, I would like to send a letter out to the parents of Pakistani Muslim Year 6 children in the school ..."
 - Please replace the highlighted with "appreciate your help to send a letter"

We note that you have chosen not to destroy the audio recordings after transcription but that they will be destroyed securely with all other data at the time stated on your protocol. This is, strictly speaking, not best practice but if they are to be destroyed at a later date you must ensure these audio recordings are stored very securely and de-identified as appropriate.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ik=747351e717&view=pt&search=all&permmsgid=msg-f%3A1617113407098006967&simpl=msg-f%3A1617113407098006967>

1/2

Please make these amendments as soon as you can, resave the documents as the appropriate version (v 1.4) and send these back to the Ethics Panel for filing please.

We are experiencing longer than usual response times at the moment while the EDO covers Research Office activities in addition to their usual workload. Please excuse this decision coming to you by email when it would usually come in a formal letter sent by the Ethics Secretary. This formal letter will follow so there is a record of it on file once the EDO are able to get to it.

We wish you the best for your research,

Tomasina

On behalf of Kass Gibson (*Interim Chair*) and the Ethics Panel

Tomasina M Oh, PhD

Associate Dean: Research & Clinical Partnerships

School of Sport, Health & Wellbeing

Plymouth Marjon University

Derriford Road, Plymouth, Devon PL6 8BH

T: 01752 636700 (ext: 3056)



Plymouth Marjon University is the trading name of University of St Mark & St John



Appendix G: Permission letter from BYPAC Coordinator

2 Whalley Street
Blackburn
Lancashire
BB1 7NB

Dated: 19th August 2020

Dear Muhammad Naeem,

Thank you for your letter dated 7th May 2020.

I understand that Mr Muhammad Naeem is seeking permission from the BYPAC steering committee to use the BYPAC report in your research titled “School Choices of Muslim Parents in relation to British Multiculturalism Policy” within Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council’s school admissions policy.

We are naturally delighted that you have chosen to include our BYPAC project for your research.

We have no objections to you referring to the BYPAC project in your research and you have our full permission to cite the report as you see fit.

We wish you good luck in your studies and every success in your future endeavours.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,



Amjad Raza

Study Centre Coordinator

Steering Committee Member

Appendix H: Coding framework

The following three major themes emerged from the data:

1. Multiculturalism
2. Culturally sensitive schooling
3. Moments of choice

The following sub-themes emerged throughout the data analysis, which is encoded as under:

Theme 1: Multiculturalism (MC)

Code	Sub-theme
MC-BBN	Multicultural Blackburn town (social and religious life in Blackburn)
MC-ISL	Multiculturalism and Islamic education
MC-NET	Social networks of the Muslim community
MC-PAR	Parents' multicultural experiences
MC-CHD	Muslim children's mixing with other communities
MC-COM	Multicultural competence
MC-LOS	'Lost children' – transition of Muslim children from Islamic secondary schools to further education
MC-RES	Concept of respect
MC-HSM	Home-school-mosque linkages
MC-IDY	Multicultural identity
MC-GOV	Muslims' satisfaction with the efforts of the government to preserve their cultural and religious identity

Theme 2: Culturally sensitive schooling (CS)

Code	Sub-theme
CS-FRE	Issues in religious education
CS-NRE	Relationships and sex education
CS-ISS	Language education
CS-FSE	Single-sex schooling
CS-NSE	'Mixed' schooling and different connotation of 'mixed'
CS-PRI	Gujarati supplementary schools
CS-LEG	Improved Muslim supplementary schools
CS-EAL	English as an additional language
CS-MFL	The teaching of modern foreign languages
CS-ARB	Arabic language
CS-HER	The teaching of heritage languages (Urdu & Punjabi languages)

Theme 3: Moments of choice (MO)

Code	Sub-theme
MO-PAR	School choices of participants' parents
MO-ISS	Islamic school choices
MO-CON	Convenience in school choosing
MO-PRI	Primary school choices
MO-SSC	Secondary school choices
MO-OFS	Ofsted reports
MO-DIS	Discipline/behaviour management in schools
MO-IIS	Issue in Islamic schooling
MO-SUP	Supplementary school choices
MO-COL	School allocation by the council
MO-ASI	Asian majority pupils in schools/Asia-isation of schools
MO-CRI	Criteria for a good school

A note about manual coding of data:

I was aware of the Specialised computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as NVivo, ETHNOGRAPH, AQUAD, AnSWR, ATLAS.ti, DiscoverText and QDA Miner are available in the market. There are many benefits of using these software, such as their capability to process a large amount of data in less time. Saldana (2009) recognised that CAQDAS can enable a researcher to organise the complicated coding systems into user-friendly formats such as clusters, bundles, networks and hierarchical patterns. However, he cautions that CAQDAS is not programmed to code the data for the researcher. The software's job is to manage, organise and store data that prepares the ground for human reflection and analysis. The task of coding is primarily the responsibility of a researcher. Therefore, during this study, I decided to code the data manually.

I did not use CAQDAS due to the following reasons:

- a. I wanted to slow down the analytical process to get sufficient time for reflection. It ensured that the reported patterns occur throughout the data transcripts rather than just in the select sample of texts. The manual coding was done to ensure the consistency and reliability of the data analysis.
- b. Manual coding enabled me to keep a systematic track of the adopted analysis processes, which helped ensure the reliable use of codes, categories and sub-themes.
- c. During manual transcriptions and playing and replaying the recorded interviews, I felt close to the data. I got to know the participants in more depth, which gave me a sense of ownership and closeness to the data. I apprehended that the closeness might be lost during the coding by electronic means.
- d. It allowed me to deal with the complexity of the fluid data by locating the mixed themes and sub-themes that run through and connect all thirty-three transcripts.
- e. Lastly, electronic coding would have 'de-humanised' the whole data. During the analytic process, I wanted to capture the participants' emotions, feelings, attitudes, and behaviours by keeping my data 'humanised'.

The manual coding helped not miss a single minute detail that proved useful for data analysis and presentation of findings coherently.

Appendix I: Educational needs of Muslim children in state schools

A number of British Muslim organizations, including Muslim Councils of Britain (MCB, 2007), has appreciates the accommodation of some of the specific needs of the Muslims. However, the council thinks that the steps taken are useful but not sufficient. It has developed a guiding framework in consultation with local authorities, Muslim organizations, faith-based schools, Islamic schools, religious experts, as well as teachers and headteachers of state schools. The council has recommended 'A Muslim inclusive approach' to address and respect the educational needs of Muslim children as under:

- Modesty in uniform dress code (for example, to allow the wearing of full-length skirts).
- Allow Muslim males to grow and maintain beards.
- Allow pupils to wear religious amulets (sewn in cloth, leather or in the form of lockets).
- Provision of Halal meals in the schools resourced from authentic halal butchers and the kitchen staff receives training on preparing and serving such meals.
- Provision of facilities for daily prayers and especially Jumu'ah prayer at the school
- Provision of facilities for *Wudu* (cleanliness before praying).
- The spirit of Ramadan should be reflected in the school Assemblies. Rigorous examinations may not be conducted during the holy month of Ramadan.
- The school includes the two main Islamic festivals (*Eid-ul-Fitr* and *Eid-ul-Adha*) in the school calendar and grants holidays to students to celebrate these two events.
- During physical education, sports, swimming and dance classes, the spirit of modesty should be maintained. For example, physical education sessions in single-gender groups, separate showering and changing facilities for boys and girls at the secondary school level, swimming sessions in single-gender groups, and wearing tracksuits by girls and boys during physical education classes.
- Schools should respect the parental right of withdrawing their children from religious education classes.

- Schools discourage children from participating in the collective worship activity, which has no Islamic character.
- Relationships and sex education classes are taught in single-gender groups and delivered by teachers of the same gender.
- During sex education classes, explicit sexual photos and videos should not be shown, and Muslim sensitivity towards sexual morality should be considered.
- Schools to allow Muslim students to study Arabic and other community languages according to their family backgrounds.
- Performing arts like drama and music should respect Muslim beliefs and religious figures.
- Schools with significant Muslim pupils should have a library with authentic Islamic books and accurate academic materials.
- Placements of Muslims as school governors.

Source: Muslim Council of Britain (2007).

Appendix J: Secondary schools in Blackburn as of 2021

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
1	Blackburn Central High School	No-religion	Trust School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
2	Darwen Aldridge Community Academy	No-religion	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
3	Darwen Vale High School	No-religion	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
4	Our Lady and St John Catholic College	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
5	Pleckgate High School	No-religion	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
6	Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	No-religion	Free School	Other Children	Random draw
7	St Bede's Roman Catholic High School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Non-Catholic children with sibling attending the school	0.479
8	St Wilfrid's Church of England Academy	Church of England	Academy	Distance	0.187
9	<i>Tauheedul</i> Islam Boys' High School	Muslim	Free School	Priority Group A - Muslim Boys attending The Olive Priority Group B - Boys attending The Olive	Priority Group A – 1.356 Priority Group B – 0.975
10	<i>Tauheedul</i> Islam Girls' High School	Muslim	Academy	Distance	0.594
11	Witton Park Academy	No-religion	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A

Appendix K: Primary schools in Blackburn as of 2021

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
1	Ashleigh Foundation School	No-religion	Foundation School	Other Children (Distance)	1.125
2	Audley Community Infant School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
3	Avondale Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
4	Belmont Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
5	Blackburn the Redeemer Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	2.310
6	Brookhouse Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
7	Cedars Community Primary School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
8	Daisyfield Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
9	Feniscowles Community School	No-religion	Community School	Distance	1.016
10	Griffin Park Community School	No-religion	Community School	Distance	0.492
11	Holy Souls Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
12	Holy Trinity Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Controlled School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
13	Intack Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
14	Lammack Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
15	Longshaw Community Infant School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
16	Lower Darwen Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
17	Meadowhead Community Infant School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
18	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
19	Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	No-religion	Free School	Other Children	Random draw
20	Roe Lee Park Community School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
21	Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
22	Shadsworth Community Infant School	No-religion	Community School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
23	St Aidan's Primary School - A Church of England Academy	Church of England	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
24	St Alban's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
25	St Anne's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
26	St Antony's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
27	St Barnabas' Primary School - A Church of England Academy	Church of England	Academy	Parental Worship	0.961
28	St Barnabas & St Paul's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Parish	0.262
29	St Cuthbert's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
30	St Edward's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
31	St Francis' Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
32	St Gabriel's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	0.383
33	St James' Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
34	St James' Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	1.117
35	St James' Primary School - A Church of England Academy	Church of England	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
36	St Joseph's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
	Catholic School				
37	St Luke & St Philip's Primary School - A Church of England Academy	Church of England	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
38	St Mary & St Joseph's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
39	St Matthew's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	0.736
40	St Michael with St John Church of England Voluntary Controlled School	Church of England	Voluntary Controlled School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
41	St Paul's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	1.077
42	St Paul's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Other Children (Distance)	2.052
43	St Peter's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
44	St Peter's Roman Catholic School	Roman Catholic	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
45	St Silas' Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A

#	School name	Religious designation	Type of school	Oversubscription criteria allocated of the last place offered	Furthest distance (miles)
46	St Stephen's Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
47	St Stephen's Tockholes Church of England School	Church of England	Voluntary Aided School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
48	St Thomas' Church of England Voluntary Controlled School	Church of England	Voluntary Controlled School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
49	Sudell Primary School	Non-religious	Academy	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
50	The Olive School	Muslim	Free School	Priority Group A – Mosque Membership Priority Group B – Medical/Social	Priority Group A – 1.272 Priority Group B – 2.272
51	Turton & Edgworth Church of England / Methodist Voluntary Controlled School	Church of England	Voluntary Controlled School	Not Oversubscribed	N/A
52	Wensley Fold CofE Primary Academy	Church of England	Academy	Distance	0.291

Appendix L: Key religious concepts

The following list will inform the readers how the Islamic terms have been used and conceptualised in this study (Abughosh & Shaqra, 1992).

Allah	literally The God. The Creator of the universe. Allah is not male or female and has no comparison in creation.
Aqeeda	means 'creed'. Any religious belief system, or creed, can be considered an example of <i>aqeeda</i> .
Asslam-o-Alaikum	Muslim greeting which translates as 'may peace be upon you'. It is often used by Muslims around the world.
Dar ul Uloom	means 'house of learning'. It is a specialist school (often full time) that concentrates on teaching Islamic scholarship. It specialises in producing Islamic scholars and prayer leaders for the mosques.
Deen	means 'way of life'. Islam is a <i>deen</i> and therefore much more than a 'religion'. It is the way of life decreed by Allah that meets the <i>fiṭrah</i> (human nature). All questions can therefore be referred to the Islamic sources and Islam should guide all human endeavours, individual and social.
Dunya	the world.
Eid	there are two <i>Eid</i> celebrations per year that Muslims engage in. The first <i>Eid al-fitr</i> is celebrated at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan and the second, <i>Eid al-adha</i> is known as the festival of sacrifice where there is a ritual slaughter of sheep, goats and camels which is then mainly distributed to the poor.
Farz	religious obligation.
Hadith	Prophetic saying: the <i>Aḥadith</i> (plural) have been preserved and compiled in books, they serve as the secondary source of Islamic law, after the Quran.
Hafiz-e-Quran	one who has memorised the entire Quran; and thereby preserves and protects it from corruption or being lost.
Halal	refers to things/actions that are permissible according to the Islamic law.
Halal food	usually refers to meat slaughtered according to Muslim custom, synonymous with Jewish Kosher meat.
Haram	refers to things/actions that are forbidden according to the Islamic law.
Hifz	literally protection, preservation, and memorisation; usually used in reference to memorisation of the Quran.

Hijab	<i>hijab</i> has a trilogy of meanings: a. to conceal, hide, cover and to veil; b. Lowering of the gaze with the opposite sex and applies to men as well who must lower their gaze in the presence of unrelated women; c. In recent times, hijab has also become the common name given to the headscarf worn by Muslim women, pinned at the neck with their faces showing. According to Islamic scholarship, hijab is given the wider meaning of modesty, privacy and morality.
Imam	an Islamic leadership position. A person trained in Islamic studies whose main duty is to lead the five obligatory prayers at the mosque or a leader of the Muslim community.
Insha Allah	if God wills.
Islam	this is the name given by Allah to the religion for humankind. The word 'Islam' means submission and obedience for Allah's commands to attain peace in life.
Jaiz	religiously permissible.
Jazak Allah	a term used as an Islamic expression of gratitude meaning 'May God reward you [with] goodness'.
Khana Kaba	House of Allah in Makkah, Saudi Arabia.
Madrassa	a part-time school often attached to a Mosque, where teachings of Quran and basics of Islam take place. Most Muslim children attend a madrassa after their day school. It is referred to as supplementary school in this study.
Masha Allah	an Arabic phrase that expresses appreciation, joy, praise or thankfulness for an event.
Masjid	a Mosque: Islamic place of worship.
Masjid e Nabvi	Prophet's mosque in Medina, Saudi Arabia.
Muslim	literally one who has testified and submitted; one who believes in and adheres to Islam. A Muslim declares that there is no god except Allah, and Muhammad is the last Prophet of God.
Najaiz	forbidden (religiously).
Nasheed	to present Islamic beliefs, history and religion in lyrical style. A song in praise of God or Prophet Muhammad.
Nazra	to read the Quran verbally without translation.
Prophet Muhammad	the final Messenger of Allah to mankind. He was Muhammad bin Abdullah (Peace Be Upon Him).

<i>Qari</i>	the one who can recite the Quran with good pronunciation and in a melodic tone.
<i>Quran</i>	literally means ‘that which is recited’: refers to the divinely revealed scripture (Holy Book) of Islam. It is revealed by Allah to Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty-three years. There are 114 chapters of the Quran called ‘Surahs’. The Quran continues to be recited by Muslims throughout the world in the language of its revelation, Arabic. The Quran is viewed as the authoritative guide for Muslims and mankind.
<i>Ramadan</i>	<i>Ramadan</i> is the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar calendar. It is the month of fasting. Muslims are obliged to abstain from all food, drink, any kind of tobacco use, and any kind of sexual contact between dawn and sunset. The month of <i>Ramadan</i> is a time for spiritual reflection, prayer, doing good deeds and spending time with family and friends. The fasting is intended to help teach self-discipline, self-restraint and generosity. It also reminds Muslims of the suffering of the poor, who may rarely get to eat well.
<i>Seerah</i>	the life of Prophet Muhammad from which, in addition to the Quran and trustable Hadiths, the historical information about his life, his companions and the early period of Islam is derived.
<i>Shariah</i>	Islamic law covering all aspects of life of Muslims, based on the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad.
<i>Sunnah</i>	literally way, method, manner; used to refer to the Prophetic Tradition of Muhammad. As the Quran urges the believers to obey Muhammad and states that he is a source of guidance, his example: his sayings, actions and silences (on certain acts) are a source of law in Islam.
<i>Sunni</i>	literally following the Prophetic tradition; in reference to the main Islamic sect, the other sects being Shia and Wahabi
<i>Surah</i>	a chapter of the Quran.
<i>Tajweed</i>	to pronounce the words of Quran with correctness
<i>Tawhid</i>	the holism, oneness or unity of Allah (God); ‘Unity in its most profound sense. Allah is one in His Essence and His Attributes and His Acts. The whole universe and what it contains is one unified event which in itself has no lasting reality’.
<i>Transliteration</i>	translations of Quran for non-Arabic readers to help recitation and correct pronunciation.
<i>Ummah</i>	a term used to signify worldwide community of Muslims across the globe. Derived from the Arabic word ‘umm’ (mother). In the twentieth century, the term was sometimes

used by Arabs to mean 'nation' in a political sense, both in global terms (the pan-Arab umma) and local terms (a specific nation)

Wahabis a sect/group among Muslims.

Walaikum Salam a standard greeting used by Muslims around the world as a response to *Assalam-o-Alaikum*, meaning 'may peace be upon you'.
