A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE EDUCATION
OF MUSLIM PUPILS AND ETHNICITY IN STATE
SCHOOLS IN BRITAIN AND FRANCE

by

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A mes Trésors,

Fabien et Adélaï
The objective of this research is to investigate the opinions and experiences of young British and French Muslim people in state-funded secondary schools. The focus is on understanding how the education system in the two countries address and answer the cultural needs of children from the Muslim community and on examining the cultural constraints that operate and the difficulties encountered.

Both nations have a large immigrant population that has emerged from the legacy of Colonial Empire and whose ethnic origins and religious beliefs vary. A significant proportion of this population is of Islamic faith, with nearly five million in France and about two million in Britain. Attempts to integrate the Muslim minority groups into the host society have revealed that there are differences in the ways the two countries accept cultural practices in the sphere of state and societal affairs. France fundamentally rejects a society based on communitarianism, while Britain bases its societal structures around it.

While France makes a radical distinction between what governs the public from the private spheres (i.e. the street and the house), Britain supports the right to display religious symbols in the public sphere, hence showing acceptance of cultural differences. France is governed by a Republican ideology that is derived from the Revolution of 1789. Relations with ‘religion’ are established on a separation between the Church and the State, favouring the principle of laïcité as one of the key Republican values. The issue of religious pluralism in state schools has given rise to different problems in the two countries. In France, the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in school results in a ‘dress-code’ problem with underlying symbolism, causing arguments about religious pluralism, integration and laïcité. In Britain the debate focuses primarily on the state funding of Islamic schools, on discrimination and Religious Education within the context of British ethnic and race relations (e.g. in 2005, the Court of Appeal ruled that a Muslim girl was entitled to wear traditional ‘head-to-toe’ dress in her school).

The research shows that being Muslim in Britain and France refers, most of all, to conveying the cultural values and heritage to younger generations. Muslim identity embodies mainly a religious dimension for which the teaching of Islam is predominantly significant for British and French participants. However, French participants display a less religious practice of Islam than their British counterparts, showing instead a relaxed approach to the faith while retaining a sense of cultural tradition. Born in Britain or France, participants felt strongly associated to their place
of birth as that to which they belong. However, they were self-aware of being Muslim in a non-Muslim country and believed they should have the right and freedom to display their religious identity and cultural practices. While British Muslim children have a greater and clearer sense of national identity, in tune with their cultural heritage and religious identity, French Muslim pupils respond to their sense of national identity with little or no pride, considering it as an attribute challenged by their cultural heritage.

School systems in Britain and France differ in the way they deal with cultural differences. Although the common goal is to reach social cohesion and equality, Muslim pupils in the two countries have very different experiences at school and of school. British Muslim pupils appear to feel comfortable at school and believe their teachers understand and respect them and their culture. In general, British schools provide and allocate the time, space and consideration required for their cultural needs (e.g. prayer room, wash room and dietary requests). In contrast, French Muslim pupils do not display the same level of affinity with their school, do not share a sense of well-being at school and consider their teachers as alright. Basically, the French schools demonstrate little or no effort regarding their cultural needs. However, British and French Muslim pupils share their preference to learn more about Muslim culture since this would enhance theirs and other pupils' understanding and acceptance. They all want to be accepted as equals and not be seen as different by their fellow non-Muslim pupils.

British and French Muslim pupils associate the definition of integration to that of assimilation. However, British Muslim participants appeared to have no cognitive notion and subjective experience of the process of integration, in contrast to their French counterparts who displayed a much stronger understanding and articulated clear definitions and connotations of the term.

The empirical work upon which this study is based, examined how state-funded schools in Britain and France differ in their structure, national curriculum, approach to cultural diversity, efforts and objectives to foster opportunities in developing acceptance and tolerance. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from two schools in Britain and two in France. This thesis presents the findings on whether school systems address and accommodate the cultural needs of Muslim children and thus could influence their attitude to integration and participation in society.
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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>CFCM</td>
<td>Conseil Français du Culte Musulman (French Council of the Muslim Faith)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIAC</td>
<td>Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNCDH</td>
<td>Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l'Homme (French National Consultative Commission on Human Rights)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Classe d’Accueil (Adaptation Class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIN</td>
<td>Classe d’Initiation (Initiation Class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRE</td>
<td>Commission for Racial Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUKC</td>
<td>Citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOM-TOM</td>
<td>Départements d’Outre-Mer et Territoires d’Outre-Mer (Overseas regions and territories)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLE</td>
<td>Français comme Langue Étrangère (French as a Foreign Language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCI</td>
<td>Haut Conseil à l’Integration (High Council of Integration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSEE</td>
<td>Institut National des Statistiques et Études Économiques (National Institute of Statistical and Economical Studies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEAs</td>
<td>Local Education Authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MJENR</td>
<td>Ministère de la Jeunesse, de l’Education Nationale et de la Recherche (Ministry of Youth, National Education and Research)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI</td>
<td>National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFSTED</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<td>RE</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
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<td>REP</td>
<td>Réseaux d’Éducation Prioritaire (Priority Education Networks)</td>
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<td>UOIF</td>
<td>Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (Union of Islamic Organisation of France)</td>
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<td>ZEP</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Britain and France have large immigrant populations that emerged from the legacy of colonialism and whose ethnic origins and religious beliefs vary. A significant proportion of this population is of Islamic faith, with nearly five million Muslims in France and about two million in Britain. Attempts to integrate the Muslim minorities into the host society have revealed that there are differences in the ways the two countries accept cultural practices in the public and private spheres. Britain bases its societal structures around multiculturalism and communitarianism, supporting the right to display religious symbols in the public sphere, thus showing acceptance of cultural differences. France fundamentally rejects a society based on communitarianism and instead has structured its society around the Republican principle and value of laïcité.

The consequences of the attacks on 11th September 2001 in New York and the 7th July 2005 London bombings by Muslim extremists have had a real impact on Muslims in Britain. The open hostility against Muslims together with government initiatives including ‘anti-terrorism’ legislation have increased British Muslims’ anxieties. Despite the Muslim community feeling insecure and troubled by personal

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1 Etymologically, laïcité comes from the Greek laïkós, meaning ‘of the people’. In French, laïcité means the absence of religious involvement in government affairs as well as absence of government involvement in religious affairs (Rémond, 1999:150). It is important to note that the term laïcité is often translated as ‘secularism’ or ‘secularisation’. However, the two terms needs to be distinguished. Baübertó (2000:20) argues that ‘la sécularisation implique une relative et progressive perte de pertinence sociale et culturelle du religieux ; la laïcité vise à la dissociation de la citoyenneté et de la religion, à enlever toute dimension religieuse à l’identité nationale’ (secularism refers to a condition where social change has gradually eroded the cultural and social relevance of religion, whereas laïcité refers to a situation in which religion is systematically excluded from the public sphere, meaning (amongst other things) that religion has no significance for national identity) (Davie, 2010). In this thesis, I use laïcité as defined by Baübertó.

Historically, Baübertó argues that laïcité is better understood as a long series of conflicts between two visions of France that span all through the 19th century up to the Law of Separation in 1905. As a result, the Churches were separated from the State to ensure the neutrality of the state, the freedom of religious exercise, and public powers related to the church. (Baübertó, 2000:80). These two conflictual visions were France perceived as ‘the eldest daughter of the Catholic Church’ and as ‘the daughter of the Revolution of 1789’. The Law of Separation was the first step towards a pacification process, the construction of an agreement where ‘laïcité was both a legal settlement and an art of living together’ (Baübertó, 2004). Laïcité can, therefore, be said to represent the pre-requisite necessary for the formation of a Republic in which relations with ‘religion’ would for ever be changed.
experiences of racism and increasing Islamophobia, young British Muslims have established a solid identity. French Muslims, like their counterparts in Britain, also experience open hostility that is raising concern in French society. Following repeated social tensions and altercations since 1989, France enacted a law in 2004 that banned the wearing of the Islamic headscarf as well as all visible religious symbols in the public sphere, making a radical distinction between what governs the public from the private spheres. A consequence of this is that France is now confronted with the challenge of simultaneously maintaining the principle of laïcité while integrating a Muslim community for which culture and traditions do not acknowledge the separation between religion and state.

The underlying assumption of this research is that education has a crucial role in developing children to become fully accepted and included members of society. A comparative examination of the multicultural environment of British state secondary schools and the French Republican and secular schools facilitates an understanding of the cultural constraints that young Muslims perceive themselves to experience. This is what I set out to do in the research that forms the basis for this thesis. With this knowledge, it is possible to identify issues and concerns that might be addressed to make the children more at ease with the school environment and society at large. This might ultimately lead to the children’s full acceptance of the host society.

1.1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The issue regarding the wearing of headscarves in schools highlights the difference between the British and French way of dealing with religious pluralism. In France, the headscarf is considered a ‘dress-code’ problem in school and is perceived as a symbol that challenges the Republican framework. It is worth noting that there are no school uniforms in France as there are in Britain. The issue of the headscarf has led to the questioning of the effectiveness of the French Republican model of integration and the place of laïcité in the making of French civic society. In Britain, controversial debates are primarily around issues of discrimination, of the state involvement in funding Islamic schools and of Religious Education within the context of British ethnic and race relations (Molokotos, 2000:367).

The goal of this study is to compare the educational experience of Muslim pupils in state schools in the two countries and the ways cultural diversity is addressed. The
research focus is on understanding how the British and French education systems in secondary schools address and answer the needs of Muslim pupils. Qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to understand the children's perspective regarding what they believe and feel about their sense of self-identity, their experience of and relationship to school, and more broadly the immediate community and society in general.

Each one of us could describe ourselves with a multitude of different identities that can be seen as defining us as people, such as our nationality (e.g. British), our national identity (e.g. Welsh), our origins (e.g. African), our religion (e.g. Muslim), our race (e.g. white, black), our gender (e.g. male), our class orientation (e.g. middle-class) or our ideology (e.g. socialist). These notions often overlap and create some ambiguity on the role and impact they have on identity construction. I would like to explore the complexity that surrounds the elements that contribute to defining one's cultural identity. It can be said that the notion of 'cultural identity' is slippery and ambiguous because it is multi-dimensional with national, racial, ethnic and religious elements. For example, British Muslims could also define themselves as Bangladeshis or even as an ethnic minority group of Indian origin. My interest is to explore how young Muslim people articulate and position themselves with regards to their sense of self-identity and how they express this with respect to their notions of nationality, ethnic identity and religion.

With this in mind the study objectives are:

- to investigate how state-funded schools in Britain and France differ in their structures, national curriculum, approaches to multiculturalism, efforts and objectives to foster opportunities in developing acceptance and tolerance towards people of different beliefs or culturally diverse backgrounds

- to understand whether the school system, in general, provides the necessary and significant provisions in respecting and accommodating the needs of Muslim pupils.

The focus is on children aged between eleven and fifteen years, as they are most likely to be aware of their cultural identity and their differences from their non-Muslims classmates and therefore to be able to reflect on their views.
In order to address the study objectives, the following research questions were generated in the three areas of interest: sense of self-identity, relationship to school and views on society in terms of integration:

1) **Sense of self-identity**: one’s self-identity is molded by one’s family and the society one lives in. In a multi-ethnic society, complex connections appear to rule the relationships that individuals have with others. The focus of the thesis concerns young Muslim people and their sense of identity, and how they define and position themselves as Muslim within the conceptualisation of national identification. Their sense of self-identity draws also on another source of identification: religion. It is with this in mind that the study intends to answer the following questions:

   - How do the participants situate themselves with respect to nationality and religion?
   - How significant is the subjective importance of religious identity to Muslim participants?

2) **Relationship to school**: British and French school systems differ in their approach to the cultural diversity of their pupils. Understanding the pupils' relationships to school can highlight the similarities and differences between the schooling systems in the two countries.

   - How does school accommodate participants’ cultural needs? Their wish for improvement?
   - What is their relationship with teachers, friends and non-Muslim pupils?

3) **Views on society**: the notion of integration is different in the two countries. Pupils’ views on society, particularly their take on recent events, provide a good indicator of how well they see themselves integrated into the host society.

   - What is the participants’ understanding of integration? How does this relate to them? Why?
   - To what extent has the rise in Islamophobia in British society, after the events of September 11th 2001 and July 7th 2005, affected the attitudes and identities of Muslim participants?
The study will attempt to underline the complexities that surround the issue of defining the Muslim identity, particularly the ways young Muslim people make sense of the context in which they articulate and define themselves as Muslims. It will show how society tolerates religious identity in relation to the notion of national identity. It will highlight any similarities and differences that British and French schooling systems may have with respect to addressing the cultural needs of their Muslim children. It will examine the British and French definition of their concept of integration.

1.2 COMPARATIVE FRAMEWORK

The approach used for the thesis is cross-national and comparative. The study sets out to examine a social phenomenon in two countries with the intention of comparing it within a socio-cultural setting, using the same research methodology. The aim is to understand similarities and differences between countries and to gain a better understanding of social reality in the two national contexts. Due to the comparative nature of the research, linguistic and cultural factors as well as distinctive administrative structures cannot be ignored. The cross-national design of the study offers a way to explore the characteristics of distinct organisations and their intrinsic ways of functioning.

The empirical work involved collecting quantitative data by using a questionnaire and qualitative data by conducting face-to-face interviews and group discussions from two state secondary schools in both Britain and France. These schools were selected on the basis of their comparable geographical location and demography with respect to the Muslim pupils.

Conducting research into secondary state-funded schools offers a wealth of interest for several reasons. In Britain, the debate on education and children of ethnic minority groups is focused upon implementing appropriate anti-racist and multicultural strategies. Thus, by acknowledging the culturally diverse backgrounds of the children, the school represents an appropriate area to examine the question of multiculturalism and children’s interaction with the education system. In France, education rests upon the principle of laïcité, whose duty is to treat all children in a neutral way regardless of their cultural or religious backgrounds. To meet this objective, structures and strategies are established, such as French language as the
only language to be used at school. The differences between the two national education systems, linked to the idea of fostering the notion of integration, are important to examine from the pupils' point of view and, more particularly, from the point of view of pupils of Muslim faith. Furthermore, secondary school is a space whereby young people are at an age where they develop their own personal sense of cultural identity and difference, unveiling who they are and making them aware of who they are not. This aspect is of importance because it reflects what young people think about themselves within a group, within the school and within the society in which they live.

This research has used the method of thematic comparisons of concepts that are socially and historically grounded. These are the making of civic society, education and Muslim children, and integration and the Muslim community.

This cross-national comparative study was carried out by myself. This was made possible as I am a French national who has been living in Britain for the past twenty-four years. I have a good understanding of the languages, social norms and culture of the two countries. I believe that my background and experience provides me with a unique angle and perspective to undertake this empirical work.

1.3 CENTRAL THEMES OF THE THESIS

Britain and France have been the sites of large waves of migration from people of different beliefs, of culturally diverse backgrounds and origins from their former colonies. As a consequence, each nation has the challenge of integrating a multicultural population in the institutional apparatus and social life of its own society. The long-term settlement of people from Muslim countries into Britain and France is one of the most important phenomena of the last twenty-five years. British Muslims of South Asian origins, like most French Muslim of North African origins, have contributed to the economy of their host countries, while maintaining strong and close ties with their countries of origin at the same time (Davie, 1999:198-9). Negative and discriminative opinions by the majority have been made about the presence of Muslims in Britain and France respectively, suggesting the majority’s failure to understand what the Muslim communities are all about.

There are three themes central to this investigation:
• **National identity and religion:** the aim is to identify the elements that foreground the identity of young Muslim people. These concepts provide a framework for understanding how young Muslim people situate themselves with respect to nationality, their religion and how they define their sense of self-identity, including the subjective importance of religious identity.

• **Education system:** the concept of British and French education systems is of relevance as it helps to assess the relationship of young Muslim pupils with their schools. It helps to measure whether participants’ cultural needs are recognised (e.g. how schools address and accommodate their requirements), the type of rapport and understanding they get from their teachers, and the level of friendship and relationship they establish with other pupils.

• **Understanding Integration:** the concepts of the British and French notions of integration are of relevance as they help us to understand how young Muslim pupils perceive themselves and their community within British and French society. Such an approach helps to establish whether they understand and relate to the notion of integration. Furthermore, it helps to project their views on the way Islam has become mediated after the 9/11 and 7/7 bombings and the repercussions of these events.

1.3.1 **National identity, ethnicity and religion**

**What is national identity?**

In Western societies, national identity provides the individual with a powerful way of defining and situating him/herself in the world. As Smith (1991) argues, national identity ‘suggests a definite social space, a well demarcated territory with which the members identify and to which they feel they belong’ (Smith, 1991:9). The notion of territory usually signifies a well-defined land with its history which, over several generations, has turned into the homeland of the people. Incorporating historical accounts or places where heroes lived (e.g. the Cenotaph monument in Whitehall), the homeland is a distinct marker of one’s national identity. Besides helping to maintain symbols, myths and traditions, national identity also helps identify individuals with similar heritage and patterns of value (Smith, 2003:25). The notion of identity is closely connected with that of shared memory as ‘national identity is constructed and
reconstructed through historical events, but also through selective and inscriptive memory, serving particular interests and ideological positions’ (Gillis, 1994:71). Hence, the sense of identity that memory helps to create is historic by nature and can be traced through various forms of celebrative narratives such as commemorations and tributes.

The idea of a nation emerges when a whole population becomes conscious of a shared collective identity, of having a national identity. This sense of national identity, however, normally develops in response to the contact with the ‘outsider’ (Castles & Miller, 1998:14-15). Often distinct from the receiving population, migrant groups come from different types of societies with different traditions, religions, speaking a different language and following different cultural practices. Their presence, visibly different and noticeable, stimulates a relationship of ‘self-other’ where a process of exclusion and inclusion becomes a comprehensive element of national identity. By drawing the boundary between insider and outsider, minority ethnic groups see themselves as separated from the majority group as they do not fit into the prevailing idea of national identity and the dominating majority culture. Such a context allows one to assume that national identity contains an ethnic component in its definition and that it functions as an identifier vis-à-vis the ‘other’ (Castles & Miller, 1998:34-35). Thus, it is correct to suggest that the notion of ethnicity intersects with that of nation.

Understanding ethnicity\(^2\) differs significantly in Britain and France. Given the different ways that immigrants are perceived in different countries, it can be said that

\(^{2}\) The concepts of ethnicity and race are often blurred because of the belief that identity can be determined through ancestry. Generally speaking, race refers to a genetic history and specific physical characteristics that are distinct and unique from other races. In contrast, ethnicity refers to racial subgroups with distinct cultural factors. (Kertzer & Arel, 2001:11-12). However, the pervasive discourse of race and ethnicity remains muddled because of ‘the spuriousness of conflating biology and culture’ (Kertzer & Arel, 2001:13). For instance, the term ‘race’ has been associated in the 19th century to the idea of commonalities, expressing the nation or culture. It has become an essential element when considering ethnicity, ‘encapsulating the ‘us and them’ dichotomy and making sense in a context of processes of identification’ (Tonkin et al. cited in Hutchinson, 1996:21-23).

The concept of ethnicity is compounded by the fact that it embraces colour, religion, language, origin and identity as well as ‘more discreet dimensions such as culture, the arts, customs and beliefs and even practices such as dress and food preparation’ (Rex, 1986:18). By safeguarding the cultural legacy for its own group, ethnicity becomes the feature of minority groups who define themselves by a sense of group belonging with the subjective belief of common origins, history, culture, experience and values that distinguish their ethnic identity from other social identities (Verkuyten, 2005:74). A typical example can be seen in the protection of language and religion inside and outside the mainstream education system by the British Muslim community concerned to promote Islamic education. The emphasis on the ‘belief in common ancestry and shared origins’ demonstrates that belonging to an
'the social meaning of ethnic diversity depends to a large extent on the significance attached to it by the populations of the receiving countries' (Castles & Miller, 1998:14). To define ethnic diversity in Britain and France, one needs to examine post-war migration from former British and French colonies.

In Britain, ethnicity is largely understood by what culturally distinguishes a group of people from another (usually the white majority culture), an attribute that helps distinguish 'them' from 'us' (Mason, 1995: 14). Ethnic groups are, therefore, defined as culturally different due to their skin colour or atypical culture characteristics. Thus, an ethnic group is a 'group of individuals who consider themselves to belong to the same social category and who share, at the same time, the same social identification' (Alida Lo Coco et al., 2005:224). Compared to the native culture, if a group demonstrates behaviours that are significantly different then they are deemed as members of an ethnic minority. So in Britain, people originating from former British colonies of the Indian subcontinent, the Caribbean, Africa and Far East are classified as ethnic minorities. Interestingly, other large migrant communities of Polish, Ukrainian and Italian are rarely thought of as ethnic minorities although they are culturally different from the host population. Therefore, it appears that skin colour is one of the defining features of an ethnic minority. In general, the term 'ethnic group' implicitly refers to an immigrant minority group that is non-white (Fenton, 2003:39). Census reports suggest that there is a significant ethnic diversity in Britain, which seems to be ever-changing and reflecting the changing national policies on immigration (Mason, 1995:31).

Interestingly, before 1991, there was no census data on 'race' or 'ethnic origin'. Following the large scale immigration from the colonies in the 1960s, the 'non-white' presence became a public issue. The term 'coloured' was used to refer to ethnic minority populations for demographic purposes and the census estimates of the 1980s were based on data about the place of birth of those born outside of the UK (Fenton, 2003:40). During the early stage of immigration, this measure was statistically sound but with the second and third generation of ethnic minority born in Britain a more refined way of estimation was needed. Using the birthplace of the head of the

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ethnic group is a claim based on a tangible and credible entity experienced as real by the people (Verkuyten, 2005:75).
household proved inadequate as children of initial migrants had their own homes (Mason, 1995:31).

In the 1991 census a question on ethnic group was included for the first time, with the aim of estimating the size and characteristics of different minority groups. The ethnic groups were differentiated using a system of classification made of ten categories based on a broad distinction between white and non-white\(^3\). The data indicated that there were over three million people of minority ethnic origin resident in Great Britain, representing 5.5% of the population. Of this, half (2.7% of the population) were South Asians, with Black ethnic groups forming 1.5% of the population (Owen, cited in Coleman & Salt, 1996). This census also categorised so-called ‘white’ ethnic groups represented by European migrants from places such as Greece, Italy and Cyprus. Bulmer (cited in Coleman & Salt, 1996) has argued that this categorisation had made it difficult to draw appropriate distinctions between minority groups. Furthermore the categorisation was at times aligned to ‘race’ (i.e. visible minorities) or to ‘ethnicity’ (i.e. significant groups such as Irish). For instance, the questionnaire used skin colour (white and black), national origin (Caribbean, African, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) and race (Chinese). From a sociological perspective, the 1991 census was successful as it recorded data on the perceptions of ethnic minority identity in Britain, thus highlighting the acknowledgement of diversity in British society.

In France, the notion of ethnicity is defined in terms of ‘linguistic, religious or moral characteristics different from those of the dominant population’, a definition that differs from the Anglo-Saxon understanding of ethnicity that is mostly directed on biological and territorial origins (Hargreaves, 1995:30). Therefore in France it appears that ethnic minority groups are socially evaluated according to the way they are perceived by the majority. According to Hargreaves, there are three types of ethnic groups: ethnicised minority groups, racialised minority groups and ethnocultural groups. In the first group, the majority population believes members of a minority group to be clearly distinct from the national society. In the second group, the categorisation by physical features put members of an ethnic group into a sub-

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\(^3\) The non-white classification was in terms of ethnic groups such as Black-Caribbean, Black-African, Black-Other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other groups (Asian) and Other groups (Other) (Office for National Statistics, available on http://www.statistics.gov.uk)
category of ethnicised minorities. In the third group, a sense of common cultural background and origins bring together the members of an ethnic group. However, the distinction between these three groups is hardly ever made in France. From the point of view of the majority, anyone that looks like a Maghrebi is thought to be an Arab. In general, it can be said that successive generation of children from North African immigrants connect with their parents' cultural legacy. But usually they remain categorised as 'Arab population' by the majority population. This categorisation of minority groups cuts through 'the more diffuse modes of ethnicity that characterise people of immigrant origin' resulting in greater anxiety in French society (Hargreaves, 1995:36-37).

French public statistics and especially censuses do not formally recognise the concept of ethnicity. However, since the growing debate on immigration from the mid-1980s, there has been a progressive reappearance of the ethnicity question, particularly in preparation of the 1999 census. France publishes two sets of population statistics: the censuses conducted by Institut National des Statistiques et Études Économiques (INSEE) which presents data on the characteristics of foreign nationals in France, and the report from the Ministère de l'Intérieur (Home Office) on current residence permits issued to foreign nationals. From these sources one can obtain the statistics related to births, deaths, naturalisation and immigration flows. Although the census data provides data on birthplace which separates French-born from immigrants and data on nationality (French-born, naturalised French and foreign national)\(^4\), it does not provide adequate detail to determine people of foreign descent (Tribalat, 1992:57). From the French perspective, what is necessary to distinguish is the 'French citizen' from the 'foreigner' and it is through this framework of binary categories that the concept of nation-state is reinforced (Blum, 2002:126-27).

It appears that the best way to get information on the ethnic specificity of the French population is to look at the data on nationality status. While there is reluctance on the part of the state to 'identify immigrants and their descendants as structurally distinct and identifiable groups within French society' (Hargreaves, 1995:4) there is a stronger desire to distinguish clearly the 'French citizen' from the 'foreigner' (Blum,

\(^4\) A foreign national is defined as a person who lives in France but does not possess French nationality. He/she may obtain this through naturalisation (definition given in 'Population Census March 1999', INSEE).
Thus, the data from the March 1999 census indicated that France has over four million immigrants of which about a third have acquired French nationality. In addition, there are about five million children born to immigrants in France and similar numbers of children with at least one immigrant grandparent, all of whom have French nationality. In total, there are about fourteen million people in France today—who are either immigrants or the children or grandchildren of immigrants (Hargreaves, 1995:6).

Therefore, the notions of ethnicity and national identity can often get entangled ‘due to the fact that both nations and ethnic groups are bodies of people bound together by common cultural characteristics and mutual recognition with no sharp dividing line between them’ (Miller, 1995:19). Usually a nation is constructed around the specific character of its ethnic group. In some cases, ethnicity can be the basis for creating a new national identity if its existence is felt to be nationalist (e.g. emergence of Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka).

Having had colonies worldwide, Britain and France developed some degree of experience in governing societies that are culturally and ethnically diverse. These societies were not treated equally by the colonial masters who made decisions about the status and rights accorded to different groups (Bleich, 2005:171). Faced with their multi-ethnic legacy, Britain and France were confronted with issues about the policies and practices to administer their ethnic populations. It was in that context that attention was brought to the central issue of who should or should not be included in the national society. Hence, issues regarding the full access to civil, political and social rights provoked reflection about the rights to citizenship. The notion of national identity is different in Britain and France in terms of its construction and significance.

In Britain

While there is still an ongoing search for a British identity, English identity seems to have been in existence since 16th century when the ‘subjects’ living in England were considered free individuals who took part in the collective and political decision-making process. The presence of the monarch, Elizabeth I, and the Protestant religion defined England and developed the English national consciousness and identity (Piper, 1998:55).
The British identity is a collective identity brought about by the incorporation of the Welsh, Scottish and Irish identities into the English one. It is not a homogenous identity from a social, political or religious perspective. For example, religious identity includes Protestantism and Catholicism, as well as other religious beliefs held by ethnic minorities. It is worth noting that it was not the Act of Union joining Scotland to England and Wales that developed a common British identity, but rather the conflict with the ‘other’ who were considered hostile and lived beyond the shores (i.e. France) (Piper, 1998:57).

Although Britain is a fusion of four cultural groups, there is a dominant English influence in the formation of British national identity. Embedded in the idea of ‘belongingness’ that is strongly associated with subjecthood and allegiance to the monarch and his/her establishment, it can be argued that the formation of a national identity is really an identity of a ‘race’. This influence in the formation of the British nation-state can be traced back to 17th century when England projected its political control through a racist ideology which held Norman Anglo-Saxon culture as superior to that of Celts (Piper, 1998:58-59).

When considering Britishness, it is important to consider whether Britishness is a national identity or a state identity. For example, a survey5 of British people’s understanding of Britishness showed that British people of different cultural backgrounds living in England, Scotland and Wales shared a common representation of Britishness by defining nationality through geography, national symbols, the people, citizenship, values and attitudes, cultural habits and behaviours, language and achievements (ETHNOS, 2005a:6-7). However, despite a shared representation of ‘Britishness’, there are significant differences in the identification and value given to ‘Britishness’ between white people and people of ethnic minorities. For example, ETHNOS reports that national identification with Scotland or Wales is much stronger than identification with Britain. This is not true for English people who think of themselves as English but also as British. In contrast, people of ethnic minorities strongly identify themselves as British, to the exclusion of any identification with England as they strongly associate England with white English people (ETHNOS,

5 The survey was commissioned by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and conducted by ETHNOS.
Furthermore, people of ethnic minorities tend to draw on other important sources of social identification such as religion or ethnicity.

Although a large majority of British Muslims believe that Islam and Britishness are compatible, they feel that they have to choose between two identities to demonstrate their loyalty (ETHNOS, 2005a:39). This is obviously unfair as the notions of national identity and religion are not mutually exclusive. In other words, it is precisely the salience of Muslim identity that is seen as a barrier preventing British Muslims from being fully accepted as British by the majority group, sentiments that may have strengthened still further since 9/11 and the 7/7 London bombings (Vadher & Barrett, 2009:445). It can be argued that it is in such a context that Muslim people proclaim and reinforce their attachment to their faith.

In France

The concept of national identity emerged when the country transformed itself from a monarchy to a Republic in the late 18th century. During this period, national identity was strongly linked with the idea of one's origins and became associated with the concept of citizenship, which was defined as a range of rights and duties whose legal definition is articulated around cultural and linguistic conformity. However, the concept of national identity centres upon the formation of a collective identity, a sense of community bond rather than predominant ethnic and cultural characteristics (Habermas, 2002:130). Indeed, it is in these terms that the practice of citizenship is currently performed where the participation and sense of belonging is based on being a citizen, reflecting citizenship as inclusive of a diversity of people within the community at large.

By treating citizenship as synonymous with nationality, a confusion develops when considering the term 'immigrant'. The French policies on immigration define an individual as either a 'national' or a 'foreigner'. Unfortunately, this definition is confusing as the term 'immigrant' tends to be used to refer to people of North African origin (Silverman, 1992:2-3). Hence, like Britain, postcolonial French national identity suggests an element of race or 'whiteness', as seen in the colonial context, whereby the status of native North Africans was distinct to that in the metropolis. However, citizenship defines who belongs to the nation-state and since the late 1980s, there has been an emergence of politics of citizenship with emphasis on the value of
national citizenship. For ‘immigrants’, this has meant that they either naturalise or leave the country thus making ‘the politics of citizenship to be first and foremost a politics of nationhood and, as such, a politics of identity and not a politics of interest’ (Brubaker, 1992:182).

The importance of religion

Given the importance of religion as a factor of powerful influence in peoples’ lives, defining religion is problematic as some definitions may influence theories and determine conclusions. According to Swatos (1998), the definitive literature can be organised around two approaches, substantive or functional, each representing a very distinct perspective on the role of religion. A substantive definition looks at religion as a type of philosophy, a system of beliefs or understanding of nature and reality. This description defines religion as a relationship between humans and supernatural ideas (the natural and supernatural spheres). A functional definition looks at religion as the function that it plays in society. This description defines religion as something that does not exist to explain our world but rather to bind us together socially or psychologically and emotionally. Rituals, for example, exist to bring us all together as a unit (Swatos, 1998:129-33).

In Britain

In her examination of the role of religion in Britain, Davie (1994) suggests that the religious element has a significant dimension in peoples’ lives, even though it has become less salient than it once was. The religious factor plays a crucial part in building one’s national identity. This is illustrated through the rituals and formal procedures surrounding the royal family. Such a display is ‘constructed primarily to represent the nation, to convey a sense of Britishness, to embody the national feeling rather than Christian doctrine’ (Davie, 1994:86). Interestingly, the British monarch is both the Head of State and the Head of the Church of England. It is precisely this relationship that is intentionally reinforced through the broadcasting of such events. Thus, the role played by the media is fundamental to the construction of a ‘monarchy that appears therefore as something sacred as well as national’ (Davie, 1994:86).

It was in the 2001 census that a question on religion was asked for the first time in Britain. The question had showed that, in general, the topic was acceptable to the
public. The inclusion of the religion question was the result of a sustained and persistent effort that began in the build-up to the 1991 census. The question was socially significant because it marked the emergence of a new dimension in Britain: a faith dimension. This meant that ‘people were moving away from what characterise them (i.e. by what they looked like, their race or ethnicity), showing that allegiance to moral and ethical values was more important in some contexts’ (Sherif, 2001:2).

This is particularly the case for ethnic groups of Muslim heritage for whom religion is an important source of social identification, besides national identity. Muslims have a distinctive emotional attachment to the salience of religion, making it an essential and stable part of the construction of their identity. It is a common practice to reduce religious allegiance to a characteristic of ethnic identity because, for many societies, ethnic and religious distinction overlap, making religion a significant feature of a given ethnic group. However, it cannot be assumed that religious identity is subsumed within one’s ethnic identity but instead in some circumstances religious and ethnic dimensions offer different and contradictory modes of self-definition to members of a social group (Jacobson, 1997:238). This is the case, for example, of second generation British Pakistanis for whom a difference appears to exist between defining oneself in terms of a Pakistani or Asian culture and heritage and defining oneself as a Muslim.

Jacobson’s study on the interrelationship between religious and ethnic identities maintained by young British Pakistanis showed that religion was a more significant source of social identity, playing a more significant part in their lives than ethnicity. For them, the special significance of ‘religion lies in the fact that Islam is central to their sense of who they are (e.g. their belief in its teachings, self-conscious and explicit commitment), whereas ethnicity (e.g. the fact of their belonging to a minority - Pakistani or Asian - rather than Muslim) is generally perceived to be a more peripheral aspect of their sense of identity’ (Jacobson, 1997:239). Interestingly, ethnic identity is perceived as an attachment to a set of traditions or customs associated with the minority group, while religious identity is perceived as belonging to a global community where commitment to doctrines are fundamental across race and nationality.
In France

Like ethnicity, religion is also a taboo topic for surveys. However this has not stopped researchers from conducting empirical studies. For example, a study of North African immigrants living in the outskirts of Paris and Strasbourg revealed that young Muslim people look to Islam as a source for a ‘specific identity construction rather than in terms of an ethnic belonging (i.e., country of origin of their parents)’ (Khosrokhavar, 1997:113). This study indicated that for young French Muslim people their religious identity is a socially significant component of their identity. In general, French Muslims appear to have come to terms with laïcité by accepting secular authority and recognising the autonomy of religion by the state authorities. This is in spite of the fact that French society tolerates some Muslim religious practices such as the slaughter of a sheep for the end of Ramadan festivities, but finds a halal supermarket or the wearing of headscarf unbearable (Roy, 2007:4). The articulation of religious identity within the public sphere and the question of laïcité does raise the question of whether Islam is compatible with French national culture?

1.3.2 Education system

Since the end of the Second World War, both Britain and France have had the aim to provide education to all children in order to encourage all individuals to participate in the democratic process. Hence, education fulfils the role of a social equaliser by accentuating learning and raising social recognition and inter-cultural understanding. Education should be used as an ‘instrument in pursuit of an egalitarian society’ (Halsey, 1965:13). In addition, education provides individuals with personal achievement and fulfilment through the acquisition of skills that are needed for the pursuit of a successful working life. However, if education has to be accessible to all, the education system has the responsibility to provide adequate support to those who require it the most: this is especially the case of children of ethnic minorities who are often victims of inequalities.

Throughout the 19th century Britain, the schooling system was mainly dominated by the Victorian voluntary system, which depended entirely on independent initiatives and was funded privately by individuals and organisations. The situation changed in the early 20th century with the enactment of the Education Act of 1902, which transferred education into a state-controlled activity through the creation of local
education authorities. Although the voluntary system demonstrated a resistance to modernisation and measures to increase standardisation, the general development of the education system saw a transformation with numerous types of schools (e.g. religious and community schools) with varying degrees of public accountability.

In France, the school system was founded in the late 19th century and was mainly based on principles inherited from the Republican tradition, making state schools public, secular and democratically egalitarian. The philosophical ethos of education was founded on the principles of *laïcité* and equality, by banning all promotion of religion within schools, which were made open to all without any form of discrimination.

In Britain, there are around half a million Muslim children of school age today. Muslim parents have a number of concerns about the education system including the continuing poor academic results of their children, racism and Islamophobic bullying, inadequate support for their children’s faith and moral education (OSI/EU, 2005:104). One way to improve the situation is through the school curriculum whose role is to promote cross-cultural tolerance by providing greater understanding and a more open approach to Muslim needs. Many Muslim parents, for instance, would appreciate ‘the option for their children to receive a form of religious education that gave them more opportunities to enrich their understanding of their own faith as well as studying others’ (OSI/EU, 2005:105).

French education has adopted a different approach to that of Britain in educating children of ethnic minorities and particularly French-born children of Maghrebin immigrants. Basically, the schools are instructed to make ‘no allowance for cultural, linguistic, religious or socio-economic diversity’ (Linage, 2000:73). However, the system presents inequalities in the standards of education with a noticeable lack in performance of ethnic minority children. To improve such discrepancies and the poor achievement of particular schools, additional teachers, security personnel and substitute teachers are allocated to schools in Education Priority Zones in disadvantaged areas. Unfortunately, this supposedly positive action has aggravated the situation by ensuring further ethnic segregation, thus further stigmatising the populations that these measures are meant to serve. On the whole, Muslim children
lack official recognition of their religious identity and want to revalorise and display this, exemplified by the issue of the Islamic headscarf.

1.3.3 Understanding integration

As soon as postcolonial immigrants arrived in the host country they had to find a house, a job and also establish a cultural foothold. Indeed, it has been observed that ‘if newcomers see themselves as different and are perceived by the receiving society as physically, culturally and/or religiously different, they will aim to acquire a recognised place in that new society and will aspire to become accepted’ (Pennine, 2004:3). The process of becoming accepted by the majority is commonly referred to as ‘integration’. In a sociological sense, integration derives from having ‘shared beliefs and practices, leading to social interaction and shared goals’ (Weil & Crowley, 1994:110). The concept, however, is not very well-defined, as it is often discussed in terms of synonyms such as adaptation, accommodation, assimilation, or by type of integration such as racial integration or cultural integration.

The notion of integration, particularly with respect to the issue of immigration, has attracted much attention and political debate both in Britain and France. The term has been ambiguously used, as it makes reference both to a newcomer’s first reception and to longer term adaptation in the new society. For example, in Britain the topical issue of asylum-seekers and refugees has become the ‘battleground for a debate on the place of minorities and racist attitudes more generally’ (Peddler, 2003:4). France, also having experienced a long history of immigration, has recently come to realise the weight and depth of the issue.

The two countries have approached integration very differently, showing two alternative paths to answer the question of how to integrate new migrants and established settlers into the country. In Britain, it is a community-based approach that is favoured where ethnic minorities have the responsibility to organise themselves and maintain their cultural and religious practices. The guideline for this approach is multiculturalism where diversity is encouraged and represented. In France, the process of integration is based solely on individual effort. The preference for a state-centric and direct policy approach that promotes assimilationism is followed whereby the cultural heritage of the immigrant ‘merges into a kind of melting-pot of
Frenchness, without acknowledging explicitly the role of multiculturalism’ (Le Breton, 1998:4).

The two countries have distinctive modes and philosophies of integration, which are embedded in their history and ideology. In the British case, the country has recognised ethnic differences and has embraced the concept of multiculturalism. Ethnic diversity is represented through the organisation and establishment of ethnic minority administrative agencies specialised in issues concerned with housing, schooling and racism such as the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Committee (CIAC), the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (NCCI) and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (Bleich, 2005:178). France has always been a place of cultural diversity, and yet, has rarely pursued policies that could be described as multiculturalist. By proclaiming that individuals have the right to choose their own values and beliefs, there is the fear that any recognition for cultural diversity would jeopardise the belief of the one and indivisible Republic. As a result, France has always followed a model of integration which is highly assimilationist, Republican and deeply ethnocentric. The rejection of what the French call communautarisme can be seen today, clashing with minorities originating from Muslim countries. For Banton (2001) Britain and France strive to find ways to forge equality while acknowledging cultural differences. However, he argues that ‘if equality comes first, it may not be attainable if sections of the population interpret differences of appearance, faith or custom as justifying inequality of treatment’ (Banton, 2001:166). In summary, both nations are confronted with the central challenge of developing policies that promote true and authentic equality throughout the social system but do this in different ways (Weil & Crowley, 1994).

1.4 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Figure 1-1 shows the structure of the following chapters and the relationship between the areas of interest, study themes, theories and literature, and the findings. This chapter has outlined the study’s objectives, described the three key areas of interest and the research questions. Chapters 2-4 examine the theories and the literature for each of the study themes of national identity and religion, education and understanding integration, respectively. These chapters therefore provide the context for addressing the study’s objectives. The details of the research design for the field
work are discussed in Chapter 5. Chapters 6-8 present the findings from the field work for each of the areas of interest respectively. The conclusions are presented in Chapter 9. A brief outline of the content of each of the chapters is presented following the diagram.

![Diagram of the thesis outline]

**Fig. 1-1 Outline of the thesis**

**Chapter 2: The Making of British and French civic society**

The aim of this chapter is to examine the ways the two nations have institutionalised the notions of civic society. This chapter presents an overview of nationality and citizenship respectively and examines how these concepts have been embedded in British and French society. This is followed by a discussion of immigration and the ways the two countries have approached and managed this issue.

**Chapter 3 – Education and Muslim children**

The aim of this chapter is to present an overview of the British and French education systems, by looking at their history and development. It examines how education has impacted upon Muslim communities, particularly the ways in which the education system ensures and accommodates the cultural needs of Muslims children (e.g. allocation of a prayer room and halal meals).

**Chapter 4 – Integration and the Muslim community**

Britain and France have developed different processes for integrating their Muslim communities. Each country has also developed a historical relationship with the
settled immigrant populations (closely related to the legacy of colonial practice) and has constructed a specific mode of reception and rejection of immigrants which the Muslim populations have experienced, confronted and negotiated. The relationship between the national model of settlement and the assertion of identity by Muslim populations has led to conflict between the majority and the Muslim population. In Britain, key moments of conflict include the Rushdie affair and the riots of the summer of 2001, when the city of Bradford was the site of the worst rioting seen in Britain for two decades. In France, the dominant Republican model of integration of individuals (bypassing communities) has given rise to more differentiated forms of expression of identity. The controversy of the Islamic headscarf in 1989-1990 and the suburban riots of 2005 exemplify the failure of integration and the majority's fear of a rampant communitarianism associated too often with Islam (Roy, 2007). The aim of this chapter is to examine the sociological concept of integration and to look at how Britain and France have attempted to implement it. This is followed by an overview of the Muslim community, examining the features of Islamic faith and by discussing the case of the British and French Muslim communities, respectively.

Chapter 5 – Research design

This chapter presents the research design, describing the process and criteria for selecting the schools and participants in the two countries. It explains the two methodological approaches employed, namely a quantitative approach in the form of a questionnaire and the use of qualitative methods consisting of face-to-face semi-structured interviews and group discussion. It presents an account of the various ethical issues encountered, namely the ethical practice of doing the research (details of parental/participant information sheet and parental/participant consent forms), the sensitivity of the research topic itself and the effects that may occur with respect to the participants. Reflections on the fieldwork process are given.

Chapter 6 – Self-Identify...Être Musulman

This chapter presents the study findings on young Muslim participants’ views about themselves as ‘being Muslim’. The discussion focuses on two constructed and central themes of self-identity: the importance of maintaining cultural ties and the exploration of participants’ feelings about being Muslim.
Self-identity is constructed through maintaining close ties with one's cultural background such as the maintenance of the mother tongue and languages spoken, the importance of receiving a Religious Education, which is largely dominated by learning and reading the Koran, the performance of faith through practices and celebrations such as Ramadan and Eid, as well as the display of faith through the wearing of headscarves.

An insight into self-identity can be gained through an exploration of participants' feelings of 'being Muslim'. The analysis presents various aspects of self-description, including the role and importance of religion, attendance at a place of worship, and also the participants’ views of their self-identity with respect to their nationality.

**Chapter 7 – My School...Et Moi**

This chapter examines the study findings regarding participants’ opinions about their everyday life at school. The discussion also looks at the relationship with their teachers and peers.

'My life at school' examines whether schools provide for and accommodate the cultural needs of Muslim pupils. Other opinions are also explored with regards to learning aspects of Muslim culture (e.g. art, history and geography) and their thoughts on receiving an education in an Islamic school.

'My relationship with teachers' explores the way participants relate to the teaching staff, what they think about them and whether they encounter difficulties or constraints.

'My relationship with other pupils' scrutinises the way participants relate to other members of the school, mainly their non-Muslim classmates and how they develop friendship with either Muslim or non-Muslim friends.

**Chapter 8 – My Home...Chez Moi?**

This chapter explores the awareness that Muslim participants express with regards to the acceptance of being Muslim in Britain and France and the respect that others have of them and the Muslim community at large. The discussion covers three themes: the notion of integration, the concept of rights and freedom and the opinions of others.
The first theme examines the participants’ perception and understanding of what integration means for them, their views with regards to the Muslim community at large and their feelings about acceptance and belonging at a personal level.

The second theme explores the concept of rights and freedom, analysed through the views expressed on the French Law banning the wearing of the Muslim headscarf.

The final theme discusses the role played by the gaze of others, namely the clichés that others have of Muslim people, the perceptions of the stereotyped views and representations that media portray of the Muslim community in Britain and France and an exploration of how participants think others see them.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

This chapter presents the conclusions of this research. This focuses on three aspects of the thesis: findings from the empirical work, research approach and the notion of ‘plurality’ in the two countries.

The central tenet of this research is that one can gain valuable insight into the life of secondary school children, their experience and relationship to school, immediate community and society in general.

The goals for integrating religious minorities are similar in both countries; however they have adopted widely divergent approaches to achieving them. The study suggests that in French society, ‘being equal’ (égalité) is of prime importance whereas in Britain it is ‘freedom’ (liberté). Ironically, there are aspects of school life for which the priorities of the two nations are reversed, for example, pupils do not wear school uniform in France suggesting primacy for liberté, whereas they do in Britain thus favouring égalité.

Britain and France share the common goal of establishing an inclusive society. They have established sets of policies and reforms based on their respective ideological ethos. Britain, with its multiculturalism, promotes and acknowledges cultural diversity. France, abiding by the principle of laïcité, promotes universalism through which one’s ethnic and cultural identity must be transcended in order to reach collective uniformity.
CHAPTER 2

THE MAKING OF BRITISH AND FRENCH CIVIC SOCIETY

This chapter presents an overview of nationality and citizenship respectively, and examines how these concepts have been embedded in Britain and France. It also presents a discussion on immigration and the ways the two countries have handled the issue. The aim is to understand how young Muslim people situate themselves with respect to these concepts, gaining a better insight into the ways young Muslim people construct and define their sense of self-identity.

2.1 NATIONALITY AND CITIZENSHIP

To get a better understanding of the notion of ‘nationality’, one needs a clear understanding of the notions of ‘nation’ and ‘state’, which are often used synonymously. According to Miller ‘nation refers to a community of people with an ambition to be politically self-determining, whereas state refers to the set of political institutions that the community of people aspire to possess for themselves’ (Miller, 1995:19). Hence, the problem to consider is the relationship between nations and states and particularly whether each nation has a right to its own state. In the case of Germany, for instance, a single nation was divided into two states after the Second World War until 1989 when the two states were reunited. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, was a state that recognised that the people it governed were of different nationalities (more than one hundred were recognised).

For two hundred years the notions of nationality and citizenship have been used synonymously for political purposes. In the mid 18th century, European political philosophy was mainly composed around four complementary components. Those were cosmopolitanism, citizenship, patriotism and nation. The first one referred principally to the impression of vital union and congruence between people; the second translated the proclamation of autonomy narrowly tied with patriotism; the third defined love and devotion to one country; the final one referred to what unites people together, like speaking a common language without automatically suggesting that the population is one and the same. It can be said that these four concepts co-
existed and complemented each other, resulting in a political philosophy divergent from the monocratic reality of the time. Consequently, citizenship, patriotism and nationhood were merged to form a dominant and modern political current that would provide a definition of the national citizen that included the rights attributed to the status as well as the notion of commitment to the nation (Heater, 1999:95-97).

According to Piper, there is a difference between acquisition of nationality and the acquisition of citizenship. The former involves a more passive process of affiliation recognised by birth or by blood and to which a common and recognised culture exists between the state and the individual. The latter, on the other hand, represents the active execution of rights and duties that translates a profound comprehension of national sovereignty (Piper, 1998:53). The modern legal definition of citizenship stems from the French Revolution of 1789, a major event that contributed to the elaboration of the notion. This Revolution created the French nation-state and gave rise to the related ideas of nationalism, which have influenced and shaped the development of the concept of citizenship. The French Revolution thus, for the first time, differentiated citizens from foreigners who were resident in the country (Faulks, 1998:2-3)

Broadly speaking, citizenship is closely related to the idea that individuals have a constructed social, political and civic relationship with the State and the community. However, citizenship is frequently transposed to the notion of nationality and in this sense, its meaning is largely associated with who is considered to be a national versus someone who may be resident in that country. Basically, someone can be a resident of a country without being a national, and vice versa. From a legal perspective, citizenship grants the membership of a nation-state which comes with certain rights and duties associated with that membership. From a socio-political perspective, citizenship is a concept where political, economic and cultural power relationships are exercised to change or affect society (Faulks, 1998:2-4).

The relationship between State and individuals requires provisions and guarantees as far as individual rights are concerned. In this context, citizenship is equated to ‘the status of basic equality, declaring a person to be a full beneficiary of collective

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6 For example, I have French nationality but reside in Britain. As a French national, I am not entitled to vote in British national elections, but do cast a vote in French Presidential elections. However, as a resident I am eligible to vote in local elections.
decisions and a holder of generalised rights and obligations' (Bauböck & Rundell, 1998:33). For this purpose, the state creates a system of rules and conditions that establish the ways citizenship can be obtained and transferred across generation. Therefore, it is through citizenship that inclusion for some individuals is guaranteed while for others it is not and this formal exclusion applies above all to immigrants.

The concept of citizenship was further developed by Marshall (1963) in his essay ‘Citizenship and Social Class’. For Marshall, the ‘civilising’ process is a direct result of the development of social rights in the 20th century. Citizenship is composed of three elements: civil, political and social, that combined to create a system of rights which were used by the residents to dismantle class inequalities and contributed to the rise of capitalism. This theory suggests that the post-war construction of the welfare state brought the concept of citizenship and capitalism closer by ‘humanising’ the marketplace with the language of social justice (cited in Faulks, 1998:36-40). However the theory does not adequately account for the presence of ethnic minorities of non-European background, particularly the issue of ‘belongingness’, challenged on a state level within civil society by nationalism and racism. The question of membership of a nation-state is complicated by immigration and the emergence of new ethnic minorities and the situation is not helped by the synonymous use of the concepts of nationality and citizenship. In fact, large scale immigration has resulted in the tendency to restrict access to citizenship in Britain (Piper, 1998:76-7). The relationship between citizenship and nationality was ignored by Marshall and the British concept of citizenship was complicated both by the lack of a codified notion of citizenship and the extension of the rights of residency to all members of countries under British sovereignty (Faulks, 1998:49). However, historical development (i.e. the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, the 1971 Immigrants Act and the 1981 Nationality Act) demonstrates the tendency towards linking citizenship with nationality and also towards involving an ethnic definition of Britishness by preventing the entry of people from non-white Commonwealth countries.

The concepts of citizenship and nationality are still not clearly distinguishable. For instance, a nation is understood as sharing cultural sentiments that give a sense of identity and belonging, i.e. nationality. However, the notion of citizenship is understood as being treated as an equal member of the national community, in other words citizenship. Hence, there is a fundamental contradiction ‘between the notions
of the citizen as an individual abstracted from cultural characteristics and that of the national as a member of a community with common cultural values' (Castles & Spoonley, 1997:9). This contradiction clashes with the formation of nation-state where citizenship should transcend all cultural distinctions to reflect communality and yet citizenship is constructed on the basis that a nation-state is culturally unique and distinct from other nations.

Though the concept of citizenship is often understood from its legal-political aspect, a different perspective can be observed, presenting citizenship as a process that turns people into subjects of a nation. Following Foucault’s approach to power relationship, Ong argues that citizenship is achieved 'through a process of individuation whereby people are constructed in definitive and specific ways as citizens such as taxpayers, workers, consumers or welfare-beneficiaries' (Ong, 1999:264). This shows that citizenship is constructed in a sovereign manner through which the way to become a citizen rests on the ways the individual is subjected to power relations. In other words, it is through the demonstration of procedures and regulations that the nation-state shapes and normalises the population’s conduct for the benefit of the country’s safety and success (Ong, 1999:264).

**In Britain**

Britain, unlike France and many other countries, does not have a written constitution. Thus, there is no single document that defines the ‘British nation’ or an official articulation of ‘British nationality’ (Dummett & Nicol, 1990:2). In general, nationality refers to membership of a state by blood relation or shared culture. It is a formal personal relationship between the individual and his state (Piper, 1998:75). In Britain, the notion of nationality and citizenship are intermingled as the two are simultaneously defined in the British Nationality Act. As a monarchy, Britain viewed ‘citizenship as allegiance to the Crown, resulting in an idea of a common citizenship with freedom of migration throughout the former Empire’ (Piper, 1998:86). The meaning is complicated by the fact that British people were formally defined as subjects and not as citizens. The nature of citizenship developed as a result of industrialisation and the emergence of civil and social rights. With the arrival of

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7 A nation-state is the combination of a political unit which controls a bounded territory (the state), and a national community (the nation or people) that has the power to impose its political will within those boundaries (Castles & Spoonley, 1997:9).
immigrants, the notion of citizenship sharpened and demonstrated a tendency to link citizenship with nationality and with an ethnic definition of being British. However, it is worth noting that British nationality law has been based upon and is closely linked with the concept of immigration and the two are strongly influenced by British history.

The British nationality law reflects both British history and English common law. According to Piper 'the tie which binds the nation together has always been the allegiance to the king. From the middle-ages up to the middle of the 20th century, the concept of 'belonging' was expressed in terms of being the king's subject' (Piper, 1998: 64). The concept of 'British nationality' could be said to have started in 1707 when the Parliamentary Act of Union made England, Wales and Scotland one United Kingdom of Great Britain. Although each nation had its own customs and cultures, they were united in the belief that they were different from their common enemy, the French. Thus the strong unifying factor that helps define themselves as Britons was their apparent dissimilarity from the enemy across the sea. Until the middle of 20th century, citizenship was expressed as ‘belonging’ as the king’s subject (Colley, 1992:17).

Since Britain has been a constitutional monarchy throughout its history, the notion of citizenship has been defined as subjects of the Crown and not as citizens (Faulks, 1998:3). In a way, this has had an impact on how the concept of citizenship has developed through the ages in Britain. One of the key factors was that as England was the home of the monarchy, the English institutions reflected the British identity. The other factors shaping the nature of citizenship included industrialisation and urbanisation, which gave rise to the idea of civil rights of the citizens. However, these rights were more ‘market rights’ than ‘civil rights’, as they were held back by the entrenched class and gender ideology. The bourgeoisie in Britain did not undergo a complete ‘bourgeois revolution’, as they did in France. Ironically, though Britain was the first capitalist nation, Britons were defined as subjects rather than citizens (Faulks, 1998:101-02).

At the beginning of the 20th century, anyone living within the extent of the British Empire was considered a British subject. At this time, the concept of subject and
nationality seemed to be one and the same. This, however, changed in 1948 with the publication of the British Nationality Act.

The aftermath of the break-up of the British Empire engendered a large influx of ex-colonial subjects into Britain. With the introduction of immigration legislation and nationality laws, the acquisition of citizenship was made more difficult and access to citizenship rights were more closely tied to nationality. Although any person living within the Commonwealth (as the Empire had become) was a subject of the Crown, he or she was not necessarily a British national. The British Nationality Act of 1948 identified three categories of British citizens: citizens of Britain and Colonies, British subjects without citizenship of any Commonwealth country and British Protected Persons. From an international perspective, all of these were regarded as British citizens, however within Britain they had different rights. Over the next two decades, the nationality law gradually evolved, redefining citizenship based on a close connection with Britain. The 1971 Immigration Act defined who had the right of abode in Britain, thus clearly separating subjecthood from citizenship and nationality. The British Nationality Act of 1981 defined different categories of British nationalities and described explicitly what British citizenship meant (i.e. automatic right of abode in Britain) and who was eligible for it.

In 2005, a survey from ETHNOS British people's understanding of Britishness, shed light on a concept often seen as complex and fuzzy. For example, it revealed that there is a shared, almost consensual representation of what Britishness is, that is a territorial and political entity defined as an 'imagined community' where people relate to and identify with a social identity associated with different meanings. Although Britishness is viewed as a multi-dimensional concept that includes geography (e.g. an island nation with its topography), national symbols (e.g. the Union Jack flag, the Royal family), values and attitudes (e.g. sense of fairness, tolerance and respect), cultural habits and behaviour (e.g. love of sports, food habits), language (e.g. the bond that unite British people) and achievements (e.g. political, historical or technological), Britishness was perceived in decline (ETHNOS, 2005a:19-32). If being British is associated with being formally recognised as a

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8 History of British Nationality Law, available on www.en.wikepedia.org
British citizen, the view of decline was particularly expressed by white people who 'attributed the decline to the presence of people from different national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds' (ETHNOS, 2005b:9).

It is correct to suggest that the concept of Britishness is 'grounded in a particular historical, political, economic, ideological and cultural reality that sees power relations involved in the notion of Britishness' (ETHNOS, 2005a:11). For example, the view over 'who the British people are and who can be regarded as British and who cannot' is contained with the concept of Britishness (ETHNOS, 2005a:21). Therefore a distinction can be made with respect to nationality (e.g. being Scottish or being Welsh against being British), to 'being white' (e.g. white English people are British) and to multicultural diversity (e.g. Britishness is also associated with ethnic diversity).

In reference to emotional and evaluative significance, ethnic diversity can be perceived as negative connotation, preferring associating Britishness with white people. This feeling reflects the perception that Britishness is in decline, having lost the genuine meaning of some idealised notion that had existed in the past. Many causes can explain this perceived decline such as 'the increased presence of ethnic minority populations, the drain on the welfare state and the moral pluralism that cultural diversity brings, the political correctness of British and European statutory organisations' (ETHNOS, 2005b:17). As a result, frustration is targeted at ethnic minorities and at Muslims in particular rather than members of other minority groups.

Associating Britishness with ethnic diversity is recognising the ethnic and religious pluralism that normalises Britain today. Yet ethnic minorities appear not to identify exclusively with Britain. For the British Muslim communities, for instance, religion is a highly salient component of their identity. Allegiance to Islam and to the cultural heritage of their country of origin is as much a part of the construction of their identity as is their identification with Britain. However, British Muslims are constantly required to display loyalty towards Britain. For Vadher and Barrett, 'the principal barrier to Muslims' inclusion within the category of British is not self-segregation by Muslims themselves, but the policing of the boundary of Britishness by the white British majority' (Vadher & Barrett, 2009:445).
In France

According to Miller, since the Revolution ‘French ideas of nationality and citizenship have been open and inclusive; anyone might become a French national who resided on French soil and displayed attachment to French values’ (Miller, 1995:143). Hargreaves argues that the legacy of 1789 has given complete power to the political class with the objective to govern an indivisible nation. In such contexts, the notions of nationality and citizenship are intertwined, making nationality a mandatory condition for citizenship. If nationality consists of a range of rights and duties for those who are officially identified as French, nationality did not always grant rights to some of its population. Such was the case for the female population who were denied political rights until 1944, or the people in the overseas empire whose official status was of French subjects exempt of any citizenship content (e.g. such was the case for French North Africans (Hargreaves, 1995:165-66)).

In his study comparing French and German citizenship and nationhood, Brubaker claims that French nationhood is symbolised within the definition of citizenship. Revolutionary and Republican definitions of nationhood and citizenship (i.e. unitarist, universalist, assimilationist and secular) reinforced what was already a political understanding of nationhood. For Brubaker, the concept of citizenship was pivotal to the philosophy of the French Revolution, which can be considered from four perspectives: a bourgeois revolution, a democratic revolution, a national revolution and a bureaucratic revolution. The first one saw the Revolution creating a general status based on people enjoying common rights bound by common obligations and being formally equal before the law. In this way, citizenship gave the status of equality between individuals. The second one saw the Revolution establishing civil equality by ‘institutionalising political rights as citizenship rights and transforming them from a privilege to a general right’ (Brubaker, 1992:43). In this way, citizenship carried both a status of general and special membership. The third one saw the Revolution constructing a nation as one and indivisible where individuals are equal. By creating the concept of the modern nation-state, the Revolution shaped the ‘ideological basis for modern nationalism, defining precisely who was French, and providing a technical basis for denying certain rights to or imposing certain obligations on foreigners’ (Brubaker, 1992:48). In this way, citizenship defined the status of the nationals from foreigners. The fourth one saw the
Revolution developing a powerful infrastructure to help the state organise civil society. In this way, citizenship represented a formalised and codified membership. Intimately bound up with the development of the modern nation-state, the notion of citizenship, as we know it, is imprinted by these four perspectives (Brubaker, 1992:39-48).

With citizenship and nationality being institutionalised in the form of the nation-state and articulating the idea of cultural conformity, the situation of non-nationals was in complete contrast to that of the nationals/citizens. While citizens were guaranteed equal rights through the rule of the law, this was not the case for the foreigners who were subject to different rules based on the bi-lateral agreement between France and their home country. Prior to the creation of the first immigration law in 1980, state supervision of immigrants/foreigners was through decrees and circulars, which did not have judicial force. Thus foreigners were seen as people to control rather than those with rights and their lives were dependent on the good will of the administrators (Silverman, 1992:129-32).

In general, the French Code of Nationality can be described as a set of convoluted laws and rulings, where people of foreign origins can see the acquisition of French nationality being conditioned by historical relations. This is especially the case for people from Algeria and French ex-colonies, whose legalisation differs from other foreigners because of their previous colonial status. Balibar and Wallerstein claim that the proposal of change in the Code of Nationality takes root from the reverse colonial discourse of ‘them’ and ‘us’, in other words ‘the less a population designated as ‘immigrants’ is in fact foreign, the more it is denounced as a ‘foreign body’” (cited in Silverman, 1992:144). In light of this, it can be said that North African people have perfectly illustrated the problem.

By attaining French nationality, one automatically gains rights. Yet politics of the late 1980s brought to the fore the debate on nationality to suggest that France was facing a problem with its immigration movements. Silverman argues that ‘the construction of the problem of immigration, as temporary workers passage to permanent families, is founded on the idea that non-European immigration is a threat to social cohesion and national identity’ (Silverman, 1992:140). In this model, the fear starts precisely when the immigrants established themselves in the territory and when immigration turned
into a cultural and ethnic problem with the potential menace to national cohesion and national identity. In such a context, debates around nationality demonstrate the complexity that exists between the philosophy of the Republican ideology of assimilation and the legal definition of nationality. As presented earlier, the politics of the 1980s orientated new initiatives with regards to the acquisition of French nationality, consequently modifying the Code of Nationality. The intention was to stop giving French nationality automatically to children born in France who had foreign parents and instead base its acquisition on voluntary application. In other words, the principle of *jus soli* was being rumbled to illegitimate on the whole people of North African origin (Silverman, 1992:141-42).

The so-called challenging presence on the main territory of post-colonial Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians and other ex-colonies subjects, demonstrated a brutal confrontation of French colonial representation of subject and citizen. In other words, the predicament rested mainly in the prospect of ‘accepting as equals those who were previously inferiors, of accepting as citizens those who were previously subjects’ (Silverman, 1992:144). As a result, the overt recognition by French authorities of those labelled ethnically and religiously as second class under colonial rule, meant that they were now similar to the other French. It was in this context that a severe concern was felt to see that a process of differentiation should be applied to them. Silverman rightly suggests that ‘the post-colonial situation has stripped away the mythology of universalism to reveal the racism ever-present within it’ (Silverman, 1992:145).

In summary, British nationality law is the law concerning British citizenship and other categories of British nationality. Since Britain itself is a multinational state, it is important to understand that there is no clear and definite link between one single nationality and citizenship. These dynamics may have contributed to the appreciation of cultural diversity. It is a fact that British citizenship granted rights that have been shaped through important historical developments in the formation of Britain, such as the rise and decline of British imperial power. In France, the inseparable feature that bounds nationality and citizenship resonates through the phenomenon of immigration and the problem encountered by the immigrants. As formally defined by French demographers such as Tribalat ‘an immigrant is a person born in a foreign country and not having French nationality/citizenship at birth. He/she may have acquired
French citizenship since moving to France, but is still considered an immigrant in French statistics' (Tribalat, 1992:1).

2.2 IMMIGRATION
Since 1945, international migration has grown in volume and changed in character (e.g. from 1945 to the early 1970s, economic strategy of large-scale capital and expansion of production resulted in large numbers of migrant workers moving from less developed countries to those of Western Europe) affecting not only the immigrants themselves but the receiving societies as a whole. While decolonisation continued in the post-war period, ex-colony subjects began to arrive on British and French soils. The immigration movement developed with the economic needs of industry. It can be said that the causes of migratory movements since 1945 stem from the existence of former links between ‘sending’ and ‘receiving’ countries based on colonisation, trade or cultural ties.

In Britain
Immigration is a hotly debated issue in Britain and instead of looking at the economic and social function of immigration and its effect on society, the tendency is to concentrate upon ‘race relations’ whereby colour, race and racial prejudice are seen as the roots of social problems connected with immigration. The law of immigration is entangled with that of the British nationality, resulting in a strong relationship which cannot be dissociated if one talks about the issue of immigration.

Britain is a nation composed of ethnic and national blend, with a long story of immigration coming from various horizons. The making of the British population, historically heterogeneous by its origins, included the immigration of Angles, Saxons, Normans, Danes, Dutchmen, Belgians, Irish and Jews. The earliest government action that contributed to heterogeneity was the decision to dispatch Protestant refugees to surrounding towns of Canterbury, Colchester, Norwich and Yarmouth to reduce overcrowding in London during XVIth century (Foot, 1965:80).
During the 16th and 17th centuries, Britain saw a new wave of immigration with French Huguenots\(^{10}\) (for the large part artisans, craftsmen, and professional people) forced to flee the country following religious discrimination and overt persecution. In general, the presence of Huguenots in the countries they settled in represented a considerable benefit due to their quality and talents in the arts, sciences and industry.

In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution not only absorbed the unemployed workers from the countryside but needed a growing labour-force to match its rapid expansion. Soon, British employers started to employ Irish workers in the textile and building industries, resulting in their migration to cities like Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow. The Jews were also an important group who came to Britain, seeking refuge after having left Russia to escape persecution. The local population were not very receptive, showing signs of antipathy and hostility towards the newcomers in fear of competition for jobs and housing. As a result, a climate of antagonism, chauvinism and prejudice towards immigration emerged that required politicians to take action and thus create the first restrictive legislation on immigration: the \textit{Aliens Restriction Act of 1914}\(^{11}\). This Act ended Britain’s laid-back attitude to immigration by defining British nationality and thus controlled movements of foreigners (Castles & Kosack, 1973:18). The aftermath following two great wars marked the emergence of new waves of immigration from territories and colonies of the former British Empire.

Immigration from former British colonies was important for Britain from an economic perspective. Immigration of workers from the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent and Africa (the New Commonwealth) started after 1945 and grew during the 1950s (the number of New Commonwealth immigrants in Britain doubled between the periods 1951-61 from 256,000 to 541,000) (Anwar, 1986:8). Workers came to be recruited by London Transport but most of the newcomers moved to cities such as Birmingham, Leicester, Liverpool, Manchester and boroughs of London (e.g. Brent, Hackney, Lambeth) to answer the shortage of labour in unskilled manual jobs

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\(^{10}\) The Huguenot Society’s own web site says that the Huguenots were French Protestants who were members of the Reformed Church established in France by John Calvin in about 1555’ (available on www.huguenot.netnation.com)

\(^{11}\) The 1914 Act granted the common status of British subject to people within Britain but also those throughout the British Empire, in the former colonies and the self-governing dominions (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada) (History of British Nationality Law available on www.wikipedia.org)
in industry and services. Many of these jobs were being initially discarded by natives for being low paid, with little stability and no real prospect of advancement. It is within this context that employers turned to immigrants for labour. Indeed, the movement of immigrants, particularly the economic migrants, can be explained in terms of macro-economic theory which suggests that people move from their country of origin (push-factor) to countries with greater demand for labour (pull-factor) (Green, 2002:4-5).

After the Second World War, British nationality law was strengthened with the emergence of the *British Nationality Act of 1948*. The purpose of this Act was to distinguish the Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKC) from citizens of the Commonwealth who were British subjects or Commonwealth citizens under British law. It was also under the same Act that two additional classes of British subjects emerged. Firstly, those without citizenship but connected with former British India either by birth, naturalisation or ancestry and who did not become citizens of any Commonwealth country or of the Irish Republic. Secondly, those of Southern Irish origin as the Irish Republic were not included in the list of countries whose citizens were to be British subjects (Jackson, 1997:90).

A looming economic inertia, in the early 1960s, caused immigration from the New Commonwealth to stop. Following strict restrictions through the *Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962*, Britain began to experience serious concern about the possible effect of such large-scale immigration from the former colonies. In essence, before 1962, immigration was mainly made up of economically active newcomers (e.g. women from West Indians and men from India and Pakistan). Along with the 1962 Act a voucher system was established that allowed the admission of dependants of workers who were already in Britain. Thus, it can be argued that the 1962 *Commonwealth Immigration* played an influential part in the way migration moved away from being a movement of workers to becoming a permanent immigration of families (Castles & Kosack, 1973:31). However this Act was in contradiction with the 1948 Nationality Act under which all British subjects had the right of admission to Britain. With controls being applied for the first time against Commonwealth citizens, the objective was to restrict the categories that could enter freely, leading to racial divide. As a result, white Commonwealth citizens were not subject to controls while black Commonwealth citizens had to apply for work vouchers. Consequently, it can
be argued that the 1962 Act exemplified the principle of exclusion, even to people holding CUKC passports (Spencer, 1997:129-30).

With a large number of immigrants staying and family reunions being resumed, the population of Commonwealth origin increased from 1.2 million in 1971 to 1.5 million in 1981. However, this was soon to be controlled with the introduction of the 1971 Immigration Act whose objective it was to create the concept of ‘patriality’ or ‘right of abode’ (i.e. the right to enter and live in Britain freely). Up to now, only CUKCs and other Commonwealth citizens had the right of abode in Britain if they or their parents were connected to Britain. However, if those concerned were free of immigration control, they nevertheless could have had their access to enter Britain denied, despite being British nationals. This was the case of Ugandan British Indians who, once expelled from Uganda between 1968 and 1972, required control. Despite holding full British passports testifying their status as Citizens of United Kingdom and Colonies, they were deprived of the right to enter and stay in their only country of citizenship. It was, therefore, apparent that the 1971 Immigration Act carried inequitable measures for which some British citizens were left stateless and no status.

In summary, the concept of patriality was then recognized as only a temporary solution, and the British government embarked on a major reform of the law, resulting in the British Nationality Act 1981 (Spencer, 1997:143-44).

Whatever the original intentions of the immigrants regarding staying or returning, the severe restrictions on entry to Britain had the effect of preventing them leaving unless they were totally sure they never wanted to return. The British Nationality Act 1981 revealed a long process of new formulated conditions about citizenship and nationality and adjustments about the Immigration Act 1971 on the right of abode in Britain. The purpose of this Act was to categorise the status of CUKC into three groups: British citizenship, British Dependent Territory citizenship and British Overseas citizenship. In summary, it can be said that the 1981 Act brought some degree of convergence between the British immigration and citizenship laws, with those holding only the British citizenship given the right of abode in Britain (Spencer, 1997:147-48).
Immigration and citizenship:

In general, citizenship reflects the identity of a nation. When immigration started in the late 1950s to respond to a shortage of labour, it was Caribbean migrants from the West Indies who came, followed by Asian migrants from the Indian sub-continent. Being British subjects either by affiliation to British colonies or by being citizens of British Commonwealth countries, the newcomers represented the imperial notion of subservience. Citizenship was then perceived as an allegiance to the Crown with the freedom of movement throughout the former Empire. In such context, Irish and Commonwealth immigrants benefited from the same political, civil and social rights as native British citizens. The aftermath of the dismantling of the Empire that had led ex-colonial subjects to immigrate to Britain posed the issue of defining legally who was British (an intricate problem considering that common allegiance to the Crown provided the notion of rights). It is under such circumstances that immigration legislation laws tended to merge with those on nationality, making citizenship more difficult to obtain (Piper, 1998:86). It was, therefore, found necessary to redefine the concepts of citizenship and nationality in order to build a collective membership based on a more equal basis. Besides bestowing rights, citizenship also has ‘a cultural dimension that provides a sense of belonging to and identification with a socio-political entity’ (Piper, 1998:79).

Work immigration involving mainly single men coming over to provide labour for the industries of the 1960s gave way since the mid-1970s to family immigration. Once settled in Britain, the vast majority of Commonwealth citizens became British citizens, even if they could not speak English or were alien to British customs and culture. Interestingly, the acquisition of British citizenship has allowed immigrants to gain a distinct degree of representativeness into British society. However, gaining British citizenship does not automatically imply social integration as the societal model was inclined to promote the emergence of separate ethnic communities, dividing people up despite holding a common citizenship.

The history of post-war British immigration was characterised by local rather than centralised initiatives to integrate newcomers. For instance, governmental involvement in the process of integration was materialised through bureaucracies such
as the CIAC\textsuperscript{12} and the NCCI\textsuperscript{13}, whose objective it was to assist local jurisdictions related to the problems of immigration. In the 1970s, the British state decided to resort to robust administrative organisations and official ruling regarding community and race relations, presenting a resolute decision to promote harmonious group interactions. This was further materialised in the 1991 census where British policymakers accepted the quantification and classification of citizens by race and ethnicity (Bleich, 2005:178).

In France

In comparison to Britain, little attention has been paid to the contribution of immigrants into French society despite the important and continuous migratory flux that took place over several generations. During the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, the idea of having immigrant workers coming from neighbouring countries was tolerated and accepted. However, the aftermath of the economic recession in late 19\textsuperscript{th} century translated into a clear resentment towards immigrants as looming fears for lost jobs was growing. This was the case for Italian immigrants in Southern France, who suffered anti-Italian sentiments and violent attacks. Until 1914, there were little or no immigration controls, allowing free population movements to market forces (Hargreaves, 1995:7).

Until 1968, the large majority of immigrants originated from neighbouring countries like Belgium, Italy and Spain. Belgians began to settle over the border in north-east France where job opportunities occurred in the coal, steel and textile industries. Italians, having already put down roots in south-eastern France, worked in unskilled jobs. Spanish tended to stay in south-western France, working mostly as agricultural workers. The Poles also came between wars, working in land and in mines and for the first time representing the largest expatriate community. However, the degraded economic situation following the recession of the 1930s constrained French authorities to repatriate Poles. If economic rationale was generally the force behind migratory flux, the European political scene and climate also gave motives for asking refuge in France. For instance, Italians fled their country following Mussolini's accession to power in 1922, Spanish left as soon as the Civil War began in 1936, 1968.

\textsuperscript{12} Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Committee (Bleich, 2005:192)

\textsuperscript{13} National Committee for Commonwealth Immigrants (Bleich, 2005:192)
Armenians escaped the Turkish campaign of genocide, Russians ran away following the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Jews fled the looming rise of Fascism (Hargreaves, 1995:9-10).

It was, however, after the Second World War that the government established primary regulation in post-war immigration policy. Soon, the economic and social context let families settle, securing their residence rights. In 1945, a new governmental agency Office National d’Immigration (ONI) was created with the objective to regulate the influx of immigrants. The latter revealed that ‘the share of Europeans in the foreign population of France had declined steadily throughout the post-war period from 89% in 1946 to 41% in 1990, while the fastest growing groups originated from the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) was leaping from 2% in 1946 to 39% in 1982’ (Hargreaves, 1995:12). This shift indicated that the French immigrant population was changing and leaving places for new waves of immigrants that originated from a French decolonised empire and more particularly the Maghreb.

Before independence, Algeria (a territory officially considered as part of France) saw its inhabitants holding the formal status of French nationals without being recognised as French citizens. It was not until 1947 that Algerians had complete freedom of movement in and out of France. This is because Algeria, unlike Morocco and Tunisia which were under French rule until 1956, did not have the juridical status of French protectorate so the citizens were not officially classed as French. In addition to North African territories, there are also the few overseas territories called the DOM-TOM14, out of which the most important are Guadeloupe, Martinique and French Guyana in the Caribbean, and Ile de la Réunion in the Indian Ocean (Hargreaves, 1995:12-3).

Since Algeria gained its independence in 1962, there has been a steady amount of Algerians who were already moving considerably from and to France. Alarmed at the increased numbers of Algerians coming to France for employment, French authorities began to establish a policy of regulation and control that proved to be ineffective (Castles & Kosacks, 1973:33). Immigration from Algeria continued to grow and the ONI revealed that their numbers grew from a mere 22,000 in 1946 to 805,000 in 1982, making them the largest ethnic minority group in France. Among the immigrant population is the one descending from European lineage and who left the Maghreb at

14 Départements d’Outre-Mer and Territoires d’Outre-Mer (Overseas regions and territories)
the time of independence. The French, by nationality and culture, are generally referred to as rapatriés (repatriated citizens) or more popularly as pieds-noirs. However, the DOM-TOM people who are mainly of African or Asian origin and are ‘easily recognisable by their physical appearance, are often treated as immigrants in a way that the rapatriés are not’ (Hargreaves, 1995: 12-3).

Though the French government quickly set up a policy of family reunifications for immigrants originating from European countries, the latter took a different approach for those originating from the Maghreb. Having lived in bidonvilles usually situated at the outskirts of cities, French authorities offered the Algerian immigrants hostel accommodation. This initiative was aimed to discourage wives and children from coming to France, as the accommodation was unsuitable for families. However, the scheme proved increasingly ineffective as ‘by 1970, there were over 600,000 Algerians in France, as well as 140,000 Moroccans and 90,000 Tunisians (Castles et al., 1984:51).

With immigration continuing to grow, the government decided upon different immigration policies that narrowed control on entries and introduced selectivity. This initiative was to ensure labour on a temporary basis for North Africans. The effects of such measures showed that immigrant population stopped to increase in the early 1980s. However, French society was feeling the dominance of its Maghrebin community with over one million in 1982 and the emergence of its second generation. Originally Arabs and often Muslims, strongly attached to their cultural roots as well as their Western way of life, the Maghrebin population was French and challenging the society simply by its presence. It was with the new Socialist government in place in 1981 that issues on immigration, together with debate around identity of France, brought to the forefront the process of naturalisation of immigrants (Castles et al., 1984:54).

**Immigration and citizenship:**

Since the early 1980s, it was not uncommon in France to believe that immigration was a potential threat to national identity and the deeply rooted French understanding of nationhood was nowhere more striking than in the political initiatives and policies of citizenship in relation to immigrants. The patterns of migration are historically linked to a colonial past and as a result, patterns of integration are related to the...
concept of citizenship, nationhood and national identity. In terms of nationality, people in France are either a national or a foreigner. Within French nationality, there are no official sub-categories to distinguish nationals (Silverman, 1992:2). Yet, that formal distinction contains additional ambiguities as it is too often that the term ‘foreigner’ is substituted for that of ‘immigrant’, the latter usually including individuals of non-European origins and specifically Maghrebin. This amalgam results in reducing immigration to a problem that is specific to a group, regardless of their French nationality. The image of an immigration, potentially dangerous to national unity and identity, has stamped different groups of people to be treated with discrimination (Silverman, 1992:2-3). As a result, the ways immigrants and their descendants are accepted (or not) in the French national community exposes the dividing-line between French nationals and foreigners. The integration of immigrants and their descendants depends very much on the manners and conduct of the majority population (Hargreaves, 1995:149).

Populations of immigrant origin have become more visible and continued to grow in France. Like many other countries, France defines its national identity through the policies of citizenship that distinguishes the concepts of immigrant and citizen. In general, the majority of people acquire citizenship in one of two ways: by birth (*jus soli*) or by blood (*jus sanguinis*). In the former system, anyone born in France automatically becomes a French citizen. In the latter system, descent and heritage gives rights to citizenship, that is, one can be a French citizen by showing that he/she has French ancestors. Thus, a foreigner is one who is not descended from a French citizen and cannot trace heritage back to France (Grieco, 2002:4).

Until recently, second generation immigrants were defined as French citizens by birth. However, in the 1980s the practice of citizenship *jus soli* came under criticism, favouring to limit automatic acquisition of French citizenship and requesting second generation immigrants to demand French nationality. According to Brubaker, there are a number of factors that have brought about the challenge to *jus soli*, including a large and growing second generation North African community and the concerns about Islam and its emergence as the second religion. This change in national demographics and the growing ‘cultural-pluralist’ discourse on immigration has fuelled nationalist politics, resulting in an attack on the principle of *jus soli* with the argument that the French Republican framework is being threatened or undermined.
by immigration, especially of North African Muslims. In this climate of friction, citizenship was described as being devalued and manifold and only nationalist initiatives could reassert the value of national citizenship (Brubaker, 1992:138-43).

The new government of the 1980s introduced policies that directed initiatives where participation in the French public life was possible while avoiding formal allegiance to the French state. The aim was to 'facilitate partial citizenship for immigrants (without them being required to take French nationality) by considering revising the French Nationality Code' (Hargreaves, 1995:166). Up to now, the Code attributed French nationality at birth to anyone born in France with at least one of the parents being born on French territory (Article 23). In addition to this Article, the Code also gave French nationality automatically to people born on French soil of foreign parents when they reached the age of majority (Article 44) (Hargreaves, 1995:25). Children born to Algerian immigrants living in France had automatically been given French nationality because of the time of their parent’s birth in Algeria, which was French territory. However, following the independence of Algeria in 1962, Algeria refused to recognise these claims and under Algerian law, the children of immigrants were regarded as Algerian nationals. To overcome such a dilemma, French authorities suggested that children of Algerian immigrants must choose to accept French nationality or not, as an alternative of having it automatically imposed on them. But technical difficulties prevented the implementation of this initiative, making it impossible to change Article 23 without affecting the rapatriés status (Hargreaves, 1995:166).

If nationality and citizenship formed an unbreakable whole during the post-colonial period, then the politics of the 1980s tried to bring a new dimension to the definition of citizenship with the ‘New Citizenship project’. Although this initiative never saw the light of day, it attracted great attention among intellectuals and human rights associations in the early 1990s, as it was presented as the implementation of the ideals of 1789 and references to the Constitution of 1793. However, for people originating from ex-colonial territories the only access to political rights lay in the acquisition of French nationality/citizenship.

If the Republican meaning of nationality is reserved for members of the nation, then the nation should be more inclusive to those who have embraced its values but are of
foreign origins. Also, it is correct to suggest that the assimilationist feature of the concept of nationality is apathetic to cultural difference. Unfortunately, only a minority of politicians support the concept of multi-culturalism while a majority ‘advocate that immigrants must adapt or utterly conform to French cultural norms’ (Hargreaves, 1995:176).

2.3 Summary

For Anderson, ‘the classic formulation of national identity conceptualised the nation as an imagined political community which is both inherently limited and sovereign’ (Anderson, 1983:6-7). In general, the concept of nation implies that a differentiation is automatically made between the people who belong to it and the others. It is in such a situation that issues around identity, citizenship, exclusion and inclusion are posed within the discourse on race and ethnicity. Bloemraad et al. gives a definition of citizenship as that which:

‘...encompasses legal status, rights, participation, and belonging. Traditionally anchored in a particular geographic and political community, citizenship evokes notions of national identity, sovereignty, and state control. But these relationships are being challenged by the scope and diversity of international migration’ (Bloemraad et al., 2008:153).

Britain is a multinational state with distinct Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish and English nations. Thus, it can be said that many British citizens have dual identities. In such a context, governmental initiatives and policies towards immigration and citizenship have moved towards a multiculturalist approach to non-nationals. British identity can be said to be aiming at the construction of a common social project where people are united and part of a collective effort.

In France, you are either a national or a foreigner. Unlike in Britain, no ethnic specificity is signalled institutionally, and French initiatives and policies have aimed to integrate a large flux of immigrants, ethnically and culturally different, into its national framework. However, it can be suggested that the visible presence of others have put to the fore the definition of national identity.

In principle, the concept of citizenship in Britain and France is similar as far as the notion of rights and duties are concerned. However, they differ with regards to who is entitled to the citizenship status. In Britain, gaining British citizenship does not imply social integration and as a result, clear indicators of race, ethnicity and religion
emerge, which divide people up into distinct communities. In France, citizenship defines who belongs to the nation-state and for immigrants, this results in facing either naturalisation or departure.

Having presented the foundations of the making of British and French national and civic society, the next chapter sets the scene and context upon which the research study is grounded.
CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION AND MUSLIM CHILDREN

This chapter presents the context upon which the focus of this research study is grounded, that is to look at the education of Muslim pupils in state schools in Britain and France and the ways in which cultural diversity is addressed. Understanding the ways British and French education systems function is of relevance as it helps to assess the relationship that young Muslim pupils establish with school education. It helps to measure whether the participants' cultural needs are recognised (e.g. how schools address and accommodate their requirements), the type of rapport and understanding they get from their teachers as well as the levels of friendship and relationship they establish with other pupils.

3.1 THE FUNCTIONS OF EDUCATION

Education in sociological terms

It can be argued that the principal thoughts regarding education are derived from the tradition of structural functionalism whose origins are associated with Durkheim's work. His major contribution within the field of education, in sociological terms, showed that the role of education was as much a contributor to industrial economies as that of a major factor in social solidarity. This point was of great significance as Durkheim understood that a correlation between individuals, society and culture had to exist in order to reach social cohesion and order. He argued that 'the fundamental duty of the state is to lay down moral unity; it is to persevere in calling the individual to a moral way of life, to create the community of ideas and sentiments without which there is no society' (Durkheim, 1957:69). For Durkheim, education was the prime instrument for achieving such goals and the State, the sole guarantee to its success. However, his theory did not include the ambiguities of a civil society where the education system was confronted with the intrinsic features of class discrepancies. In other words, the function of education failed to acknowledge and encourage particular cultures, while promoting and validating the construction of the dominant culture (Green, 1990:36-37).
Besides playing an important role as a socially integrative element within a society, education and its institutions also function like the mirror of the society within which they exist, entrusted with the task to develop and prepare informed individuals to become future responsible members of the society. Following Durkheim, Bourdieu proposed his concept of cultural capital, which is the set of cultural experiences - values, beliefs, norms and attitudes - experiences that equip people for their life in society. ‘Culture’, in this view, is seen as an important resource, which is developed and maintained within a social group. For Bourdieu, people accumulate cultural capital from birth and through the education system. However, socialisation tends to be within the culture corresponding to their class and not into the values held by the whole society. Thus, the true purpose of schooling lies not so much in the transmission of know-how and skills but more in its efforts to duplicate the social inequity already at work within the system. During the schooling phase, the cultural capital gained since birth is directed to achieving things that are considered culturally important, such as educational qualifications for the majority of children as well as status by attending independent high status schools like Eton. It can therefore be said that the possession of the proper form of cultural capital is an essential element of educational selectiveness (Giddens, 1997:512-13).

Rooted in Marxist thought on the concept of hegemony, cultural hegemony implies that cultural institutions such as schools create the context where dominant beliefs and thoughts are made natural or coherent. Gramsci has defined cultural hegemony as the philosophic and sociological concept by which a culturally diverse society can be ruled or dominated by one of its social classes, through mechanisms that transmit the values and belief systems of the dominant group from generation to generation (Gramsci, 2000:166-67). The key vehicle for transmission is the school system whose practices can be said to be the main device for cultural reproduction. However, more profound and subtle ways also operate, such as behavioural and modes of conduct that individuals learn in an informal way while at school (Giddens, 1997:525).

The relationship between the school system and the transmission of culture also involves the concept of cultural legitimation. This refers to the validation of the cultural capital of the mainstream society within the school system and implies that impartiality and universality are often applied within the school system, often to the detriment of the cultural capital of ethnic minority groups. The latter can often be
considered insignificant and are excluded altogether from the mainstream education system. Subsequently, in a response to the cultural hegemony, cultural resistance rises, implying that ethnic minority groups are faced with a choice to make as far as their integrative process is concerned. This cultural resistance can translate an opposition into a complete assimilation. Through the school system cultural values are transmitted from the dominant culture, whose aim is to live up to exalted ideals. Yet education is also addressed to children whose cultural values differ from the mainstream ones and for which education institutions have to put efforts to assist these children with their inclusion in society.

Thus, for Bourdieu the system of education legitimates the transmission of power from one generation to another while the education institution guarantees the prosperity of cultural capital and validates its diffusion.

**State schooling and nation-building:**

It can be said that the development of the education system is closely linked to the history of the nation-state, as the former became entrusted with the notion of nation-building. Indeed, education is seen as a vehicle for maintaining social order and reinforcing state power. It is through the education system that one moulds the moral and political opinions of individuals, ensuring loyalty to the state (Vaughan & Archer, 2010:181).

According to Balibar, the education system is the 'principal institution for which state intervention has a direct position in the need to build and ensure the reproduction of the nation' (Balibar, 1992:98). As a product of national sovereignty, the state schooling system was involved in the processes of education institutionalisation, where modern conceptions of the relationship between individual and the state were explained. Boli and Ramirez argue that 'the notions of individualism and statism were combined, where individualism demands that individuals were provided with means to cultivate their self-development, while statism implied that the formation of individuals ought to be directed towards the empowerment of the group' (cited in Chilosi, 2005:48). It can be said that it is through the expression of these two principles that nationalist ideology emerged (Chilosi, 2005:57).
According to Vaughan and Archer, the French bourgeoisie used nationalism as an important ideological weapon to legitimise their control over schooling between the 18th and 19th centuries against the Church and religious orders. This contrasts with Britain, where nationalism was more traditionalist and where the Anglican Church exercised a firm control on the education while advocating a clear distinctiveness between religious morality and secular philosophy. Although opposed to the process of laïcité, British and French conception of nationalism share common points, mainly that nationalism ought to promote anti-aristocratism and egalitarianism while, at the same time, should point up the importance of establishing a common sense of morality through education for citizenship (cited in Chilosi, 2005:54-56).

In essence, the impact of state schooling in promoting the idea of nation-building can be explained with reference to the notion of nationalism. Firstly, nationalism and the state system of education follow the principle of egalitarianism where cultural homogeneity is promoted and applied with the aim to break down any source of individualism. Secondly, nationalism corresponds to a context where popular sovereignty triumphs, translating into practice the idea of democracy (Chilosi, 2005:71). If education development was to play an essential part within the course of state formation, it appears to be most noticeable and accelerated in France than in Britain where the process was slow and tardy. It was instead ‘the liberal market order and the doctrine of the minimal government which shaped the relations between society and state’ (Green, 1997:34).

Social origins of education system:
Green studied the origins of the education systems in England and France and showed that in the 18th century, English and French education was integrated with the same social institutions – primarily with established religion and with the prevailing system of social stratification. In each country, the church exercised an unchallenged domination over education and was the major owner of school buildings - in so far as teacher-training existed, the Church was the only provider. Pupil selection at the various levels of instruction reflected the prevailing system of social stratification in each country. In England and France, the goal of the education given was predominantly religious and its conceptual framework was traditionalist (Green, 1990:26-30).
Whilst religion was clearly an essential element in the early development of schooling, it did not present the primary explanation for the rise of a national system of education. In France, the latter was more than just an elaborated network of schools; it was a unique and distinct system that was characterised by the notion of the 'collective' and defined orientation towards the secular needs of the state. One can say that the emergence of the 'national education system' was a distinctive break from the traditional clerical domination of schooling. This is not to say that religion ceased to be an important influence. The Church and religious societies made arduous efforts to retain their influence through maintaining independent schools but despite their resistance, they progressively had to submit to state control. Enlightenment philosophy and the Industrial Revolution are other significant influences on the ideology of an education system. For Green:

'...the legacy of Enlightenment philosophy, from the philosophical empiricism of Locke to the rationalist optimism of Voltaire to philosophers like Rousseau, Condorcet in France and Mill in England, was the base line theory for which the environment formed the person, with the predominance of nurture over nature. In other words, the belief that the human mind could be shaped by education introduced the principle of universal educability. The cultural grounds of the Enlightenment and revolutionary era provided an essential ground for the development of theories of education' (Green, 1990:30-32).

It was during the French revolutionary period and the decades that followed that the national system was established and given a permanent institutional form. The reforms regarding national education included general forms of provision, the reduction of administration and institutional structure and the development of forms of public finance and control. As the number of public schools dominated the private and voluntary ones, the education control became carried out more and more by the state, whose influence on education increased. Whether central or through local authorities, the state was in control of education by way of allocating funds, licensing and inspecting schools as well as recruiting and training teachers. The creation of an institution solely devoted to education and including a legitimate monopoly of formal learning and training suggested a revolution in the concept and forms of education together with a transformation in the relations between schooling, society and the State (Green, 1990:33-36).

In summary, the formation of the national education system in early 19th century marks the beginning of modern schooling. With the emergence of the school system,
learning became associated with a proper and systematic schooling which itself became a fundamental feature of the state. British public education developed differently and at a much slower pace than in France. During the 19th century, France had created state lycées but in Britain, the government continued with the policy of keeping education outside state control. Instead, education was based on a voluntary system dependent entirely on independent initiatives and funded privately by individuals and organisations. The situation changed with the enactment of the Education Act of 1902, which brought education into state control by creating local education authorities who were made responsible for coordinating both elementary and higher education. Britain had now a dual education system with the Church and the State providing education equally. This trend has continued in the 20th century, with the Church still remaining one of the main providers of education in Britain working within the state defined education policies (Green, 1990).

While education development in Britain was a progression from voluntary system to a state co-ordinated dual system, the progression in France was more focussed on the state assuming full control of education, which was seen as a mechanism for reshaping society and helping with the process of state formation. With the 1882 Jules Ferry Law, the state started to make the move towards taking the control of education away from the Church and transmitting the principle of laïcité to promote social cohesion. The 1886 Goblet Law mandated that all teachers in State schools should be secular. These two laws set the foundation of the école laïque and paved the way for a République laïque. The 1905 law formally separated the Church from the state by the concept of laïcité, which asserted the non-confessional nature of the French State (Chadwick, 1997).

**British education structure**

According to the Department for Education & Employment (DfEE) three categories of schools exist under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998: Community, Foundation, and Voluntary\(^\text{15}\). These schools are funded by their Local Education Authorities and are expected to teach the National Curriculum. Table 3-1 shows the

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\(^{15}\) Voluntary schools can be divided into Aided and Controlled. They are often called faith schools and run in the same way as the mainstream state schools but with a strong slant towards religious and spiritual teaching.
differences between the school categories which are in terms of ownership and who sets the admissions criteria (Part II, Chapter 1:4-6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Category</th>
<th>Staff employed by</th>
<th>Land &amp; Building owned by</th>
<th>Admissions criteria set by</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Close coupling with local community by providing facilities and services such as adult learning classes and childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Governing Body</td>
<td>Governing Body</td>
<td>Governing Body</td>
<td>Charitable Foundation may own the land and buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Aided</td>
<td>Governing Body</td>
<td>Charitable Foundation</td>
<td>Governing Body</td>
<td>Charitable Foundation is often a religious organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Controlled</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Religious Foundation</td>
<td>LEA</td>
<td>Governing Body, with some members from religious organisation, manages the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also Grammar schools, which select pupils based on high academic ability. Besides state schools, England has over 2000 independent schools which are self-funded through fee-paying students. Being outside the maintained system, independent schools can set their own curriculum and admission criteria. However, these schools have to be registered with the Department for Education and Skills which regularly monitors school standards in line with their policies.\(^{16}\)

Although there are differences in the schools depending on funding and ownership status, they all have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. The National Curriculum provides guidance on what subjects a child will be taught throughout his or her school life. The core subjects include English, Mathematics and Science. Schools are also required to provide Religious Education for all pupils, however parents have the option of withdrawing their children from the lessons. In other words, schools have the freedom to organise teaching and learning to suit the needs of their pupils as long as this is done within the framework of the National Curriculum.\(^ {17}\)

\(^{16}\) Available on www.uknetguide.co.uk

\(^{17}\) Available on www.direct.gov.uk
Separate faith schools:

Given that today British society is multifaith, there is a long standing debate on whether the government should assist religious schools in any way. The Swann Report pointed out that:

'recent debates of the role of the school in relation to the diversity of today's multifaith society are dominated by the moves of certain ethnic minority communities in establishing their own separate schools as an alternative to the existing mainstream system. The term 'separate' covers a variety of aspirations on the part of members of some ethnic minority communities for the establishment of schools which they feel would provide a more appropriate and acceptable environment for the education of their children' (Swann, 1985:498).

For example, McCormack (2005) reported that in 2005 a Hindu state school was built for the first time in Harrow as part of the government announcements of grants for new school buildings across the country. Working closely with the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, a group of British Hindu businessmen were behind this project with clear motivations. First, the belief that Hindu families, like those of other great religions, should have the chance to choose a publicly funded school for their children; second, a growing desire to anchor Hindu children more securely to the central principles of their faith. Opened in September 2008, the Hindu school teaches, like other state schools, the full National Curriculum but has a strong emphasis on teaching Hinduism, involving an assembly every morning with Hindu prayers.

With a distinct religious identity, the ‘Jewish Free School’ founded in 1817 in the East End of London, for instance, is a Voluntary Aided school and the biggest Jewish school in Europe. It is noticeable that the provision of Jewish education and religious worship in the mainstream Orthodox sector of Greater London includes sixteen Voluntary Aided schools, while two primaries and one secondary school are independent. This contrasts with the strict Orthodox sector where thirty schools are private and five are Voluntary Aided.

It is worth pointing out that the 1944 Education Act does allow Voluntary Aided schools of a distinct religious character, provided that the school has a clear ‘religious’ foundation like the Church of England, Roman Catholic or Jewish schools,
which are already part of the British education system. However, an ethnic minority community without a clear religious identity is not permitted to establish a school on a ‘race’ basis as it would breach the 1976 Race Relations Act, which prohibits school admissions on racial grounds.

With ethnic minority communities emphasising the importance that they remain attached to their religious beliefs as a key element in their cultural identity, all religious communities clearly felt that the education system ought to respect and reflect their faiths as legitimate belief systems. Faiths such as Islam or Judaism are of considerable significance worldwide and cannot be labelled ‘minority’ religions purely because a small number of devotees live in Britain. Issues surrounding ‘pastoral matters’ have been left unaddressed for children of ethnic minorities, particularly when they were faced with the schools’ failure to provide for their religious requirements (for example meals and dress code). In the case of the Muslim community, the direct conflict with such matters with regards to the growing number of pupils and their concentration in particular schools and areas, brought about a determined request to see changes in the rules and regulations that shaped such matters within schools. Furthermore, the global revival of Islam and Islamic principles in the 1990s contributed to influence of the Muslim community in Britain to claim acknowledgement and respect for their cultural and religious needs with regards to education. In such context and mood, it was of no surprise that the British Muslim community considered securing their children’s education through the establishment of their own voluntary or independent schools, based with a more favoured religious approach to education. In other words, religious education was to be understood as religious instruction where children would concentrate on the knowledge and understanding of Islam (the first Muslim school was the ‘London School of Islamics’ in 1981). Since 1997, the Government has extended State funding to four Voluntary Aided Muslim schools, among them, AlFurqan School in Birmingham, Islamia School in London and Feversham College in Bradford (OSI/EU, 2002:415).

Towards a multicultural education:
In Britain, the idea of multicultural education started in the 1960s and was based on the ideals of social justice and education equity. In essence, multicultural education is
a recognition of the fact that schools are essential to laying the foundation for the transformation of society and the elimination of oppression and injustice (Gorski, 2000). Furthermore, multicultural education helps students from diverse ethnic and religious groups and prepares them for working in a pluralistic society by developing knowledge and skills needed for interactions with people from diverse groups (Banks & McGee Banks, 1995:xii). Multicultural education can be discussed in terms of a shift in the curriculum with new and diverse materials, by moving away from the alleged difficulties (so-called ‘disabilities’) met by children of ethnic minority, to meeting the religious education requirements of the children so that all pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society (Swann, 1985).

In the Government White Paper on *Education, Choice and Diversity* published in 1992, the Government was urged to guarantee that the new school Curriculum and Assessment Authority would consider the ethnic and religious diversity of British society and emphasised the ‘importance of the curriculum in promoting equal opportunity for all pupils regardless of ethnic origin and gender’ (Parekh, 2000:142). The practical implications of a multicultural education started with the National Curriculum. Infused by a genuinely pluralist perspective, the latter must inform and influence both the selection of content and the teaching materials used (teaching material that presents an Anglo-centric view of the world is not favoured).

**The cultural dimension of the National Curriculum:**

According to the OSI/EU report, the school curriculum can play a significant role as far as developing pupils’ appreciation for different cultural groups. Although the National Curriculum includes the study of Islamic art, history and literature, most community schools do not adequately teach them. For example, the study of Religious Education can provide a better comprehension of the Muslim faith, contributing to overcome intolerance. However, the teaching of the primary religious elements of Islam is usually given by non-Muslim teachers who have little training in Islamic beliefs and values. This brings to the forefront the issue related to teacher training. Out of a four-year undergraduate education degree, ‘teacher training programmes spend no time on the study of Islam and the needs of Muslim pupils. They do on related issues of racism, inclusion, multicultural education and equal opportunities’ (OSI/EU, 2005:153). It is correct to suggest that teachers should be able to promote,
and at the same time, be aware of religion and the multiple identities of their pupils. For this, teachers need specific training around diversity at whole-school, departmental and subject level, to build their confidence around issues of ‘identity, race and religion, either in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) or through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers throughout their career’ (DfES, 2007:66-67).

In addition, the danger of misrepresenting the religion is more likely to occur when the books and resources employed contain factual inaccuracies and misunderstandings. For example, the Muslim Council of Britain launched in 2004 a ‘scheme to provide a resource pack about Islam, for schools to use as a teaching aid’19. Although the Muslim Council of Britain contributed to equipping schools with adequate teaching material on Islam faith, Muslim people remained very concerned about the stereotyped opinion that their faith has endured.

Developments in relation to preparing children for living within an ethnically diverse society have been promoted in the English school system. In 2007, the Government initiative stressed the role and duty of schools in promoting community cohesion, defining it as:

‘...working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; a society in which positive relationship exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community’ (DfCSF, 2007:3).

The contribution that schools can make towards community cohesion is vital as their role is to promote the equality of opportunity and inclusion of different groups of pupils, as well as promoting shared values and encouraging pupils to engage with others. To achieve this goal, schools are encouraged to develop an approach that will reflect the nature of their population and their location. Furthermore, a new curriculum is organised to broaden cultural awareness and encourage discussions and debate around issues of identity and diversity (QCDA, 2010:10-12). For example, since 2008, citizenship education has included the new strand ‘Identity and Diversity: Living together in the UK’ in which learning about national, regional, ethnic and

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religious cultures as well as the concept of community cohesion are explored. The aim is to develop three components: 'a critical thinking about ethnicity, religion and race, an explicit link to political issues and values, and the use of contemporary history in teachers’ pedagogy to explain thinking about contemporary issues relating to citizenship (DfES, 2007:97). Drawing from the disciplines of History, Geography and Religious Education, Citizenship Education is an interdisciplinary subject whose challenge is for young people ‘to develop a notion of citizenship as inclusive, where issues of identity and diversity are addressed explicitly’ (DfES, 2007:8).

French education structure

France has a distinct and centralised Republican tradition, whose identity is consolidated through its school system. As a result, the State plays a large role in defining and implementing education policy and the National Curriculum. Structured around the notion of equality of opportunity, the education system is a vital precondition for social integration and cohesion. For Franchi,

‘the plan of ‘Priority Education’ was set up to deal with educational, language and social disadvantage of immigrant learners or children of disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. However, in spite of the efforts to promote equal opportunity within education, Priority Education may in fact contribute towards producing and reproducing inequalities and discrimination’ (Franchi, 2004:4).

Trained at the Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maitres (IUFM) (university-level education institutions), the teachers are the responsibility of the central government who attribute them with the status of civil servants. In addition, about two thirds of the total funding for the education system (principally teachers’ wages but also financial assistance, such as scholarships and allowances) are provided by the state.

Since the 1990s, France has been engaged in a process of decentralisation, aiming to bring a more flexible organisation to what was described a homogeneous and large education system. Assigned with greater power, regional and local authorities are now able to decide and treat the issues that affect them, independently from Paris or ministerial offices. Every year, Paris accredits a financial budget to the Chief Education Officers, who themselves allocate funds to the various education establishments. At the local level, collèges and lycées (but not primary schools) have enjoyed not only financial autonomy but also progressive education autonomy where
each school defines a ‘school project’, which explains how national objectives and curriculum are implemented. In other words, attempts are made to match courses more closely to the specific needs of the children. Yet, it is through a distinct structure and order that authority and responsibilities are geographically distributed: communes are accountable for primary and nursery school buildings, equipment/maintenance, and non-teaching staff wages; départements for college buildings, equipment/maintenance and financing school transport system; régions for lycées buildings, equipment and maintenance and involvement to education planning (e.g. regional training plan and forward investment program).

Private and faith schools:

It is estimated that around 15% of children in France attend a private school of one kind or another. Generally, private schools are governed through associations, religious groups or other private groups and have little or no contract with the State. However, private schools can benefit from financial support from the State with the introduction of contracts.

The development of the private school sector gained State support from the passing of several laws, particularly in the primary and secondary education. One very significant law was the ‘Debré Law’ of 1959, which allowed private schools to receive State funding. To do so, private schools were bound by a contract to the State. Two types of contracts were defined; the sous-contrat or contrat simple (the simple contract) and the contrat d’association or hors-contrat (the contract of association). Under the sous-contrat, the government pays the teachers’ wages and the school follows the national curriculum and schedule. Under the contrat d’association, private schools accept the control over the selection of teachers by the government in exchange for the payment of teachers’ wages and operating expenses (CNDEP, 1999).

It is estimated that 90% of private schools in France are essentially Catholic schools. Besides Catholic schools, other faith schools also exist such as Jewish schools. Although most French Jews send their children to public schools, 25% of Jewish children attend full-time Jewish schools. Of the 42% of Jewish schools that have passed contract with the State, 21% are under a contrat d’association, 7% under a

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20 The state schooling system is complemented by a comprehensive network of private schools such as boarding schools, European International schools, Protestant schools, American schools.
sous contrat, 4% under a combination of both, and 10% having part of their classroom under a sous contrat. This contrasts with the large number of Catholic schools which are under a sous contrat. Whereas religious teaching in Catholic schools occupies less than two hours a week, Jewish religious teaching occupies six to thirteen hours a week (Cohen, 1991:142).

Since 1993 there have been increased calls by Muslims for the creation of private, non-associated Muslim schools, claiming their constitutional right of having private schools in the same way as other religious communities such as Jews and Catholics. After having three applications turned down by the authorities, the French government approved the establishment of a secondary private Muslim school in the northern city of Lille for the first time in 2003: the Lycée Averroès (named after an Arab philosopher of the 12th century). All pupils of different faiths and gender were eligible and potential pupils did not have to be able to speak Arabic to attend the school since lessons are in French. The students could study Arabic and Muslim culture (though made optional subjects to accommodate non-Muslim pupils) along with French curriculum. The necessary funding was secured by non-governmental organisations and donations, and two years later the Ministry of Education subsidised the school as happens with other private schools in the country. Furthermore, previously in 1990, the Institut Européen des Sciences Humaines (I.E.S.H.) (European Institute of Human Sciences) became the first private centre of higher education to specialise in Muslim theology, Arabic languages and an apprenticeship of the Koran.

According to the ANOEP (2005), the of private school sector has a count of 5,300 primary schools, 1,600 colleges, 1,100 lycées and 700 boarding-schools, all under the control of the Ministry of Education. In general, elementary schools tend to go with a sous-contrat while secondary schools choose the contrat d’association due to their large operating costs. On the other hand, private schools with no religious orientation remain autonomous and self-regulated.

3.2 Education and British Muslim Children

According to the OSI/EU report, 'there are about 500,000 Muslim children currently receiving education in British schools and colleges (i.e. 5-6% of the total school population). The age profile of Muslims is much younger than any other ethnic group: in all, 33.8% of Muslims fall into the 0-15 age bracket (i.e. 1/3 of Muslims are
under age 16 as compared with 1/5 of the population as a whole), and a further 18.2% are between 16 and 24 years old’ (OSI/EU, 2005:109). In general, it can be said that the British Muslims have been successful in claiming for equal treatment, opportunity and an acknowledgment of their cultural needs within the realm of educational issues. It was in the 1960s that school authorities began to take notice of the considerable numbers of ethnic minority children and official reactions were encouraged by an ‘assimilationist’ point of view. On an educational level, this meant giving exclusive priority to the teaching of English and avoiding a situation where the majority in any given class was composed of ethnic minority children. However, assimilationist policies proved to be ineffective as very low academic attainment levels were recorded amongst Muslim children. This was the evidence that they were falling behind their peers and other ethnic minorities (e.g. Hindus and Sikhs). It became apparent that a policy of integration was required, acknowledging the separate identity of ethnic minority children. Waddy argues that following Muslims’ discontent with state provision of education, a new approach was adopted. This consisted of ‘supplementary schools to provide religious instruction within the communities themselves; and to establish and involve organisations only with the education of Muslims’ (Waddy, 1990:152). It is within this context that financial support was provided in setting up independent Muslim schools, offering a more religious and devoted education, hence an alternative to mainstream education system.

In the 1990s however, the gap between Muslim pupils and the rest continued to grow with education achievements increasing between Indian, African-Caribbean and white children on the one hand, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi children on the other. Thus, Muslim parents expressed deep concerns about the values of state education, especially whether the latter reflected aspects of disadvantages and discrimination towards their children. As a result, Muslims proceeded to firm actions for an education aimed to build their children’s positive sense of identity, including the right to withdraw children from specifically Christian teaching and the provision of Islamic education suited to their needs (for example girls of secondary school age should be allowed to wear modest dress and headscarf conforming to the colour of the school uniform). Muslims became disillusioned with state provision and aspired to establish

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21 It was because of this that a policy of ‘bussing’ was adopted in some areas whereby pupils were taken by a special school bus from one area to another whenever the percentage of ethnic minority children in any given school reached 30%.
independent Muslim schools that had Islam at the heart of the curriculum. This initiative was denied state funding, which suggested to the Muslims that the government was treating them unfairly compared to other religious minorities who were able to secure Voluntary Aided status for their faith-based schools. In this context, it can be argued that a negative opinion of Western education was clearly expressed, accusing it of being ‘materialistic, anti-religious and because of the Christian origin anti-Islamic’ (Ansari, 2002:21-22). The pursuit to create Muslim Voluntary Aided schools was more than ever a determined objective and between 1997 and the end of 2001, five Muslim Voluntary Aided schools were approved.

This development meant that the request to see independent Muslim schools was potentially achievable. For example, the Hazrat Sultan Bahu Trust spent about £13 million to establish a large Muslim girls’ school in Birmingham. Unfortunately, following the Bradford disturbances of 2001, antagonism against the creation of faith schools resurfaced; despite the acknowledged reality that segregation existed within schools, feeding consequently racial tension. Regardless of the contentious climate, Muslim groups maintained their position and claim ‘their right to a Muslim education, not only as pedagogically appropriate for their children but also as reflective of the multicultural character of British society’ (Ansari, 2002:22).

In general, Muslims unanimously regard education as a valuable asset. For some parents, ‘a school with an Islamic ethos is essential, while others are happy with community or church schools, so long as their children can also learn about Islamic beliefs and practices, either at home or at a local mosque school’ (OSI/EU 2005:118-19). Another specific requirement is that many Muslim parents prefer single-sex schools at the secondary level especially for their daughters.

According to the OSI/EU Report, the vast majority of Muslim pupils are educated in three kinds of schools: community schools, Church schools and Muslim schools (mainly independent, fee-paying schools). The school choice is more often driven by residence patterns as Muslim communities, like other ethnic communities, have settled within boroughs of major cities in Britain. Thus, one finds a concentration of Muslim children in community schools in London boroughs and other major cities. With a high concentration of Muslim pupils, schools are able to cater for specific
requirements of Muslims much better. For example, LEAs have granted the following requests from schools with significant Muslim pupils:

"the provision of a room for midday prayer and special provision for Friday prayers; the adaptation of school uniform rules and sportswear requirements; the provision of appropriate showering arrangements to take accounts of Islamic teaching about modesty and decency; the use of discretionary holidays to allow Muslim children permission to be away from school at the start of Ramadan and other religious festivals; the provision of halal food for school lunches; single-sex groupings and classes; and sensitivity to Islamic beliefs in assemblies and other school activities" (OSI/EU, 2005:120).

In light of the slow improvement within the school education system, Muslim parents remain concerned about the relatively poor academic achievement of their children. There is a feeling that the schools are not doing enough about bullying and Islamophobic discrimination. Furthermore, the education system does not adequately provide for the needs of the Muslim pupils such as the provision of spiritual and moral guidance (OSI/EU, 2005:122).

To answer to these anxieties, the State decided to fund five Muslim schools, in comparison to '4,716 State-funded Church of England schools, 2,110 Catholic, 32 Jewish, 28 Methodist, 1 Seventh Day Adventist, 1 Sikh, 1 Greek Orthodox and a number of joint-faith schools, mainly Anglican-Methodist' (OSI/EU 2005:124). This positive progress is perceived by the Muslim community as a recognition of their legitimate right to establish such schools, and as a way forward to press on creating independent Muslim schools, of which there are currently over 100 including one in Scotland and two in Wales. These schools are funded privately and often with the support of local mosques. Unfortunately, OFSTED reports have marked them down on the grounds that they were failing to provide their Muslim pupils with the appropriate cultural environment, denying them the opportunity to develop a multicultural understanding of British society (OSI/EU 2005:126).

Muslim Schools

Though many case studies of Muslim schools have contributed to move away from a negative image that describe them as inadequate to prepare children for citizenship in a multicultural society, or reluctant to open up to other cultures, the essential question remains whether Muslims should be free to establish their own schools. Legally, the right to do so is enshrined in the 1944 Education Act, but the most contentious issue
lies on whether such schools are genuinely acting in the interest of Muslim children and are not divergent from the general interest of the society at large. The debate around this problem shows arguments against the establishment of Muslim schools. Mainly perceived as socially and ethnically divisive, the schools appear to be restrictive to Muslim children, separating them from the broader society and as a result obstructing the process of integration. The objective of teaching and nurturing Religious Education may jeopardise the absence of analytical reasoning and opening the mind to new ideas. Muslim schools are also criticised for being incompetent and unequipped when it comes to preparing Muslim children to live in a democratic multicultural society. Their lack of learning and developing tolerance and understanding towards others delays the children’s development of personal autonomy (OSI/EU, 2005:128-30).

However, the debate also presents arguments in favour of developing Muslim schools. Amongst those is the fact that such schools offer an answer to Muslim families who wish to provide an education that is consistent with their home values. In such a context, British society shows that it acknowledges Islam as a minority faith, which is given the right to its own state-funded schools. Muslim schools are considered not only as the most appropriate place to nurture faith and security against laïcité and materialism but also as a place to provide a shield to the threat of absorption into the dominant culture. From a Muslim perspective, they offer the children the right setting to develop and maintain their identity without the strain of Islamophobic discrimination (OSI/EU, 2005:131).

In the light of the arguments against or in support of Muslim schools, education policy has decided to rise to the challenge by providing ‘appropriate policies such as paying more attention to Muslim contributions to knowledge, confronting Islamophobic bullying in schools more effectively, supporting Muslim pupils’ religious observances and avoiding low expectations of Muslim pupils (OSI/EU, 2005:132).

The academic achievements of Muslim children

According to the OSI/EU report

‘only 30% of the children of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin in England and Wales gained five or more GCSEs compared to 50% in the population as a whole in
2000. This made them the lowest achieving of all ethnic groups. The same level was achieved by 37% of African Caribbean children, 62% of Indian children and 70% of ‘other Asian’ (mainly Chinese) children. By 2002, the success rate had risen to 40% for Pakistani children and 45% for Bangladeshi children, compared to about 51% for the general population (OSI/EU, 2005:135).

A number of relevant points need to be highlighted.

Academic results suggest that there are gender differences in school achievements. For example, ‘the figures for Birmingham in 2003 illustrate that 37% of Pakistani boys achieved five or more GCSEs compared to 50% of Pakistani girls; 43% of Bangladeshi boys achieved the same level compared to 58% of Bangladeshi girls’ (p. OSI/EU, 2005:135). Muslim boys have been identified as under-achievers and problematic pupils, suffering high rates of school exclusion and a poor rate for pursuing upper-secondary education. These figures translate not only a serious feeling of alienation by young Muslim boys, but also translate a phenomenon particularly recurrent amongst Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Somali boys. According to Archer, Muslim pupils are generally regarded as more problematic than other Asian groups in relation to issues of school uniform and lack of participation in extra-curricular activities. These differences are attributed to religious factors rather than due to cultural values. Furthermore, the study suggests that it is mostly Muslim boys who suffer Islamophobic behaviour and racism at school. Also, this reflects the negative assumptions that teaching staff may have of Muslim families, portraying them as authoritarian and oppressive (Archer, 2003:36).

It can be argued that a correlation exists between low academic achievement and social factors. For example, poorest ranking LEAs are usually found in areas of highest social deprivation. Unfortunately, these areas seem to have the highest concentration of Muslim people. However, it is worth noting that in spite of poor GCSE results, the Muslim children are proportionately well-represented in higher education as determined by entry to university. This fact suggests that Muslim pupils do not lag behind other groups in terms of educational ambition. Thus it can be argued that there are many factors, besides the social and economic ones, such as bullying (due to religious difference, for example), lack of role models, pressure to spend time on religious matters on top of normal school homework and differences in
the value system at home and school that impact on educational attainment (OSI/EU, 2005:136-37).

In summary, Muslim parents consider education as a valuable asset. Compared to girls, Muslim boys are perceived as low achievers and appear to be the ones who suffer the most from discriminatory behaviour. Within the education discourse, a stereotyped assumption of Muslim culture remained dominant. For instance, there is the general perception that Muslim pupils live in two worlds: home and school, which are culturally distinct and cause for anxiety. This is derived from the unsubstantiated belief that Muslim values are incompatible with British education values, particularly with regards to gender relations. This has been observed by Archer who found that 'many school teachers assume that Asian Muslim girls experience a conflict between the worlds of school and home because school constitutes a place of freedom where repressive family relations are escaped' (Archer, 2003:31). In other words, Muslim pupils may suffer a crisis of cultural identity, as the result of being trapped between two cultures.

3.3 EDUCATION AND FRENCH MUSLIM CHILDREN

All children are guaranteed an equal access to education, which is mandatory from the age of six (the first year of primary school). Structured and regulated by the principle of laïcité, the OSI/EU Report shows that

‘...the principle which affirms the individual right to freedom of conscience has come into conflict, particularly with regard to students belonging to religious minorities, including Muslims. It is a central objective and responsibility of French public schools to train students in ‘Republican’ values and to ensure equal treatment of individual pupils and respect for pluralism. Local officials have the authority to regulate the public expression of religious belonging in schools. The affair of the headscarf illustrates the tension between public space and private choice, the difficulty in balancing the requirements of laïcité against the needs of Muslim students' (OSI/EU, 2002:92).

The analysis of Muslim children can be discussed by looking at the situation in education today for children of ethnic minorities, and more particularly French-born children of immigrant descent. The lack of data and transparency are justified on the grounds that schools are mandated to follow the principles of universality (each child must be equipped with same universal knowledge), equality (each child is treated the
same) and secularism (religious practices belong to the private life and have no place in school which by definition is in public life) (Franchi, 2004:3).

However, it can be said that significant ambivalence within such principles is conspicuous within the issue on diversity in education. For instance, the principle of *equality* renders it impossible to collect ethnic and racial statistics. Also the term ‘ethnic minority nationals’ is even rejected within the French system based on the fact that ethnic minorities are not recognised as communities but rather as affiliations of choice. In the interest of *equality* that prevents differential treatment, the schools are not allowed to collect information on racial, ethnic or religious affiliation of pupils. This rule is enforced even when such information is deemed essential for monitoring and eradicating discrimination and inequalities (Franchi, 2004:3).

The French school system addresses cultural diversity of immigrant pupils by either special education classes or by repeating the class. However, the ‘notion of cooperative learning or making the school more aware and responsive to children’s cultural diversity and needs have met with little response as diversity remains an out-of-school matter’ (Limage, 2000:85). As a result, different forms of intolerance take place, ranging from ethnic segregation to stigmatisation and the construction of a discriminatory ‘other’. All can be said to contribute to sources of existing inequities within school population.

In France, most Muslim children attend state school. However, a clear tendency has developed where Muslim parents prefer to send their children to private Catholic schools, translating the failure of state schools to keep their promise of equal opportunity. With an estimated 8,847 Roman Catholic schools, Bennhold (2008) suggests that Muslim pupils now form more than 10% of the two million students in Catholic schools. In those schools, pupils can practice Islam and girls are allowed to wear the headscarf. For example, in the Saint-Mauront Catholic School (in Marseille, south of France), 80% of the students are Muslim. Bennhold is correct to suggest that the move from state schools to private schools is a signal reflecting the looming

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22 These classes are divided according to school level: at Primary level, ‘Initiation Classes’ (CLIN) are offered to non-francophone pupils of foreign nationality, with French as a foreign language; at Secondary level, either ‘Adaptation Classes’ (CLA) are created for pupils who experienced difficulties with elementary teaching, or ‘French as a Foreign Language’ (FLE) classes are offered to non-francophone pupils whose language skills are insufficient to follow and benefit from ordinary classes (Franchi, 2004:21).
challenge to a strict form of *laïcité*. For Muslim parents, ‘Catholic schools have become a refuge for seeking what an overburdened, secularist public sector often lacks: spirituality, an environment in which good manners count alongside mathematics, and higher academic standards’ (Bennhold, 2008:1).

**Priority Education in primary and secondary school**

To remedy pupils’ discrepancies and poor school achievements, the National Education ministry decided to put in place a ‘Priority Education’ scheme, with two types of aid structures: the Zones d’Education Prioritaire (ZEP) and Réseaux d’Education Prioritaire (REP). According to the Policy document n° 90-028 published in the Official Bulletin, ZEP aims to improve academic achievement of pupils living in socially deprived areas and, as a result, helps towards their social integration into French society (Franchi, 2004:22).

The factors defining a ZEP school are usually associated with socio-economic elements such as unemployment and cultural elements such as ratio of foreigners and children of migrants attending the school. The school academic performances are also taken into consideration, particularly the rates of failure, dropout, absenteeism, violence or disciplinary problems. Defined and addressed through central policies and directives, education inequalities remain anchored within social, economic and cultural/linguistic factors that weaken the pupils’ potential education prospect.

*Réseaux d’Education Prioritaire* (REP) outline the target zones or zones where people are potentially more at risk of schooling difficulties, including violence or criminal behaviour. Usually, the school population in REP zones is made of a high percentage of immigrant children and French children of immigrant descent. Paradoxically, it can be argued that between the minority status of these populations and the resources spent to improve children’s school achievements, hidden and implied prejudice is at play. According to the data published by MJENR (2002), France had in 2001 ‘706 Priority Education Zones and 808 Priority Education Networks, comprising a total of 8551 public schools and establishments, located in

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23 Priority Education Zones.
24 Priority Education Networks.
25 Ministère de la Jeunesse, de l'Education Nationale et de la Recherche (Ministry of Youth, National Education and Research)
various academies. During the year, 675,000 pupils (21.5%) were schooled within Education Priority schools, as compared to 17.9% in 1999' (cited in Franchi, 2004:36).

Despite efforts to promote school achievement in Priority Education zones, the policies implemented may in fact be part of the root causes of the types of problems encountered regularly (e.g. violence, disciplinary problems and mobility of teachers). In essence, different forms of discrimination take place (such as ethnic segregation, stigmatisation and discriminatory discourse of the ‘other’), producing inequalities and preventing an integration process within school system.

Academic achievements of Muslim children

In the early 1960s and 1970s, sociological studies such as Clerc (1964), Courgeau, (1973), and Gratiot, Alphandery and Lambiot (1973) concluded that with similar socio-economic backgrounds, school achievement of children from North African descendants were not worse than those of French natives. In the early 1980s and 1990s, some studies confirmed these conclusions. One of those was the quantitative national study undertaken in the 1990s by Vallet and Caille (cited in Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007:446). Having examined the school performance of nationals of French origin against that of immigrant origin with similar socio-economic background, they concluded that when socio-economic conditions were controlled, immigrant descendants had better chances of accomplishing a good schooling career than their French peers. They also demonstrated that immigrant families hold higher education expectations and aspirations regarding their children’s education. For example, in 1995 nearly half of North African families preferred their children to follow education track leading to baccalauréat. The parents viewed higher academic achievement as a passport to upward social mobility (Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007:450).

However, high expectations do not always turn into successful school careers. Children of immigrant families perform less well on average in secondary education than the children of French natives. Nonetheless, the findings of the national study that are referred to above provide a distorted view of the overall situation of socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, particularly children of ethnic minority backgrounds in Priority Education. The results were taken to suggest that
'children of immigrant descent are assimilated into the education system, insofar as their access and performance levels improve as they advance through primary and secondary schooling, as compared to their French-origin peers from similar socio-economic backgrounds. The findings mask inequalities and discrimination at local (within schools and academies) and national levels and omit to give a detailed picture of the actual practices and realities that prevail within schools' (Payet & Henriot-Van Zanten, 1996:95).

Too often, these children have generally poor academic achievements, a high-level of absenteeism and a greater drop-out rate. Furthermore, there is greater likelihood of them to be involved in delinquency and prone to disciplinary action (Franchi, 2004:38).

Although the expectations from children of North African origins are clearly higher than their actual education achievements, they are less likely to be satisfied with the decision regarding their selection into upper secondary schooling. The process of selection takes place within a panel called conseil d'orientation (class council), which is made up of teachers from the school year that is being considered. There, the education path for each pupil is examined, based on the academic grades in French and Mathematics. Regrettably, the orientation towards a vocational or technical track does occur in France in a negative way: ‘good’ pupils are invited to attend the general track (leading to a baccalauréat) while the pupils with lower performances are oriented towards vocational training (leading to professional certificates). Regarding their selection for upper secondary schooling, the children of immigrant families are more likely to be channelled towards a technological or vocational track rather than to a general one. For example, in 2002 a study into education careers showed that the recommendations regarding the education track that children should follow was not entirely merit-based. Many of the pupils felt that the recommendations regarding their education track were unjust and prejudiced against - ‘42% of children of North African families felt this way, against 18% from French families and 20% from Portuguese families’ (Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007:461).

Based on interviews with parents and pupils on their relationship with knowledge and the pursuit of education in secondary school, Dubreuil found that ‘children of North African origin succeed at school if they find an instrumental interest in learning, for their lives, their future, their project within society or their goal to be like everyone else’ (cited in Franchi, 2004:53). Having observed three generations of North African...
women, Dubreuil discovered that for each age band, aspiration to a better life occurred, shifting from domestic work (first generation) to employment (second generation) to an ambition for professional qualification (third generation). According to Dubreuil, strategies are at play to create a connection between pupils’ familial environment and schooling system. Having identified three approaches, Dubreuil demonstrates that

‘...first, there is the case of families who have received no formal education. The strategy used is to identify a reference person within the schooling system and him/her as a mediator. Given the importance that these parents attribute to schooling, in most cases they place their unconditional trust in this person. Second, there is the case where families use the success of older siblings as a model for younger children. However, younger children may choose to excel in different areas (e.g. sport, music) as a way of forging a different place within the family and affirming one’s own identity. Third, there is the case where children are faced with parents who cannot help them with school work because they know little about the system, are illiterate or do not speak the language. In such case, this may prompt the child to become his/her own supervisor, developing a personal drive and independence’ (Dubreuil, 2001:80).

In essence, education ambitions and expectations are transmitted across generations. For children of North African origins, the technological or vocational track is often seen as an alternative to pursuing education. This is often decreed as the type of job they could get rather than considering their academic ability. North Africans generally experience a high-rate of unemployment and are discriminated against in the job market (Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007:463).

**Displaying Islamic identity: ‘Affaire des foulards’**

The question of the Islamic headscarf first began in the autumn of 1989, when the headmaster of a secondary school in Creil (north of Paris) refused the admission of three Muslim girls wearing their headscarves. The decision was on the basis that the event was in breach of the Republican principle of laïcité\(^{26}\). After the girls were expelled, several related incidents took place in other towns. The so-called ‘veil affair’ was of national magnitude and the Conseil d’État (Council of State) had to be contacted to pronounce a final decision. It was ruled that schools should not exclude

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\(^{26}\) Prior to 1989, Muslim schoolgirls were probably admitted wearing Islamic headscarves in schools; it was not perceived as a problem by French public authorities, or covered by the national press, until 1989 (Molokotos, 2000:379).
pupils for wearing religious items. This overturned an earlier decision to exclude girls who wore headscarves in school. However, the ruling did give headmasters the ‘power to prohibit the wearing of the headscarf if it was felt that this disrupted class or the behaviour was considered to be an overt sign of overt proselytism’ (Favell, 2001:180).

Although this decision brought a temporary end to the affair, it was repeated many times and controversial debates about the Islamic headscarf continued until the affair rekindled in 1994. Responding to growing fears about the effect of Islam in French schools, the Ministry of Education issued a document insisting that the wearing of ostentatious religious symbols in school would not be tolerated. In this statement, no references to the wearing of a crucifix or Jewish kippa were made, implying the headscarf to be an explicit religious symbol. At the same time, on the international scene, the situation in Algeria was causing some degree of anxiety within the French political circle, as they witnessed the rise to power of the Front Islamique du Salut (an Islamic fundamentalist organisation). In the light of this, there is understandable anxiety about the place of Islam in French society and a fear that Islamic fundamentalists will grow (Freedman, 2004:14). The progressing and sporadic debate over this issue translates the degree of discomfort that France has with a large Muslim community, and the forceful pledge to reiterate the Republican principle of laïcité.

For Khosrokhavav and Gaspard (1995) the reason for young Muslim girls to wear the headscarf is more an expression of identity than a sign of Islamic fundamentalism. In other words, the wearing of the headscarf ‘should not be interpreted as a rejection of French citizenship but as a desire for integration without assimilation, as an inspiration to be French and Muslim’ (Khosrokhavav & Gaspard, 1995:204). According to Khosrokhavav and Gaspard, the Muslim girls who wear the veil are often the best integrated ones, with a clear motto being ‘Françaises et Musulmanes’ (Khosrokhavav & Gaspard, 2004:24). Advocates of the debate to support or to oppose the wearing of the headscarf at school made strong arguments for interpreting the values of liberté, égalité and fraternité. However, it is the anti-headscarf view that prevailed, judged to be more compatible with laïcité in the schools. Thus, the wearing of headscarves (or other ostentatious religious symbol) was clearly condemned as being incompatible with French Republican values (Collet, 2004:125).

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The wearing of the headscarf has become a part of the clothing of orthodox Muslim women in many suburbs with a large Muslim population. Usually perceived with resentment by the majority of non-Muslim people, the Islamic headscarf (as much as having a beard) is often synonymous with the rejection of integration into the French society. The legal banning of the headscarf from schools and by extension from the public administration marks an increasing rigidity towards Islamic identity. For Khosrokhavar, ‘the more restrictions on the Islamic identity are promulgated, the more minority groups of Muslims close ranks to live in closed circles to protect themselves from the disintegrating effect of the public policies, and the more they are exposed to the grievance of the other citizens of refusing to become integrated citizens’ (Khosrokhavar, 2006:2).

The Stasi Commission:  
In July 2003, the French president appointed a commission to reflect on the principle of \textit{laïcité}. Hamilton et al. explain that the objectives of the Commission were to clarify the relation between the ‘constitutional secularist and Republican values in the public sphere (i.e. being the unifying factor in a diverse society) and the respect of freedom of religion’ (Hamilton et al., 2004:6). After months of reflection, the Commission reiterated the supremacy of the principle of \textit{laïcité} and reaffirmed the ban of ostentatious religious symbols in state schools. Furthermore, the Commission stressed the significant role of impartiality that schools embody, in which values of \textit{laïcité}, Republicanism, and citizenship are taught.

Following the Commission’s report, a law was passed in 2004 that prohibited the wearing in state schools of signs or dress by which students ostensibly express a religious belonging. It can be said that within the context of an increased anxiety and fear of a growing Islam in France, the law collides with the concerns about religious freedom in a multi-ethnic society. Yet, the law is perceived at different levels: from being ‘anti-Islam’ with its implied and legitimate anti-Arab stereotype, to being pro-secularist with its protecting function towards girls who do not want to wear the headscarf. Among those who opposed the claims made by the Stasi commission that

\textsuperscript{27} The commission Stasi was named after his Chairman, Bernard Stasi and consisted of twenty members. The commission interviewed various representatives from different groups, such as religious leaders (e.g. Cardinal Lustiger), school headteachers, political leaders, equal-rights groups and social groups (Hamilton et al., 2004).
Islam was not the singular target of the policy recommendations, was Baubérot (sociologist of the history of laïcité) who was one of the members of the commission, who chose to abstain from voting in favour of the law. Baubérot warns against the fundamentalist application of an ideal laïcité against a religion that the government claims not to be the primary target of containment. For him, laïcité is made of three essentials components: respect for freedom of conscience and worship, the fight against domination of religion over the state and civil society and the equality of religions and beliefs, including the right not to believe. However, to hold these three components together is most challenging when one is favoured at the expense of another: ‘the believers refer mainly to freedom of worship; agnostics and anticlerical rely instead on the fight against the domination of religion; the minority groups insist on equality of religions and beliefs’ (Baubérot, 1998:175-187). Baubérot’s position is one that favours religious freedom.

According to official French sources, ‘a total of 1,256 foulards were reported in public schools at the start of the 2003-2004. Only twenty of these cases were judged ‘difficult’ by school officials themselves, and only four students were expelled’ (10 December 2003, Le Monde).

**Timing:**

Some explanations can be seen as supportive and justifiable for the firm position of the government. According to Scott, it was in the late 1980s and early 2000 that Islam came to international attention due to a chain of events that occurred in the Middle-East, the Maghreb and Afghanistan. In 1995, Islamic movements developed in France and the country endured several attacks at the hands of Algerian terrorists. It can be said that the term Islamisation emerged in the 1990s in response to the intensification of religious sentiments among second generation Muslims. But, it was mostly the unprecedented events of 9/11 and London 2005 bombings that contributed to accelerate French nervousness about its Muslim population. However, the successive governmental decisions about the Muslim question were also a riposte to the growing National Front party. Le Pen, the French National Front party leader, tapped into the deep-seated racist attitudes towards immigrants from ex-colonies for the French society. Arguments were made about the ‘irreducible difference between Islam and France, suggesting not only religious incompatibilities but also ethnic ones’ (Scott,
For Khosrokhavar, the phenomenon of Islamisation has driven Muslims to feel alienated from French society, pushing them to gravitate towards Islam as a source of dignity (Khosrokhavar, 1997). In his study of second and third generation North African immigrants living in the suburbs of Paris and Strasbourg, Khosrokhavar claims that the Islam of young Muslims in France act as 'a form of protection against racism and social ostracism, giving sense and value to a life by facilitating differing forms of cultural expression and social engagement' (Khosrokhavar, 1997:113).

The intense controversy generated by the Affaire des foulards is an indication of the place of the headscarf in the history of French racism.

### 3.4 Summary

Education is one of the main social integrative factors, as schools play a central role in the production and reproduction of culture. National education systems are seen as tools for building nations, by moulding the moral and political opinions of citizens along the lines laid down by the nation’s ideology.

Since the foundation of the modern state education system in 1944, the Christian churches have had a significant influence by making religious education a compulsory element of the British National Curriculum. Though multicultural education originated in the 1960s, it was not until early 1990s that the British Education system acknowledged the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society and revised the curriculum to promote equal opportunity for all pupils regardless of ethnic origin and gender. Britain has a large number of faith schools, including Muslim ones. The current challenges of the schooling of ethnic minority children lie in the debates of multicultural education. The British education system is now making efforts to define and accommodate the cultural well-being of all children.

In France, it was during the nineteenth century that education was considered a key element of the construction of the unitary Republic, of national identity, culture and language. In this Republican project, the school was supposed to play a major role in suppressing all differences (i.e. local cultures, communities and religions) with the fundamental aim to build Republican citizens. Based on a secular and universalistic framework, the French model of education aims to offer to all children equality of
treatment, regardless of their ethnic and cultural background. However, the issue of cultural diversity and differences has not been addressed by an education policy and the concept of 'multicultural' education is deficient in French policy. After a succession of events and ongoing debates about the Islamic headscarf, France reacted to a growing fear about the effect of Islam in French schools. In 2004, the government adopted the law banning wearing the headscarf in schools (or any other ostentatious religious symbols), having judged the garment incompatible with French Republican values, since it symbolises religious belief. In all, cultural diversity at school reveals the ambiguity of the principle of equality as demonstrated with the affair of the Muslim headscarf.

Having presented the context in which the research study is grounded, the next chapter introduces the notion of integration and what it signifies in British and French society.
CHAPTER 4

INTEGRATION AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

This chapter presents an insight into the complex and intricate concept of integration and the ways in which this notion relates to the Muslim community. The concept of British and French notions of integration is of great relevance as it helps the comprehension of how young Muslim pupils perceive themselves and their community in British and French society. It helps to establish their understanding of integration and relation to it. Furthermore, it helps to project their views on the way Islam has become mediated after 9/11 and London bombings in July 2005 and the repercussions of such events. This chapter also presents an overview of the British and French Muslim community.

4.1 SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF INTEGRATION

'Integration' has been widely used to describe the developing relationship between the native population of a nation-state and its growing ethnic immigrant population. The sociological concept of integration is rooted in the concept of social cohesion, which can be identified as being the result of shared values added with a sense of responsibility out of which social order is the foundation. The concept derives from Durkheim's work on morality whose concerns descend from the ways institutional organisations uphold the cohesion of social structures. According to Durkheim, morality is considered as necessary for social solidary and consequently has the function to maintain social integration. Social cohesion is an organic solidarity based upon the reliance that individuals have on each other. In general, social cohesion is used to explain a state of harmony through the application of institutional processes and practices. It is through their implementation that negotiations and compromises are reached and that a community life is constructed. There are three schools of thoughts about social cohesion.
Theory of integration:
The central tenet for the theory of integration for social cohesion is that the social system must define the goals for which change and integration of individuals can become possible. According to Parsons, the concept of integration functions only if the social, cultural and personality components are working together. These three elements must be compatible and must sustain one another for a lasting integrative interaction. Parsons' model involves the willingness of the individual to open up to the values, norms and rules of the society which will allow him to fulfil his role in the system. Other theorists such as Lockwood and Giddens have argued that there is a difference between social integration and system integration. For Lockwood, social integration refers to the process by which relations between people can be either peaceful or conflicting. System integration, on the other hand, refers to the institutions of the social system that can either operate as one or each other (Lockwood, 1964:244). In contrast, Giddens sees integration in terms of reciprocity (either in relations of dependence or independence) and defines social integration as reciprocated practices between individuals, whereas a system of integration refers to reciprocity between groups or collectivities (Giddens, 1979:76).

Theory of community:
The term ‘community’ can be approached as a ‘value and as such it may well be used to bring together a number of elements, for example, solidarity, commitment, mutuality and trust’ (Frazer, 1999:76). It can also be approached as a descriptive category or set of variables such as a place, an interest which, in practice, are entwined and often difficult to separate (Frazer, 1999: 76). It is mostly through the work of Cohen (1985) regarding the idea of belonging and attachment that the theory of community lays. Cohen (1985) argues that ‘communities are best approached as communities of meaning’ where the community plays a crucial symbolic role in generating people’s sense of belonging. People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity’ (Cohen 1985: 118).

Furthermore, the theory of community tends to emphasise the moral commitment of an individual to a social community, with the belief that the rise of individualisation could conduct to a progressive decline of the social community, therefore affecting
social cohesion. For them, a strong sense of community is what helps to create the social bond between groups of individuals with an emphasis on the collective and not the individual. Without the moral dimension (such as role of ethics and moral values) social cohesion cannot take place.

Theory of inclusion:
Theory of inclusion for social cohesion focuses on the types and approaches employed in dealing with people as individuals. Drawing from Saussure’s model of language, Bourdieu claims that the logic behind symbolic processes is one that is based on a binary system that establishes divisions and groupings. From this perspective, binary oppositions contribute to a classification based on inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu, 1991:237). For Bourdieu, social cohesion includes this binary opposition where inclusion and exclusion are shared by all and used to develop relations of authority and power in social life. Creating divisions and groupings based on ‘them’ and ‘us’, the differentiations and classifications are based on a system where people are allowed ‘in’ while others are ‘out’. From this arrangement, the individual develops a clear understanding of where he or she belongs. This takes roots from patterns built in before the development of speech in the family and reinforced later by education. This rational symbolic system helps us to formulate the distinctions between ‘them’ and ‘us’ (Swartz, 1997:87).

Processes of absorption of immigrants into host society
Based on her sociological study of the absorption of West Indian migrant group in Brixton, South London, Patterson discusses the processes of absorption using expressions such as adaptation, accommodation and assimilation to represent the objectives from the immigrant groups and that of the majority group (Patterson, 1963:9).

According to Patterson, the type of contact established between the newcomers and the members of the receiving society rests on the mutual basis of adaptation and acceptance. In such a context, adaptation occurs gradually and clearly with the host society broadening and adapting its societal framework and patterns in order to include some elements of the newcomer’s culture. This is the case in countries like United States and Canada where immigration took place on a large scale, unlike
Britain and France whose model of society rests more on a deep-rooted and consistent pattern. The degree of adaptation and acceptance is proportional to the social distance and cultural differences between immigrants and the host society. However, adaptation does not always coalesce with acceptance, and this is true when a minority group reaches complete adaptation but, at times, receives partial acceptance (e.g. Parsi in India) or when a minority group achieves partial adaptation and yet meets greater acceptance (e.g. American Jewry) (Patterson, 1963:10).

Patterson argues that when the first generation of immigrants settled in Britain, the main concern was with the phase called *accommodation,* which can happen on an equal or an unequal basis. In general, accommodation refers to a ‘way of living’ between the newcomers and the host society, in which the former set themselves up economically and socially while agreeing with norms and codes of the new society. From the perspective of the host society, accommodation could mean a partial or greater level of acceptance of the newcomers, depending on the model of society. For instance, egalitarian society would demonstrate a greater level of acceptance in areas such as employment, public services, education and legal/political rights. As Patterson claims:

‘...accommodation is the least degree of adaptation and acceptance that is consistent with peaceful coexistence between immigrants and the receiving society in the early period of contact as during this phase, the newcomers are able to retain or rebuild their own social and cultural patterns’ (Patterson, 1963:13-14).

For Patterson, the most inclusive phase of absorption is that of *assimilation,* where the process is understood as one leading to a complete end-result. In other words, assimilation signifies a total adjustment by the newcomers to the model and principles of the host society. In theory, complete adaptation is associated with complete acceptance on the part of the host country. It is in this context that absolute incorporation occurs (e.g. the Huguenots in Britain, the Dutch, Germans and Scandinavians in the United States and Canada). However, Patterson emphasises that ‘assimilation rarely occurs in the first immigrant generation and this is true even in the case of immigrants who are socially acceptable and culturally close to the host society such as Jewish newcomers in Israel, or Latin immigrants in South America’ (Patterson, 1963:10-11).
In summary, these various stages do not happen in an orderly sequence but through several stages. It is in the course of time that newcomers and the host society see themselves making the effort to adapt or to accept each other. In any case, their actions would inevitably impinge on each other, coinciding or progressing at a different pace and in different domains. Therefore, any approach of integration of minority groups in an institutionalised system such as education would have to be concerned about the quality of absorption of immigrants into the host culture.

Assimilation
Sociologists describe the processes and results of ethnic ‘meetings’ by using the term ‘assimilation’ while anthropologists such as Redfield, Linton and Herskovits talk about ‘acculturation’. For them, acculturation is the ‘exchange of cultural features that results when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first hand contact; the original cultural patterns of either or both groups may be altered, but the groups remain distinct’ (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1963:149). With regards to the term ‘assimilation’, the sociologist Park defines it as the ‘process(es) by which peoples of diverse racial origins and cultural heritages, occupying a common territory, achieve a cultural solidarity sufficient at least to maintain a national existence’ (Park, 1930:281). Therefore, assimilation requires more than the acquisition of the language or patterns of behaviour of the majority group. Assimilation refers to the individual commitment to identify with the members of the society. In this context, physical or racial characteristics are removed from being indicators of identification, giving space to people who are assimilated to self-identify with the habits and practices of the new society. For example, children of African origins in France learn that their ancestors were the tall, blue-eyed, blonde Gauls. In Brazil, a large number of Brazilians have some African ancestry and generally think of themselves as Brazilian and Latin-American. On the other hand, in the United States, practically everyone with a black ancestor, however remote, thinks of themselves as Black first and only secondly as Americans. Therefore, one can say that people of African ancestry in Brazil are not only acculturated but also assimilated Brazilians whereas Blacks of the United States are acculturated but not assimilated (Gordon, 1964:78).

Social scientists share common beliefs regarding the concept of assimilation. Firstly, the adjustment of an individual into a new society depends partly on their personal
and social background, as well as cultural values carried when migrating. Secondly, the number of immigrants may influence or slow down the assimilation process depending on social groups already established to meet the requirements of newcomers. Finally, the process of assimilation is very much dependent on the position (e.g. social events and resources), disposition (e.g. housing, jobs and public education policy) that the host society is willing to offer and on the nature/demands of the host society (Jackson, 1986:188).

Assimilation can also be acknowledged within a time sequence or the ecological history of immigrant people. For example, Rex and Moore explain the ecological sequence of Irish, West Indian and Pakistani immigrants in Birmingham. During the first stage, the new immigrant is disconnected with his home culture but is not yet involved with the national system of social norms of the country to which he has emigrated. During the second stage, he or she remains short of a bonding link with the host society but has started to establish some community ties amongst his fellow-immigrants. The third stage sees the immigrant incorporated into the society as a legal citizen. In the final stage, the immigrant consents to the social rights of a citizen and agrees to certain social norms governing relationships with strangers. However complete or successful the ecological sequence is, it tends to place ethnic groups within a position of 'ghetto' or 'quarter', still short of assimilation (Rex and Moore, 1967:15).

Amongst the ideological tendencies defining the philosophies of assimilation, two trends highlight the values and aspirations of assimilation in Britain and France. Respectively, these are ‘cultural pluralism’ for Britain, and ‘Franco-conformity’ for France.

Cultural pluralism: Britain and the idea of a multicultural society

For Gordon, cultural pluralism suggests the ‘preservation of the communal life and significant portions of the culture of immigrant groups within the context of citizenship, political and economic integration into the host society’ (Gordon, 1964:85). Standing at a cultural intersection, the host country may either choose to impose an idea of uniformity on its people, or conversely to encourage various ethnic groups to develop by giving them the space they need to cultivate their particular deep-rooted cultural heritage. The doctrine of cultural pluralism is to allow each
ethnic group to maintain its cultural heritage while asking at the same time full contribution to the dynamics and general life of the country as a whole. In essence, cultural pluralism 'asserts the positive value to the country as a whole which derived from the existence of various ethnic cultures and their interaction within the framework of a democratic society' (Gordon, 1964:146). One can argue that the greater part of the process of integration occurs at a social and economic level but also involves individual action. Weil and Crowley explain that in Britain, the new generation of Commonwealth immigrants have suffered from the consequence of broad social problems following the financial crisis caused by the economic changes of the 1970s and 1980s. As such, the promotion of integrating immigrant population was jeopardised by an unemployment that remained persistent, with housing shortages and by a crisis of the education system. It was in that context that feelings of 'being put aside' developed by those affected by difficulties, hence promoting a sentiment of rejection. To rise to the challenge, minority requests took a prominent place, moving 'multiculturalism from the denial that diversity was a threat, to the claim that diversity was in itself a value that must be promoted' (Weil & Crowley, 1994:122-23).

Looking across time, it becomes clear that British officials, at various times and in various ways, employed a wide range of policies to promote integration, using both direct and indirect methods. Bleich argues that in the early post-war history of British immigration, local programs to integrate newcomers were preferred to the centralised ones. In general, the British system has a number of policy tools for promoting integration. One of them is the CRE (Commission for Racial Equality), which has been established since 1976 and whose function is to undertake race relations inspection within industries or local governments. In the eventuality of substantive evidence of racism, the CRE acts as a legitimate power to require compliance with the Race Relations Acts. Since 2000, the government has reinforced further conditions to promote immigrant integration such as English language training programmes. Education, urban and housing policies of areas (defined mainly by geography and social deprivation) has been used as platforms to address the major problems of immigrant integration. This was the case in the 1960s where the British government set up programs targeted at areas rather than ethnic minorities groups. In essence, the policies were defined in a way that they did not openly focus on immigrants of ethnic
minorities and maintained impartiality with respect to promoting multiculturalism (Bleich, 2005:178-80).

As a policy idea that has emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (especially in education), multiculturalism can be described as a communal diversity that embodies 'a complex of alternative cultures sustained by distinct communities' (Parekh, 2000:3-4). Post-war arrival and settlement of migrant groups exemplified the communal diversity, with each of these groups believing to be united by a single national culture, often having had colonial ties with Britain. For Modood, multiculturalism is more than the 'rights of minority cultures, it is about the value of cultural diversity, for which its sense of contrast gives a deeper understanding of our own culture and makes us reflect and learn about diversity' (Modood, 2005:173). Discussing the importance of ethnicity and diversity as positive values, Modood argues for a multiculturalism that should recognise the country as a 'legitimate and irreducible plurality ...this means reimagining national identity, so that all can be part of it without having to deny other identities' (Modood, 2005:18). This view is demonstrated in the 2005 survey from ETHNOS on the ways British people of different ethnic backgrounds living in England, Scotland and Wales think about Britishness. Nonetheless, in light of the London bombings in 2005, concerns were expressed on the success of Britain's multicultural policy. The research shows the views that 'multiculturalism, as it is currently lived in Britain, is better understood as reciprocity', and the belief that ethnic minorities should be able to maintain the integrity of their own culture and values' (ETHNOS, 2005b:22-23).

Franco-conformity: France and the Republican model of integration

In theory, France aims to constitute a uniform society, socially and nationally, where the construction of a collective project (i.e. the Republic 'one and indivisible') requires the contribution of all its members, regardless of their cultural origins. For Hutchinson and Smith 'the new ideology of political nationalism requires all the members of the new nation-state to be united and homogenous' (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996:14). Such endeavours as these signify that ethnic minorities have the

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28 The research shows what was felt by participants as the 'sine qua non for multicultural Britain to work, namely learning English, schooling in the mainstream, respecting individual rights and freedoms, respecting the democratic process' (ETHNOS, 2005b:22).
responsibility to assimilate as individuals in order to become citizens (Hutchinson & Smith, 1996:12).

The French Republican model of integration is a broad term which may be used to cover a variety of viewpoints about assimilation and immigration. In general, they all operate around the essential theory that French institutions, language, cultural patterns and standard way of life should be maintained. The belief in Franco-conformity with regards to the desirable goal of assimilation shows attitudes that can range from ‘discredited notions about race and race superiority to a lack of opposition toward any immigration source as long as immigrants and their descendants duly adopt the standard French cultural patterns’ (Gordon, 1964:88). In essence, Franco-conformists believe that French culture has established the central structure for the development of institutions to which newcomers should adjust. The process of Franco-conformity involves a clear concentration on behavioural assimilation in which the newcomer is asked to renounce his native cultural norms of living to accept the French pattern of behaviour and attitudes implemented in the country. By favouring the withdrawal of ethnic and religious identity, the newcomer and his or her descendants are encouraged to enter into the life of the host country by adopting its values and ambitions. In other words, by submitting him or herself to the process of assimilation, the newcomer is assured that prejudice and discrimination towards him or her will disappear if he or she conforms to the values (Gordon, 1964:104-05).

The French state does not distinguish individuals on their racial or ethnic origin and has carefully kept away from any integration policies that would support such intent. Policy makers have tried to strike a balance between fostering common ground and valuing diversity. Bleich explains that in the 1970s the French state began to show greater tolerance towards religious pluralism with Islamic practices becoming permissible in factories and even the teaching of the mother-tongue for immigrant school children. Until 1981, France restricted the rights of immigrants from organising collectively, obstructing ethnic identities and action. It was not until 2003, that the state took the step of establishing an elected Conseil Français du Culte Musulman29 (CFCM), an initiative that was perceived as contradictory to the culture

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29 French Council of the Muslim Faith
of republican ideology for its representation was defined through ethno-religious identity (Bleich, 2005:181).

During the 1990s, debates around the concept of the Republican model of integration took place, defining it as being unique and rational with regards to immigration and the French multi-ethnic society. In essence, the ‘French model of integration is largely based on the Republican concept of citizenship and nation, with the classic conception of France as a universal nation of equal and free citizens that continues to be relevant today’ (Gibb, 2003:88). Three main attributes describe the French model according to Gibb: ‘the first is its universalism or inclusivity where access to French nationality and citizenship is presented as potentially open to all residents regardless of origins; the second is the voluntaristic basis of French national unity; the third is the individual process of integration which excludes any official recognition of ethnic and cultural attributes’ (Gibb, 2003:88-89). It is worth noting however, that the state differentiates what governs the private sphere from the public sphere. In the former, ethnic and religious diversity is plainly recognised whereas it is institutionally disregarded in the latter.

In 1992, both the Institut National des Études Démographiques and INSEE combined their efforts to conduct a survey called Mobilité Géographique et Intégration Sociale (Geographic Mobility and Social Integration). The objective was to analyse the behaviour of immigrants and their children and to do so, the survey had to move away from the conventional binary categories. New criteria were introduced such as the notion of migration and the distinction between citizens from parents born in France and citizens whose parents were immigrants. Therefore, the survey departed from the Republican tradition by which ethnic distinction was left hidden, to claim an approach which reflects a reality. As Blum claims, ‘this survey provided a way of rejecting the artificial idealisation and homogenisation of the population of France in favour of the observation of social reality’ (Blum, 2002:132). This survey has helped not only to raise the debate around sensitive issues such as urban violence, the exclusion of certain groups from schools or discrimination in the workplace but has contributed to comprehend the nature of ethnic friction and segregation.
4.2 The British Muslim Community

Since the expansion of Islam in the 7th century, Islam and the West share a history of conquests, crusades and wars (Lewis, 1994:180). The imprint of Islamic culture on the modern geopolitical map is enormous, considering the Islamic realm stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific Rim, comprising some of the richest countries in the world as well as some of the poorest. With a world population standing at about six billion, one quarter has embraced Muslim faith (i.e. as many as 1.5 billion). In all, Muslim countries form a chain that starts from the Atlantic coast of Africa, to South of the Sahara, then to the shores of the Mediterranean through the Middle East, Iran and Afghanistan to Pakistan and ends in Kazakhstan.30

The Muslim population

Muslims in Britain constitute a large population which has largely lost its immigrant attributes and is today permanently settled in Britain. Historically, it is in the mid XIXth century that the first permanent Muslim people touched base in cities like Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, South Shields and London's East End. Since the Second World War, the majority of them came from Pakistan and Bangladesh and it is only in the 1970s that their immigration began to slow down, corresponding more or less to the demand for labour at that time. Coming mainly from the Indian sub-continent, it was mostly young men who came, followed by women and children who joined them. It was at that time that communities began to form, organising themselves and constructing networks which would allow them to follow their religion and cultural practices. It was in the early 1960s that immigration saw a considerable increase, following the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act that restricted automatic entry to Britain for Commonwealth citizens. Following further legislations, immigration started to decrease after the 1970s (Ansari, 2002:6).

According to the 2001 UK National census, an estimated 1.6 million Muslims live in Britain, constituting 3% of the general population. However, the total number is probably about 2 million as there are a significant number of undocumented and asylum seeking Muslims that remain unaccounted for (Ansari, 2002:7). Placed as the second largest faith group after Christians, Muslims constitute 52% of the non-Christian religious population. According to the report issued by OSI/EU (2005)

30 A review of Muslim geography is available on www.muslimheritage.com
‘...the British Muslim population is ethnically diverse with the majority (73%) of Asian ethnic background. In 2001, 43% were Pakistani, 16% Bangladeshi, 8% Indian and 6% of other Asian ethnic background. There are also Muslims of other regions including parts of Africa, Cyprus, Malaysia, the Middle-East and more recently Eastern Europe (primarily Bosnia). Muslims from some of these groups may account for the 12% of Muslims who identified themselves as either ‘white-UK’ or ‘white-other’ in the 2001 census (this includes the Turkish/Turkish-Cypriot population estimated between 125,000 to 300,000). In addition, 6% of Muslims are of Black African origin and it is estimated that the total number of British converts to Islam could be as high as 5,000, many of whom are African-Caribbean. Data from the census also reveals that 46% of Muslims living in Britain were born in the UK, while 18% were born in Pakistan, 9% in Bangladesh, 9% in Africa and 3% in Turkey’ (OSI/EU, 2005:12-13).

The vast majority of Muslims live in England with 60% of them in the South-East (mainly in Greater London). Muslim communities tend to be classified by ethnic origin and are established in different regions in Britain. Data of the 2001 census shows that the

‘...most diverse Muslim community in Britain live in London with almost 250,000 Muslim Londoners being of Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin and a further 150,000 being Turkish. Other communities originate from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, North Africa, Cyprus, Somalia and Nigeria. The highest concentration is in East London where 123,000 people of Bangladeshi origin live mostly in the borough of Tower Hamlets. Large concentrations of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are found in the industrial West Midlands towns of Birmingham (15%), Leicester (12%), Greater Manchester-Oldham (11%) and in West Yorkshire Metropolitan County with 17% in Bradford and 4.5% in Leeds’ (OSI/EU, 2002, p. 446-47).

Largely concentrated in the West Midlands, Pakistanis are also located in South East of England and Northern parts of London; Turkish Cypriots are spatially concentrated and Muslims people from the Middle-East are scattered in London (Ansari, 2002:7). Muslim populations are also found in Scotland, in the Glasgow/Edinburgh area, with a majority of Pakistanis but also small number of Arabs, Indians, Turks and Iranians, forming 1.2% of the general population. In Northern Ireland, it is mostly Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Arabs (0.2%) that are settled in the area of Belfast. In Wales, the Muslim community is estimated at 1.7% of the general population, mostly located in Cardiff (OSI/EU, 2002:447). In general, it can be said that the Muslim population at large is usually represented as living in the most deprived inner-city areas. While making 8% of the London population, the Muslim communities tend to be clustered in a number of boroughs such as ‘Tower Hamlets and Newham where they make up
36% and 24% of the boroughs residents, respectively’ (Richardson, cited in OSI/EU, 2005:13). The large concentration of Muslims in these areas has contributed to a symptomatic ostracism of these communities, suggesting a ground for inter-faith and inter-ethnic conflicts.

The majority of Muslim immigrants in Britain originate from the Commonwealth and, as a result, they enjoy the same civic and political rights as British nationals. The Muslim population have made good use of this opportunity by fully participating in the civic and political activities including having representatives in both Houses of Parliament. They have also been proactive in the community life by establishing contacts with city and borough councils as well as local schools; this is done with the view to influence the local and national policies to accommodate the needs of their community. Central to this requirement is the Islam religion, which supplies the principles by which Muslims identify and position themselves in relation to non-Muslims (Joly, 1995:1-2).

Constructing the Muslim community

According to Joly, two key factors have contributed to the settlements of Muslim communities in Britain. Firstly, the migration flux in industrial cities causing the development of housing for them to stay and secondly, the extended family networks has ensured the links with the country of origin and has reinforced their identity. There is a strong desire to preserve their cultural, social and religious structures by ensuring their young observe the Islam faith and learn about the Muslim values (Joly, 1995:7).

Place of worship:

In essence, communal life is largely controlled by religious institutions, particularly the mosques and associations that provide leadership and guidance in the ways Muslim populations are included into British society. With a growing number of mosques, including the notable London Central Mosque and Manchester Central Mosque, it is estimated that there are about 1,500 mosques in Britain31. Like any other place of worship, the Mosque has the function of reinforcing religious beliefs with the support of the community who oversees the moral and spiritual conduct of

31 Casciani, 2007, available on www.bbcnews.co.uk
individuals. Furthermore, Islam regulates the relations in the social realm such as matrimony affairs, divorce, family relationships, economic and political affairs.

According to Joly there are two types of mosques: private and communal. The former is a place of worship organised in private homes, particularly during the early period in immigration. The devotees were often from the same ethnic group. The latter refers to the commonly known public mosque, which also functions as an association and often acts as the mediator between the Muslim people and British society. The devotees are all the Muslims living in the vicinity. Besides its principal role of being a place of worship, the mosque provides the focal point for communal activities such as after school religious studies and social gatherings to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr at the end of Ramadan (Joly, 1995:7-9).

Contacts and Networks:
For the Muslim population, the mosque is just one factor in maintaining social cohesion. Another, and probably more important factor, is the extended family network, which involves maintaining strong links with their country of origin. These networks help reinforce collective identity, and even create voluntary or commercial associations that provide communal services such as support to families in the case of funeral situation (e.g. Immigrants Funeral Society in Bradford) or helping new immigrants to settle in. In general, such local associations are pivotal in maintaining the Muslim community through provision of services that deal with a range of issues such as housing, teaching cultural values to young people, setting up sports groups, giving legal advice on immigration matters and social benefits (Joly, 1995:10).

Overall, Muslim associations tend to canvas their way of life proactively and defend their community’s right to be treated equally within the public domain. Education is one area where there is significant activity. Muslim parents prefer their children to have an education in tune with their cultural values. This is often not possible in state schools, which tend to offer education largely guided by Christianity. Muslim populations, like any other ethnic minority group, express the wish to belong to British society while stating the rightful claim to retain their own culture. Thus, Muslim associations and Mosques, with their diverse and assorted functions, are working towards constructing and securing a social space in British society (Joly, 1995:2).
The place of Islam in Britain

How well has the Muslim population settled in Britain? This is a broad question that this research is attempting to answer. Results of the empirical study are described in Chapter 8. To set the context it is useful to understand where Islam is situated within British society.

Historically, Britain is a Christian country where the church and state are intertwined. England exemplified the fact that the monarch acts as both as the head of the Anglican Church and the State. Thus, Christianity is infused within British public life. For example, with regards to education, it was the 1944 Education Act that made religious instruction compulsory at school with a collective prayer at the start of the day. Certain religious minority groups, like Catholics and Jews, succeeded in obtaining official recognition of their faith. This enabled them, therefore, to perform religious practices legally (such as marriages) or to state their rightful claim for public funding for their schools. Therefore, it would be presumptuous to anticipate Muslim people not to expect their faith to be equally treated like the other religions (Joly, 1995:12).

It is correct to suggest that a way of responding to new ethnic and religious communities is to legitimately institutionalise the recognition of difference, whatever this might be. Hence, the presence and integration of Islam in Britain can be said to reflect the particular experience and capacity of England in recognising the multiple faiths (i.e. Church of England, the Catholic Church, Protestant Churches such as the Methodists, as well as Judaism) which enjoy some kind of ‘state recognition and resources in relation to Parliament, schooling, the armed forces, hospitals, prisons and so on, but the relationship in each case is a product of its own history and population distribution’ (Modood & Kastoryano, 2006:172).

The overwhelming majority of British Muslims are integrated, loyal, non-violent and despise religious fanaticism. Muslims in Britain are politically active, taking part of ‘domestic multicultural and equality currents, emphasising discrimination in education and economic opportunities, political representation and the media, working against Muslim-blindness in the provision of health care and social services, and arguing for remedies that mirror existing legislation and policies in relation to sexual and racial equality’ (Modood, 2005:167). At large, British Muslims tend to
express their concerns regarding the moral values that the country carries. For Muslim parents, the lack of morals and principles has opened the path to depravity and excess for which the symptoms (e.g. vandalism, drugs, crime, juvenile delinquency or sexual promiscuity) is a major cause of concern. Another concern is the observance and reproduction of Islam outside the Muslim world for which British Muslims have addressed the issue by establishing mosques and associations 'to influence British institutions and individuals with a view to making a space for Muslims in their midst' (Joly, 1989:41)

With regards to the younger generation, Muslim parents and mosque leaders express their concern and anxiety towards the young people losing their link to Islam. The Muslim community is aware that continuity and reproduction of Islam must be secured for the next generations. For this purpose, all means and efforts are invested into the Muslim religious instruction of the children (e.g. private Koran classes or Koran classes at the Mosque). As a general rule, all the children undergo this type of teaching and so the parents and Muslim leaders hope the essential values of Islam will be passed on (Joly, 1995:35).

While religious practices are secured within the Muslim community, Muslim people also express their wish to relate to British society given that their presence is permanent. Nowhere is it more explicit than with the education system being perceived as a major area of concern. It is indisputable that the early years at school have a decisive influence on young Muslims. On this occasion and acting on behalf of parents and the community at large, Muslim associations engaged into a dialogue with schools in areas largely populated by Muslims. As a result, initiatives and schemes were introduced, demonstrating a sense of flexibility and adjustment within the British education system. It was at the discretion of headteachers that measures and adjustments were introduced and applied, even though no statutory ruling stipulated them (e.g. school assemblies were dedicated to Islam at the time of Ramadan and Eid) (Joly, 1995:39).
4.3 **THE FRENCH MUSLIM COMMUNITY**

The Muslim population

The aftermath of the Second World War saw the beginning of the process of decolonisation, which prompted a flux of immigrants from French colonies and ex-colonies in Africa and Asia. Among these populations were those of Muslim origin, coming from the countries of the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia) and sub-Sahara (Senegal and Mali). Although a clear tendency was expressed for immigrants of European origins, it was mainly to North African workers that employment opportunities were offered following the critical shortages of labour. As a result, France saw a Muslim population growing rapidly (Freedman, 2004:7). Defined as immigrant workers, Muslim people embodied a status which reduced them to being viewed as an ‘imported factor of production of an atypical composition, made up virtually of working men’ (Kepel, 1995:xvii). It is worth noting that, at that time, no concern was expressed by the French public opinion regarding aspects of Muslim cultural identity. However, following the aftermath of the 1974 economic crisis and the shortage of employment that resulted from this, the French government decided to bring to an end the immigration flux of labour as an answer to delay the progress of unemployment. As such, governmental measures were engaged in ‘offering incentives to immigrants without a job to return home. The effect of such measures were the exact opposite of what the public authorities had hoped: not only did the majority not return to the country of origin, but Maghrebin workers brought their families over to join them to settle in France and asked for French nationality’ (Kepel, 1995:xvii).

Today, the Muslim population presents a large diversity among its composition. Although no exact data are available, it is estimated that over four million Muslims live in France out of a total population of over fifty eight million (OSI/EU, 2002:74). In 2000, the *Haut Conseil à l’Integration* published an estimated distribution of Muslims by country of origin. The great majority with almost three million were from the Maghreb (one and a half million of Algerian origin, one million

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32 It is not possible to arrive at an exact figure as it is illegal for the French state to collect data on ethnicity and race, a law with its origins in the 1789 Revolution and reaffirmed in the Constitution of 1958 (OSI/EU, 2002:74).

33 It is important to note that this estimation is based on a definition of Muslim as a person of Muslim culture, on the basis of the nationality of origin of the parents and grand-parents (OSI/EU, 2002:74).

34 High Council of Integration (HCI)
of Moroccan origin and 350,000 of Tunisian origin). Other Muslim populations were also recorded such as 100,000 originating from the Middle-East, 315,000 from Turkey, 250,000 from Sub-Saharan Africa, 100,000 Asians, 100,000 of various other origins, and 40,000 converted (HCI, 2000:26). Although scattered all around the territory, the Muslim population tends to cluster in some regions of France such as Ile-de-France (35%), Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (20%), Rhône-Alpes (15%) and the Nord-Pas-de-Calais (10%) (OSI/EU, 2002:74). According to Freedman, more than 30% of the French Muslim population was second generation by the late 1990s. The Muslim population can be described as ethnically diverse and having various positions to religious observance. It is within this context that Muslims and Islam are largely represented in a negative way, in spite of its significant cultural differences (Freedman, 2004:8).

A distinction needs to be made between the first and second generation of Muslims. The first generation was made up of Muslim immigrants for whom keeping strong ties with the country of origin was necessary and crucial. As such, the level of affinity and the fervent bonding with the country of origin were so deep that they considered themselves as being first Algerians, Moroccans, Kabyles or Turks, before being French (Cesari, 2002:38). The situation is completely different with the second generation who were born in France. Having acquired French nationality by the principle of 'jus soli', the second generation did not build any bonds with their fathers' country of origin. As French natural citizens, however, they experienced being regarded as immigrants too often, following persistent social discrimination. If ethnic origin was such a stronger identifier for the first generation of Muslims, this was not true at all with the second generation, who often did not even speak Arabic. Often referred as beurs/beurettes (slang for 'Arab'), the second generation developed their own point of reference within the French society (music, consumption and 'look'), a subculture within the dominant culture. For Roy, 'the culture of proletarian, second generation immigrants saw its values being in conflict with those of Islam. The protest against French society takes place in the name of the values of the society itself and not those of Islam' (Roy, 1994:199).
Constructing the Muslim Community

By stating a permanent position within French society, it can be argued that the modes of organisation from populations of Muslim origin collided with the Republican model. The idea that a community structure could emerge is unconceivable and even seen as hostile to the process of social cohesion. As a result, the French Muslim population has no political representation comparable to that in Britain, despite being the largest Muslim population in Europe. Unlike in Britain

‘where the model of a community integration (coupled with the granting of full civil rights to Commonwealth nationals) has allowed the constitution of a Muslim vote and a political lobby, the population concerned in France, both in terms of nationality and religious identity, has prevented the development of comparable structures’ (Kepel, 1995:xviii).

It was only in the mid-1970s that the first signs of Islamic associations emerged with the creation of prayer rooms in workers’ dormitories and large factories such as Renault. However, with the emergence of new generations born in France, Islamic associations called for Islam to be more visible in French society in the 1980s and 1990s. It can be said that ‘the profile of the Muslim communities changed radically with younger generations demonstrating different attitudes towards their identity and citizenship’ (OSI/EU, 2002:75).

Despite the relative lack of Muslim community structures, several associations have organised themselves along ethnic lines. With an overall membership remaining low (10-20% of the French Muslim population), the Grande Mosquée de Paris and its associated Muslim Institute are representative of the Algerian presence. For Laurence another association similar in size to the Grande Mosquée de Paris is the Union des Organisations Islamiques de France (UOIF), which is a large umbrella organization with Moroccan and Egyptian ties. There are also three main Turkish and various African religious associations. Nearly all of these have participated in consultations with the Home Ministry to create the Conseil Français du Culte Musulman (CFCM)’ (Laurence, 2001:2).

35 Founded in 1983, the UOIF has developed into France’s largest and most active Muslim organisation, controlling a large number of mosques and attracting a considerable number of attendees. Its objectives are to respond to religious, cultural, educational, social and humanitarian needs of the French Muslims (Vidino, 2006:28).

36 High Authority of Islam in France
In general, the mission of Muslim associations is to support new Muslim French citizens in dealing with their process of integration. With no Islam-based political lobby, Muslim organisations are generally engaged with cultural activities such as coordinating discussion groups or setting up Arabic language classes. They also put a lot of effort in getting involved in French society by either pushing for active citizenship or working with children at schools. Over the last twenty years, a large number of charities emerged in addition to associations. For example, the ‘World Muslim League’, with its headquarters in Saudi Arabia, established an office in Paris in 1979. Its major involvement consisted in financing the building of two major mosques in Evry and Mantes-la-Jolie (suburbs of Paris). Others charities concentrated on financing humanitarian projects in war-torn countries and territories administered by the Palestinian Authority. Among them is the Secours Islamique, a UK-based charity, founded in 1984 whose mission is to support education and health projects around the Muslim world (Camus, 2004:14).

Place of Worship:
The right to construct mosques in France is usually a perpetual source of conflict and polemics at both local and national levels. It is not unusual to see the construction of a mosque being financed by donations from Muslims' countries of origin or by other Muslim countries (e.g. the construction of the central Mosque in Lyon was largely financed by the World Muslim League) (OSI/EU, 2002:115). It is worth noting that it is around this particular issue that a significant divergence exists between Britain and France. In Britain, mosques have been built all over the country, offering Muslim communities an array of facilities and services. Such a display would be inconceivable in France as the very idea would shake the principle of laïcité. For Kepel 'any attempt by other religious dignitaries – Jewish or Muslim – to intervene in their capacity as religious leaders to indicate a ‘good choice’ to their fellow members can only provoke strong polemics among the defenders of laïcité’ (Kepel, 1995:xix-xx).
At present, it is estimated that 1,550 registered Islamic places of worship exist in France. It can be argued that this is a small amount in relation to the large Muslim population. Despite an improvement since the beginning of the 1980s, the context for Mosque construction in the public domain calls for some explanation. The creation of the Islamic Republic of Iran gave grounds for an antagonistic context for the expression of Islam in France and as a result the permission of construction was often refused. According to the OSI/EU report ‘Muslim communities are entitled to open legally-recognised places of worship under the 1901 Association Law. However, since public authorities cannot directly finance the building or purchase of Mosques, the wish to do so requires negotiating with the local public administration to obtain permission’ (OSI/EU, 2002:115). At the 2006 meeting on ‘Tolerance Implementation on Promoting Inter-Cultural, Inter-Religious and Inter-Ethnic Understanding’ at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), a paper entitled Principles and Legal Foundations Governing Relations between Public Authorities and Muslim Religious Authorities in France emphasises that

‘Mosques and places of worship, like all religious buildings, are the very condition for the religious expression of the faithful. This is why purchasing and using them is an integral part of the free exercise of worship, provided that, in accordance with the Law of 1905 on the regulation of religions, these religious buildings are exclusively reserved for public worship, and thus freely accessible, to the exclusion of all activities not relating to worship, political ones in particular’ (OSCE, 2006:2).

In general, most places of worship are prayer rooms with a limited capacity and in which standards on public health and security do not always conform to the required levels. In large cities, mosques are either within a neighbourhood or at a more central place. For example, in 1999 the city of Strasbourg voted for the construction of one central mosque after two proposals were submitted by two competing mosques. It was not until 2002 that local authorities gave official permission (OSI/EU, 2002:116). This example illustrates the heterogeneity of the Muslim population for which religious identity is intimately attached to national identity, particularly for North Africans. This is reflected through the mosques which should exclusively be emblematic sites of religious unity but function equally as ethnically-oriented centres which provide social and financial assistance, education to children, and ethnic and

37 In comparison, there are about 40,000 Catholic churches for a Catholic population fifteen times bigger and 1700 protestant Churches for a lower Protestant population (available on www.eglisesdefrance.com)
national linkages back to countries of origin' (Cesari, 2002:38). As a result, it is not unusual to see different mosques for North Africans and Turks located in the same district and yet proceeding with identical religious practices and rituals. In summary, the French Muslim community at large strives for a representation of Islam by 'bringing Islam out of the cellars, garages, private apartments and other inappropriate venues in which it is currently practised and set it within the existing Republic framework' (OSI/EU, 2002:117).

The place of Islam in France

Islam is statistically the second religion in France with an overwhelming Sunni population. Its emergence as a significant force in French society reflects self-affirmation and resistance to the outside world. However, the hostility, suspicion or rejection to the construction of mosques, the prohibition of wearing the headscarf in school or the question of serving halal food in school canteens are all perceived as indicators of an Islam that is after a ‘territorial conquest’ of a society being whittled away at by the ‘others’. Islam appears to cause some level of anxiety because it is perceived as a potential factor of profound change in society. The problems generally caused by the banlieues, the failure of integration and the fear of a rampant communitarianism are all accredited to Islam. However, Roy argues that the suburban riots in France in 2005 are more likely to be linked with the failure to cope with a ghettoised young generation than with Islam, despite the majority of the rioters having a Muslim background. Roy’s analysis of these incidents shows the ‘lack of the religious dimension that contrasts with the ongoing debate where Islam is systematically been the analytical grid through which the problems of the banlieues have been debated’ (Roy, 2005:4). For him, the false debate on Islam has helped to ignore or discard the socio-economic dimension, making him believe that Islam is in frontal collision with laïcité, despite being transformed by a ‘process of the secularisation of society, and by a negotiated political integration’ (e.g. the creation for the Conseil Français du Culte Musulman) (Roy, 2007:94).

Cesari argues that political authorities felt the need to pay serious and close attention to the Muslim population following a fearful and presumed upsurge of local Muslim extremism. The aftermath surrounding the affaire du foulard in 1989 demonstrated that young French Muslims were developing an interest in Islam. Having learnt
lessons from that episode, authorities conceded to the recognition of a new Islamic institution in the form of a High Authority of Islam (Cesari, 2002:39).

*Le Conseil Français du Culte Musulman (CFCM)*—French Council of the Muslim Faith:

Historically, the 1905 Law on the separation of the Church and Cults with the State assures the State’s neutrality in religious matters, securing freedom of worship. Since Napoleon I’s ruling, the State has retained relations with the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish institutions as they became significant mediators for problems of religion. Consequently, authorities for each faith were institutionalised with the Council of Bishops, Protestant Federation and Central Consistory. Their function rested essentially as being counsellors to the State in the affairs of religious life (e.g. religious guidance in imprisonment and hospitals, management of cultural rituals). Allegedly favouring more traditional religions, in particular Roman Catholicism, the majority of Muslims who arrived in France after 1905 saw Islam being denied all recognition as one of the faiths identified by French law. It was not until 2002 that Islam was finally gaining a properly institutional acknowledgment of its existence with the creation of the *Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*. The establishment of such body sent a clear message that all Muslims were on an equal foot with other faiths (Fernando, 2005:14).

Fernando explains that in 2002, the Home Minister initiated the creation of the Council, which was elected by 4,000 delegates from 995 mosques. The group was made up of 25 regional councils with a president at its head, Dalil Boubakeur, also Imam of the *Grande Mosquée de Paris*. CFCM, like any other faith-based authority, is a private non-profit association with no special legal standing, whose function is to be a representative of French Muslims to the national government. It acts as an official moderator with the State with regards to matters related to the regulation of Islamic worship and public ritual practices (e.g. mass slaughtering of sheep during Muslim festivals, allocation of public cemetery space, nomination of Imams for hospitals, prisons and the military) (Fernando, 2005:12). It is worth noting that the creation of a Muslim representative body in dialogue with the authorities translates the will from the French state to disconnect Muslims with their countries of origin, with the aim of shaping an Islam that would be regulated and kept under observation.
The attempt includes therefore a targeted supervision of Imams, which is considered as a major concern. The question clearly raises a real challenge as a controversy develops between promoting French Imams prepared and coached in France and those trained in Muslim countries (Fernando, 2005:17). In summary, it can be argued that if the establishment of the CFCM validates the presence of Islam in France, it is, nonetheless, instrumented by the State with continuous effort and pursuit to scrutinise Islam.

*La Grande Mosquée de Paris*:

The *Grande Mosquée de Paris* is the official representative of Islam in France and is the largest Mosque in France. Most members of the mosque are from the Algerian community. Historically, it was the Turkish Sultan Abdulhamid who promoted the idea of a focal point symbolising Muslim religion in the French capital city. But it was not until the early 1920s that the French State consented to the construction of such an institution, as an act of gratitude for the sacrifice of Muslim soldiers during World War I. It was finally inaugurated in 1926. Partially financed by the State and Muslim residents of the then French Algeria, the *Grande Mosquée* became over the years an object of dispute between various Arab countries. It was then that, in 1982, the *Grande Mosquée* became supervised by the Algerian government. It is in this context that the Algerian government exercised a tactical influence on Algerians living in France by encouraging them to become French citizens while keeping their Islamic identity at the same time. Another important task was asked from the Algerian authorities with the appointment of an Imam as being the Muslim public figure to engage into inter-faith dialogue. In summary, the *Grande Mosquée de Paris* can be said to be accountable in representing an Islam that is compatible with the secular values of the French state (Kepel, 1987:61-64).

**French Muslims from Algeria: colonial legacy:**

It was in 1830 that the French arrived in Algeria with the intention to establish a public administration that would rule the country. Right from the beginning, an aggressive approach was deployed, indicating the imposition of French rule. The mission was to educate the indigenous in civilisation and bring Republican values to the land. From that time onwards, the Algerian territory was part of France and Algerian people were all French subjects. After the Revolution of 1848, the Second
Republic proclaimed that French Algeria was an expansion of the Republic with three departments: Algiers, Oran and Constantine. However, the treatment of Algerian people as full French citizens of the nation was repeatedly postponed (Shepard, 2006:20-21).

With the colossal task to inculcate French culture into so-called underdeveloped Algerian people, French colonisers believed that one day the Algerians would become French. However, 18th century colonial history also shows that racism and bigotry were legitimised in the imperial projects and the Algerian people were no exception. Rapidly labelled as Arabs, the term was used to amalgamate Muslims and North Africans (Scott, 2007:45-46).

Although Algeria was a French territory its ruling proved to be complex and arduous, as French authorities strived to administer the land and its people. For over hundred and thirty years, Algeria was an extended part of France, treating its native-born inhabitants as national subjects. It was only in the late 1950s that full citizenship was recognised for all Algerians, following the outcome of six years of debated policies that would finally materialise a far too long pretence that all Algerians were part of the nation. Thus, it can be said that Algeria was a Republic within an empire from 1870 until July 1962, the year which saw Algeria winning its independence after nine years of war with France in the Algerian War of Independence (1954-1962). During all these years, political decisions from Paris shaped Algeria in terms of the content of its citizenship and nationality. France behaved as a state whose authorised action identified the systematic classification of Algerian people. The French laws and codes that gave identities to Algerian people also contributed to fashion their position, their alternatives and their history (Shepard, 2006:19-20).

With a First World War looming, shortage of labour in the armament industry resulted in the emigration of Algerians to France in 1914. Mainly composed of poor peasants whose land was lost to European settlers, an increasing number of men arrived in France looking for jobs. However, their arrival in the large French cities was exposed to discrimination and segregation. Facing a situation where they had to suffer the status of being inferior due to being Arabic, they slowly found support with others who shared common cultural and linguistic background and, like them, experienced being alien and despised on the French land (Scott, 2007:50-53).
One can argue that the legacy of colonialism continues today through the debates and still very vividly, on the status of ‘immigrant’ Arabic/Muslim populations. It is significant to highlight the sense of rejection that the term ‘immigrant’ conveys by being related to North Africans and West Africans from former colonies, no matter how long ago they arrived in France. In its core, it implies not only their failure to integrate into French society but even the hopelessness that it will ever occur. With the stigma of their origin still glued to them and yet being formally French citizens, the French Muslim population suffers under-representation within the professional and political stratum. The riots of 2005 were swiftly credited to Islam, implying incompatibility with a secular France. This alleged identification with religion ‘becomes further proof that, whatever the technicalities of their formal citizenship, they can never be fully French’ (Scott, 2007:87-88).

In his book ‘Can Islam be French?’, Bowen (2010) investigates what Islam is on the ground. He found that Islam lives through Islamic institutions and organisations whose objective it is to give shape and consistency to the religion in France. However, this endeavour is compounded by the fact that Islamic values are seen as incompatible with French laïcité. Bowen demonstrates that Islam has the capacity to accommodate to the principle of French laïcité, providing this principle allows it. By giving and taking on both sides, Islam in France appears to have become a faith working hard for its legitimate place in society and taking on secular Republican ideas while standing up for its Islamic traditions.

4.4 SUMMARY

Integration in different senses is central to building up a relationship between the host population and immigrants and to develop social cohesion, which is generally defined as having shared values and commitment to a community. Nations tend to implement this process according to their national cultural history and philosophy. Britain subscribes to the idea of a multicultural society and espouses cultural pluralism where ethnic minority culture is recognised within the definition of citizenship, including their political and economic integration into the British society. France, on the other hand, believes in Franco-conformity and expects immigrant groups to accept French institutions, language and cultural patterns as the standard way of life.
The 2001 National Census indicated that Muslims constituted about 3% of British population. This Muslim community is as varied as it is vibrant and makes a major contribution to every aspect of Britain's political, economic and cultural life. Sharing similar views to non-Muslims, they wish for more efforts to be made towards an unprejudiced society, co-existence and towards promoting community development. They have access to officially recognised Islamic institutions, services and mosques, and can be said to suffer no impediment with regards to religious practice (including clothing customs). Over the years, a strong civic Muslim culture has flourished with its newspapers, social clubs, representative organisations and pressure groups. It is significant to highlight that the vast majority of British Muslims are citizens of Britain and not merely residents and it is as such that they belong in Britain and Britain is their home. Unfortunately, the events of 9/11 and 7/7 have brought into question the loyalties of British Muslims. The notion of integration (e.g. Western values, public morality, education and opportunity) is under scrutiny with respect to the relationship between British society and its Muslim communities.

The French assimilationist approach to integration supplants any attempts at multiculturalism, maintaining laïcité as a principle, banning religious symbols in schools and adopting state-driven consultations with Muslims. The theory and policy behind the notion of integration is largely built around a robust definition of what defines ‘being French’; in other words, accepting French values, speaking French, and admitting that cultural differences belong to the private sphere. The longstanding tradition of laïcité is challenged as the country has been largely involved with the process of integrating a growing Muslim population. Issues such as the construction of mosques, the creation of representative Islamic bodies, or the wearing of religious symbols in schools are issues that have sparked vigorous public debates, rapidly crediting Islam. Despite the fact that Muslims have come into France from the beginning of the twentieth century, no official organization has been recognised by the state as the formal representative of the Muslim community until the creation of the French Council of the Muslim Faith in 2002. In the aftermath of the terror attacks worldwide, in London and other European cities, the question has reopened the issue on how to best ensure a cohesive, culturally-diverse society while preserving a Republic ‘laïque et indivisible’ and cultural identity. The suburban riots of 2005 have demonstrated that France struggles to achieve its egalitarian and universal democratic
culture that it is so proud of, being challenged with the task of fully integrating the Muslim community. France’s exclusive approach to integration has been shaped through its history, philosophy and contemporary concerns, all of which have contributed to produce suspicion about Islam.
CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH DESIGN

5.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: WHY A COMPARATIVE STUDY?

This research attempts to understand whether and how the school systems in Britain and France contribute to the social integration of Muslim ethnic minority. The research methodology adopted is that of a cross-national comparative study of schooling system in Britain and France. Due to the rather complex nature of the investigated problem, both quantitative and qualitative analyses have been utilised for the enquiry in which I was the only researcher involved in data collection and analysis.

According to Ragin, 'comparative research examines the patterns of similarities and differences across cases and tries to come to terms with their diversity; ... such research is defined by its focus on a phenomenon that is historically delimited, culturally significant' (Ragin, 1994:51/110). The initial motivation for a cross-national comparison of British Muslim and French Muslim minorities comes from my interest in the dynamic relation between religious minorities, the nation state in which they live and the external 'homelands' to which they belong by ethno-cultural affinity but not by legal citizenship. Integration is a complex concept that each nation tries to define in terms of its own institutionalised definitions of citizenship, nationality and national identity. A cross-national comparative approach is considered essential here as the objective is to explain and interpret the variations from the cases under study and to produce limited generalisations.

The choice of a cross-national comparative study involves studying a phenomenon in more than one country and where conclusions will bring out the similarities and/or differences across the different national contexts. However, the equivalence of subject matter under study is at the heart of the comparative method. The choice of countries must be justified, asserting that the countries are equivalent or resemble one another sufficiently for the purposes of the analysis. In this study, Britain and France share a number of similarities such as experiencing a colonial history, undergoing...
patterns of immigration flux and as a result gaining a large Muslim population of diverse ethnic origins. Both countries are faced with the similar task of providing an education to young Muslims whilst fostering the notion of integration of ethnic minorities through schooling.

The rationale behind this comparative study is to look at the differences and similarities of the Muslim group within two societies. The aim is to provide a definition of Muslim self-identity, an account for the impact and influence of British and French education system in fostering recognition of cultural differences and an attempt to provide contextual knowledge about the social integration of British and French Muslim minorities. Conducting and interpreting comparative research requires attention to a number of issues that may not arise from research within one's own country. Among those are the issues related to the 'insider/outsider' perspective, my personal reflection on the advantages of doing comparative research and experience of it, the location for research and language. The personality and presence of the researcher within the investigation plays an important role as a person's thoughts and ideas tend to be inherently positioned. For Nightingale and Cromby for example,

‘reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgment of the impossibility of remaining outside of one's subject matter while conducting research. Reflexivity incites the researcher to explore the ways in which his involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs the research’ (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999:228).

In other words, reflexivity is an acknowledgement of the role and influence of the researcher on the research project, making the role of the researcher subject to the same critical analysis and scrutiny as the research itself.

Reflexivity could be identified at two levels: a personal reflexivity and an epistemological reflexivity. The former involves ‘reflecting upon the ways in which one’s own values, experiences, interests, beliefs have shaped the research’ (Willig, 2001:10). Within the process of comparative research, the researcher needs to take into account the position of ‘insider/outsider’ in connection with the cultural context in which information data is collected. During my study, I can claim that my role was both that of an insider who could share the meanings of participants and that of an outsider who had the advantage of coming to a setting with untainted views. During this study, I was both an insider trying to access participants’ meanings in France and
an outsider trying to do the same with British participants. In my position of being
French investigating British schools and that of living abroad and investigating
French schools, I eligible to be perceived as a ‘foreigner’ by participants who were
the focus of that research. This effect allowed me to stand in a position where my
relation with the participants could be based on a mutual understanding of ‘being
different’ and yet being sensitive to context.

Epistemological reflexivity can be defined as being the encouragement to ‘reflect
upon the assumption that are made in the course of the research, and help to think
about the implications of such assumptions for the research and its findings’ (Willig,
2001:10). For Bourdieu ‘three principal sources of potential bias can be identified in
knowledge claims: the social origins of the researcher, the researcher’s position in the
intellectual field, and that of viewing the world as a spectacle or what Bourdieu called
the ‘intellectualist bias’. In other words, the focus becomes how the social position
and structure of the field in relation to objects of study shape knowledge claims’
(Bourdieu, 2000:51). In essence, Bourdieu argues that the production of a knowledge
claim can be deemed to be objective if the social scientist is reflexively aware of the
intrinsic biases that he is hampered with.

My fieldwork took place in Britain and France, within selected schools of different
geographic regions in each country. Because the pupils I interviewed were not
nationally representative, the findings presented could not pretend to be generalisable
to all young Muslim people in each country but attempt to give a partial view of
British and French adolescents. Because my research was cross-national, it was
important to give careful attention to issues of language and translation. Good
interpersonal skills, communication skills and interviewing skills proved to be crucial
for the research process. My level of interpersonal skills facilitated the trust between
the interviewees and myself, thus improving the quality of the data collected. When
interviewing French respondents, their reactions helped me with building trust and
relationships between the interviewees and myself. In addition to interpersonal skills,
linguistic skills also played an important role during the interview process. My
bilingual skill allowed me to approach French respondents with familiarity, enabling
them to express themselves fully using the most appropriate selections of words and
phrases, thus facilitating the narrative approach. My linguistic ability in this research
extended to the production of transcripts which were transcribed in the same language.
in which the data was collected. However, the analysis and interpretation of data was in the same language i.e. in English. In summary, I conducted all interviews in the language of the participants, providing translation for French quotes.

There has been some debate about the role of bilingual researchers and very little has been written about the effects of being bilingual on research. For Temple ‘what it means to be bilingual is often essentialised and rarely problematised. There have been developments within sociolinguistics, particularly around what it means to be bilingual that could make a valuable contribution to cross-language research across a range of disciplines’ (Temple, 2006:3). In my case, my ability to speak French provided the interviewees with assurance that their expressed views would not be misrepresented by ambiguity. In this regard, I can say that I presented an account of the French participants’ views as authentically and vividly expressed as it could be.

Looking back at the fieldwork achieved, I felt a significant and noticeable difference in the ways the research process went in the two countries. For example, when interviewing British participants, the nature and subject matter of questions appeared as if they ‘fitted’ adequately within the environment of tolerant ethnic plurality. No inhibition or restraint was felt by asking how a young boy or girl felt about ‘being Muslim’ and participants were at ease talking about themselves. My contact with participants was very easy and relaxed and their general approach to my questioning showed a great sense of openness on their part. During my fieldwork in Britain, I had little contact with teachers, not because they were disinclined but because their busy teaching schedule and my own time constraint prevented this. In general, my presence in the classroom during the distribution and completion of questionnaires reflected their positive attitude and willingness to accommodate my research. Contact with the headteachers and the people I liaised with was excellent. They were very helpful and friendly and made me feel that my work was meaningful and taken seriously.

My experience in France was very different at various levels. When interviewing French participants, my feeling of ease experienced in Britain was not there at first. The nature and subject matter of the same questions asked in Britain felt somehow inappropriate to the secular environment, as if their raison d’être became devoid of any meaning. This impression made me feel slightly uneasy and made me wonder whether I was asking the wrong kind of questions. But then, after presenting the topic
of my research and explaining the reasons why I was in their school, the participants realised that an opportunity was offered to them to talk overtly and unreservedly about themselves, which they did with great enthusiasm and eagerness. This change of attitude could translate the fact that French participants were never given a chance to express their views on a topic that concerns them directly. My contact with the participants was very enjoyable and positive. At first, they were surprised by the nature of my inquiry but gradually the interviewees lost their shyness and quietness and developed a progressive enjoyment talking about themselves. In addition, my identity appeared somehow unclear to them as I was a French person living in Britain and, as a result, did not know if I should to be perceived as British. Overall, the French participants expressed clearly and candidly a facet of themselves that is seldom investigated. In general, contact with teachers was good and they showed an interest and willingness to accommodate my visit during their class. My contact with the headteachers and the people I liaised with were not always trouble-free. Despite their genuine motivation and interest in my work, I was left to organise myself (e.g. arranging time for questionnaires, setting up the selective process of interviewees, organising timetable for interviews/group discussion, distributing and obtaining parental consent) with little support from the person instructed to help me. This lack of organisation and coordination suggested a lack of enthusiasm in my research despite the headteachers' keenness to see me there. This situation proved to be demanding on my part but did not distract me from conducting my fieldwork.

For me, two benefits of doing comparative cross-national research have been personally rewarding. First, I have found that by doing comparative research I have learned much about British and French cultures, especially the way education is a tool by which particular histories and cultural values of a society are revealed. For example I remember a French headteacher describing the long tradition of defining laïcité and explaining to me that pursuit of equality can only be achieved when cultural identity is absent. In another instance, a British member of the school administration explained that the French ban on headscarves was the worst way to protect freedom of expression. As well as discovering disparate cultural values, I also noticed habits and practices that are well established in British and French schools. In Britain, for example, it is customary for students to attend Assembly regularly, where current societal topics or issues related to adolescence are approached, discussed and
left to the adolescents to ponder upon; in France, such school gatherings do not exist. When a pupil receives detention in Britain, their parents are first notified and the detention takes place at least 24 hours later. However, in France the detention is implemented on the same day with the parents being informed during the day. The second advantage of doing a comparative study was to appreciate the extent to which the British and French schooling systems share many common interests in their commitment in providing an education to young people, despite their different approaches, concerns and frameworks. By presenting similarities and differences in British and French education, I looked at the way school prepares young people to be part of a society.

In short, doing comparative research is constructive on two levels. Firstly, it can expand the conceptual notion of education and cultural differences. For example, by looking at Britain, I could observe that pupils learn much about the diverse religious and cultural viewpoints within their society. Being born and brought up in France, I can see that French pupils are missing the opportunity to learn about cultural diversity when themes and topics related to perspectives around religion and culture are avoided. This could help them in broadening their understanding of what a multicultural and ethnically diverse society means. Secondly, comparative research can improve understanding cultural differences without the need to generalise. Given that the number of participants was relatively low, it would not be possible to make claims about the behaviour and beliefs of the Muslim communities in Britain or France. However, I believe it is reasonable to say that, from the data collected, more British Muslim pupils indicated that they were bullied or made fun of because of their religious background than their French counterparts. Thus, the data analysis has focused on bringing out the relative differences without generalising the results.

5.2 **Schools selection: criteria and identification**

Selecting schools involved a number of criteria of which one was the level of education. Secondary school education was the target because children over eleven years of age are more likely to be aware of their cultural identity and differences and therefore are able to reflect on their views and opinions. The relationship between age and cognitive readiness has been demonstrated by Piaget in his theory of cognitive development. According to Piaget, ‘preadolescence begins from eleven years
onward, with the process of attaining formal operational stage of development when intelligence is shown through the logical use of symbols related to abstract concepts. There is typically a return to egocentric thinking early in the period which progressively moves the individual to a much broader perspective and thinking beyond himself or herself” (Piaget 2001:163). In addition, Siegler suggests ‘that an important ability of people who reach this stage is that they are able to think abstractly about such issues as truth, morality, justice, and the nature of existence. Thus, cognitive development becomes a pre-requisite for the acquisition of morality based upon abstract principles’ (Siegler, 1991:43).

Another criterion of selection was the type of school from which data was gathered. State-funded secondary schools were chosen for several reasons. In Britain, secondary schools intend to put into action anti-racism and multiculturalism policies, which correspond to the two central themes of the debate on education and ethnic minority groups. By acknowledging the separate identity of ethnic minority children, the school constitutes an appropriate ground to examine children’s interaction with the education system. In France, secondary schools have to treat all children on a neutral stance with regards to religion and ideology, on the theoretical ground that such differences cannot exist. To meet this objective, structures and strategies are established: the sole use of French at school and an education that is based on the Republican principle of *laïcité*. Looking at the possible differences between the two national education systems, which are both linked to the idea of fostering the notion of integration, is interesting when examined from the pupils’ point of view, and more particularly from those of Muslim faith. Furthermore, secondary school represents the space whereby children enter an age when they develop their own personal sense of cultural identity and differences, unveiling who they are and being aware of who they are not. This aspect is of importance as it reflects what young people think about themselves within a group, within the school and within the society they live in.

Because the purpose of the research was to compare British and French Muslim adolescents, it was essential to have schools with a large number of Muslim children for each country. For this, I decided to select two schools in each country. Each school had to have at least 20% of children from the Muslim culture and heritage, a proportion considered sufficient to ensure a sample big enough for analysis. This
criterion required careful consideration in terms of school location and geographical areas.

Geographical areas were important criteria as this determined the location of fieldwork. In addition, other elements such as proximity and access to schools, as well as financial constraints, were taken into consideration in identifying the broad geographical locations of potential schools. In Britain, large-scale migration began in the 1950s when Muslims, mostly from Indian sub-continent, came to Britain for employment. They settled mainly in inner London, the textile towns of northern England and the Strathclyde region of Scotland. Thus, geographical location for the first British school was identified to be inner London and more specifically the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, which is situated in the East End of London. The area attracted large numbers of people looking for employment. Successive waves of foreign immigration began with Huguenot refugees in the seventeenth century, followed by Irish weavers, Jews and in the twentieth century, Bangladeshis. Many of these immigrants worked in the clothing industry. The main ethnic groups are the white British (42.9%) and Bangladeshis, which constitute 33% of the population. The main religions that are followed or practiced in Tower Hamlets are Christianity and Islam. In 1991 Bangladeshis made up 23% of the population of Tower Hamlets and 95% of Bangladeshis come from the rural district of Sylhet. The Muslim population in the borough is the largest out of all authorities in England and Wales.

The geographical location for the second British school was outside the London area, in Berkshire. However, just before the start of my fieldwork, I encountered problems that prevented me from continuing data collection at this school (this is further discussed under the point ‘Problems encountered’). I, therefore, had to find an alternative school in order to maintain my schedule for completion of fieldwork. Fortunately, a school in Surrey where I had done the piloting of interviews and questionnaire agreed to let me conduct my fieldwork. So, Surrey was the geographical location of my second school. With a relatively large Pakistani community, their migration to Britain started slowly and peaked in 1961 and 1962. Their arrival into Britain was to fill unskilled textile jobs in Yorkshire and Lancashire textile mills. Pakistanis are now the third largest ethnic minority group in Britain. They are not evenly distributed throughout Britain, with around 87% living in four regions: the South East (30%), West Midlands (21%), Yorkshire and Humberside...
(20%) and the North East (16%). Most people who came from Pakistan were aided by chain migration. The early pioneers who had found accommodation and employment in Britain then sponsored other men, usually from the same family group or village to join them. This pattern of chain migration led to large numbers of Pakistanis settling in particular regions, including Surrey.

In France, Muslim immigration was largely important in the 1950s and 1960s, a post-war phenomenon for the most part. The immigrants came primarily from Algeria and other North African colonies. Muslim immigration (mostly single males) was to meet the French labour workforce shortage of a booming post-war economy. The trend continued into the 1970s, where Muslim immigration was a temporary solution to an economic problem. Like in Britain, minority ethnic groups tend to be settled in the large cities and industrial towns. The geographical location for the first French school was the city of Le Havre, North-East of France. Le Havre is the second-largest port in France and the fifth-largest in Europe. The industries there include textiles, engineering, chemicals, car manufacturing and oil refining. It is a major import centre for cotton, coffee, sugar, tobacco and wool. With its large industrial activities, Le Havre and its neighbourhood districts are heavily populated by Muslim immigrants from Africa and the Maghreb.

The geographical location for the second French school was initially suburban Paris, and more particularly the area of Seine-Saint-Denis. In French administrative organisation, Paris is at the heart of the Île-de-France region which is made of eight départements out of which Seine-Saint-Denis. Parisian suburbs make up the areas with the highest proportion of Muslims in France. I was particularly interested in the area of Seine-Saint-Denis because of a large North African population living there. Seine-Saint-Denis is the French department with the highest proportion of immigrants. The ratio of ethnic minorities is difficult to estimate accurately, as French law prohibits the collection of ethnic data for census taking purposes. However estimates suggest there are 500,000 Muslims out of a total population of 1.4 million38. Having successfully found a school in this area, a week before I was to start my fieldwork the headteacher informed me that he was withdrawing his agreement for me

38 Institut National des Statistiques et Études Économiques (INSEE), on www.insee.fr
to collect data in his school\textsuperscript{39}. I tried to find another school in the same area but with no success. So, I decided to extend my search to an area I am familiar with, the region of Bordeaux. Bordeaux is a port in the southwest, and has long been considered to be one of the most important regions for grape-growing and wine production. Other industries include textiles, engineering, electronic manufacturing, car manufacturing, plane manufacturing and the food industry. As in Le Havre, Bordeaux and its suburbs are heavily populated by Muslim immigrants from Africa and the Maghreb.

**Identifying and establishing links with schools**

The census conducted in England and Wales by the Office for National Statistics and in Scotland by the General Register Office for Scotland is the main source of data on the demography and ethnic composition of the population in Britain. A question on ethnicity and religion was introduced for the first time in 1991, meaning that the 2001 census offered the first chance to compare the geographical distribution of ethnic groups. The census report\textsuperscript{40} showed that the minority ethnic groups tended to be settled in the large cities and industrial towns. For this study, the key ethnic groups of interest were the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, which are concentrated in London and its periphery. In Britain, information on the ethnic background of pupils is easily available through the OFSTED Inspection report\textsuperscript{41}. As a result, locating schools that met the defined school selection criteria presented no difficulty.

Unlike Britain, it would be inconceivable in French schools to enquire into the ethnic background of students. In acquiring data, the schools in France differentiate between French and foreign citizens, but it does not ask for any further group membership. All aspects related to ethnic origin are carefully avoided due to the principle of *laïcité* which forbids collection of such data. The lack of ethnic background information meant the school identification and selection process proved to be a much more complex endeavour. A way of approaching school identification was to identify the schools qualified as ‘ZEP’ schools, which have a high probability of ethnic minority children. This information was available on the websites of the Ministry of Education and Regional Administration. It was through this channel that two schools were

\textsuperscript{39} Explanation of this refusal is given in section titled ‘Problems encountered’

\textsuperscript{40} www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001

\textsuperscript{41} OFSTED (Office of Standards in Education) reports are available through their website: www.ofsted.gov.uk
selected. Table 5-1 shows at a glance the statistics of contacts made and the step-by-step progress all the way to the schools being surveyed.

Table 5-1 Number of contacts made with schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No. of schools identified</th>
<th>Total responses to email received</th>
<th>No. of Introduction letters to schools</th>
<th>Initial agreement from school</th>
<th>Schools surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkshire</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le Havre</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordeaux</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The process of school identification involved three steps. Step one involved making initial contact with the headteacher via e-mail. Those that replied positively were sent an Introduction letter (see Annex A) with details of the study. Step two involved a day visit to the school to discuss the requirements of the study and obtain an agreement from the headteacher on the dates for fieldwork and to ascertain the level of support the school would be able to provide. For the two schools visited in Britain, I was met by deputy headteachers with whom I liaised throughout the fieldwork. They helped me with the preparatory work required, in other words organising the time allocated for questionnaires, setting up the selective process of interviewees, arranging timetable for interviews and group discussion, as well as distributing and obtaining parental consent. All these efforts resulted in two weeks of fieldwork fully completed and very well-organised. For the two schools visited in France, I was met by the headteachers who took personal charge in setting up the selective process of interviewees. However, I liaised with the headteachers' secretaries who were instructed to help me in all preparatory work. Usually loaded with administrative work, these people did not always have the time or attention that I needed. As a result, the two weeks of fieldwork proved to be demanding, as little preparatory work was completed before the start. It was with a lot of patience and efforts that I conducted my fieldwork in the French schools.
Problems encountered

Finding schools for data collection was not very straightforward in either country. As shown in Table 5-1, many contacts were made and many schools decided against the study. However, the problems experienced were of a different nature: lack of motivation in Britain and sensitivity of the research topic in France.

Britain

Among the negative responses received, some indicated that they were already oversolicited with similar requests from other researchers and could not support this study. Others were just not interested.

Problems were encountered in the first school contacted, which was situated in Berkshire. Having agreed to the study, the headteacher and staff were very enthusiastic and fully supportive. The timetable was all agreed and the participants informed and given the letter of consent to be signed off by their parents. Unfortunately, the children showed no willingness to participate in the study in spite of strong encouragement from the staff. I was unable to get a good reason for this reluctance to co-operate and was advised by the liaising staff to abandon the project. Because of time and financial constraints, I looked for an alternative school. Given the opportunity, I think it would have been interesting to understand the reasons for such negative reaction.

France

Obtaining access to French schools proved even more challenging. Initial search for schools was focused on the area of Seine-Saint-Denis, an eastern suburb of Paris. The district of Clichy-sous-Bois in Seine-Saint-Denis was of interest because it was the scene which sparked the nationwide riots in Autumn 2005. All of the potential ZEP schools in this area were contacted but most of them refused outright. A few declared interest and unofficially welcomed the study but said they could not allow the data collection due to the principle of laïcité that the school embodied. One school, however, agreed for the study to be conducted. During my day visit, I had a very successful meeting at the school with the headteacher and staff who showed great interest and enthusiasm in my project. Details of the study were discussed and a timetable agreed. Regrettably, three months after my visit, the headteacher was
promoted to another school in a different suburb in Paris. She informed me of her departure and reassured me that her successor was fully informed of my planned week visit for fieldwork later that year. After several unanswered emails and many phone calls, the new headteacher finally made contact requesting that I provide details of the proposed fieldwork including a copy of the questionnaire and my interview schedule. I sent all of the requested information promptly. There was no more communication from the headteacher until a week before the start of fieldwork when he called me to say that he was withdrawing the offer to collect data in his school. Again, the principle of laïcité was quoted as the reason for his refusal. It is interesting to note that similar problems were encountered by Professor James Beckford while conducting a cross-national research project on Muslims in the prisons of Britain and France. He encountered similar difficulties in gaining access to French prisons during his fieldwork. He experienced a degree of reluctance or obstruction on the part of the Directeurs who ‘adopted delaying tactics and, in one case, insisted on being assured that the researchers were laïque’ (Beckford, 2005:288). In contrast, no similar difficulty was reported as far as gaining access to the prisons in England and Wales. In all, Beckford and his team of researchers noticed ‘the same pattern of relatively strong cooperativeness in Britain and uncooperativeness in France’ (Beckford, 2005:289).

Once my fieldwork in Britain and France was completed, I realised that I had relatively less quantitative data from France than from Britain. I decided to redress this by sending further survey questionnaires to schools in the North of France (Lille, Calais and Dunkerque). A number of schools were contacted but my search proved to be fruitless. As with the Paris schools, the responses were unanimously negative. Due to time constraints, I decided to abandon the search for more data and focus my analysis on the data collected.

In summary, I encountered problems in both countries in finding schools willing to open their doors for data collection. The schools in Britain generally welcomed the study. The few rejections were due to either a lack of interest or being too busy with other project studies. The main issue in France was the delicate, sensitive and charged nature of the topic. Though many schools thought the research project was attractive and worthy of investigation, they were not prepared to take the risk of getting on the wrong side of the law regarding laïcité. The latter alone strikes at the
heart of public religious expression and even beyond. Because the French state does not allow any proselytising in public buildings - least of all schools - the insistence on schools as religion-free zones goes to the heart of an idea of laïcité. The resistance I met in obtaining a positive answer from French schools translated primarily the difficulty that my research project could cause, namely affecting the neutrality of the secular school by soliciting an activity that could draw attention. By focusing my interest on pupils from the Muslim culture and heritage, the headteachers judged that I was overtly drawing attention to a definite population of their school and thus infringing the basic principle of laïcité.

**Presentation of each school**

After months of perseverance in identifying schools, particularly in France, the following four schools**42** kindly opened their doors for data collection which lasted one week in each school.

- The J. Austin School, London
- The T. Hardy College, Surrey
- Collège E. Zola, Le Havre
- Collège S. de Beauvoir, Bordeaux

**The J. Austin School (School A)**

The J. Austin School is a mixed comprehensive secondary school, categorised as a specialist business and technology college, with 1023 pupils on roll, aged between 11 and 16 (OFSTED Report, 2005). Over 90% of its students are British Asian, predominantly of Bangladeshi heritage (846), with small numbers from other ethnic backgrounds (16 Pakistani and 12 Indian). Almost all students have English as a second language and about 10% are in the early stages of learning English. Among the Bangladeshi students, a small percentage of them come from Sylhet, the northeastern region of Bangladesh, and speak and write Sylheti.

My day visit and my week of fieldwork were successful and enjoyable experiences. The headteacher and members of staff were very welcoming and helpful. On the first day of my fieldwork and before the first class started, the headteacher introduced me

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42 To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms are used for the schools.
to the teaching staff, explaining the purpose of my visit and its aim. The deputy headteacher, with whom I liaised, introduced me to the pupils of the school gathered in the Hall. The purpose of my visit was explained to the pupils and a request was made to them to contribute to the study if they were selected. Teachers showed enthusiasm and willingness to help if their class was chosen for distribution and completion of questionnaires. Together their teaching assistants, they provided support to pupils who had difficulty in understanding questions. A room was allocated for me to conduct my interviews and the group discussion. Overall, the children showed great enthusiasm in contributing to the research, showing confidence and very little inhibition. The fieldwork took place in the morning until midday, and lasted five days. Details of planned and actual interviews conducted are given in Annex B.

The T. Hardy College (School B)

The T. Hardy College is a smaller than average mixed comprehensive secondary school with 654 pupils on roll, aged between 11 and 16 (OFSTED Report, 2005). There are an equal number of boys and girls who come from the local area. Two thirds of pupils are white British and one third is of Asian origin (144 Pakistani). The percentage of pupils with English as a second language is high at 27%.

My day visit and my week of fieldwork were successful. On the first day of the fieldwork, I was met by the deputy headteacher with whom I liaised. Unlike the school in London, I was not directly introduced to the pupils of the school. The deputy headteacher introduced me to the teaching staff, explaining the purpose of my visit. Like in London, teachers showed a willingness to help if their class was picked. A room adjacent to the Library was at my disposal for interviews and group discussion. The Librarian was made responsible for collecting and returning the children from their classroom for the interviews. Overall, the pupils were willing and keen to be part of the study. There was, however, a fire incident in the school at the time the group discussion was on. As a result, all the buildings were evacuated and all activities for the rest of the day were cancelled. The group discussion could not be resumed and was therefore not completed. The fieldwork at this school took place in the morning until early afternoon and lasted five days.
Collège E. Zola (School C)

Collège E. Zola is a school categorised as a ZEP school (i.e. school in Priority Education Zone) with a SEGPA section (Section d’Enseignement Général et Professionnel Adapte). This means that the school provides an ‘adapted’ teaching program that includes a general track combined together with professional or vocational teaching. The pupils follow this program from Year 7 up to Year 10, with the professional teaching starting in Year 9. The school has 399 pupils on roll, of which 61 are in SEGPA section\(^4\). My day visit to Le Havre was successful and conclusive. Having received numerous negative answers from French schools, the headteacher of Collège Zola demonstrated a progressive and welcoming attitude towards my research. She thought that the topic was very relevant and needed to be investigated, as too little was done about it. As mentioned earlier, my week of fieldwork was more demanding as little preparatory work was completed by my school link before my arrival.

On the first day of fieldwork, the headteacher welcomed me and introduced me to her administrative staff and showed me around the school. Although my first impressions were positive overall, I felt a lack of connection between the administrative, management staff and teaching staff. This was further enhanced by the architectural set up which separated the administrative building on one side of the school and the teaching building on the other. My first day was spent finishing preparatory work before proceeding to interviews. A meeting room was allocated for my interviews and group discussions. Like the school in Surrey, I was not directly introduced to students and it was the secretary who presented me to the teaching staff. Everyone was friendly, showing some interest and happy to help. However, one teacher demonstrated some irritation and impatience with my presence in his class when questionnaires were distributed for completion. His remarks and behaviour towards his pupils reflected his sense of annoyance at what was clearly a disruption to his class routine. During the interviews, pupils were at first shy and inhibited but soon relaxed and became very talkative. Many of them expressed their happiness to be able to speak openly to someone about their cultural identity, emphasising that they did not discuss it at school. Overall, participants were enthusiastic and happy about their interviewing experience and in general the teachers were quite accommodating.

However, I experienced some problems during the data collection, which resulted in a relatively low number of questionnaires and interviews. A national teaching staff strike occurred during the week I was there and as a result no teachers and only a few pupils were at school. Unfortunately, interviews scheduled on that day were cancelled and it was not possible to reschedule, due to my time constraints. The fieldwork took place all day, finishing late in the afternoon, and lasted for five days.

**Collège S. de Beauvoir (School D)**

Collège S. de Beauvoir is also a school categorised as a ZEP school, with a SEGPA section. The school has 451 pupils on roll, of which 76 are in SEGPA section\(^44\). In addition, the school has what is called a *Classe d'Accueil* (CLA) (welcoming class) whose objective is to integrate non-French speaking pupils into the school system and study program as quickly as possible. These pupils are usually from countries which experience conflict or civil wars and for whom school life has been profoundly disrupted. They are registered as any other pupil but have to follow additional classes called *Français Langue Seconde* (French second language). Generally, pupils stay in CLA around nine months. As they gain fluency in French, they progressively move to the teaching program related to their school year. The Collège S. de Beauvoir has been welcoming non-French speaking pupils for the last fifteen years, with around eighteen a year, originating mainly from Kosovo and Africa (e.g. Mali).

Like the school in Le Havre, my week of fieldwork appeared to be more demanding, as once again little preparatory work was completed before my arrival. On the first day of my fieldwork, the headteacher welcomed me and introduced me to his administrative and teaching staff after a guided tour of the school. The school environment was welcoming and friendly and the headteacher praised the modern and thoughtful architecture of his school. Like in Le Havre, my first day was spent finishing off preparatory work before proceeding to interviews. I was not introduced to children but they were informed of my presence as they saw me in their playground during their breaks. The teaching staff was very accommodating and showed a great interest in my research. I was allocated an office to conduct my interviews. The group discussion was organised in a conference room. Pupils were shy at first but soon opened up and enthusiastically talked about themselves. They welcomed the idea

\(^44\) InfoCentre Académique, www.ac-bordeaux.fr, 2007
of talking about their cultural identity and wished they could do it more often. A relatively low number of questionnaires and interviews were collected. The fieldwork took place all day, finishing late in the afternoon and lasting five days.

5.3 THE SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The secondary schooling year system in Britain differs slightly to the French one as shown in Annex C. The former is spread out on a five year cycle, from year 7 to 11. The latter, on the other hand, follows a four year cycle, going in descending order from Sixth grade (la Sixième) to Third grade (la Troisième). Therefore, for the purpose of comparative analyses, the data collection of British children in Year 11 will not be considered in order to ensure cross-schooling equivalence.

In Britain and France, questionnaires were distributed to Muslim and non-Muslim children, aged between 11 and 15, in each of the selected schools. With the help of the teachers, the class in each year group with most Muslim children were identified. The questionnaires were distributed to all pupils in the class for completion in the classroom. About 15 minutes were allocated for completion of the questionnaire.

322 questionnaires were completed and returned, of which 107 were from school A, 102 from School B, 79 from School C and 34 from School D. Of these, 227 questionnaires were from pupils of Muslim heritage (School A: 105; School B: 64; School C: 45 and School D: 13). The data of the non-Muslim participants (95 in total) was used as a way of contrasting Muslim and non-Muslim within countries but only in order to establish if there were any significant similarities in responses. Initial analysis made a comparison of schools within countries and found no significant differences. As a result, the analysis has focused on comparing Muslim participants between countries and, at relevant points, Muslim and non-Muslim within countries.

Figure 5-1 shows the breakdown of the number of Muslim participants by country and school year. The original research aim was to try and get data from at least 20% of children of Muslim heritage within each school. The actual returns were just short of the target. However, there were significant differences in sample sizes due to the relative size of the schools in Britain and France. Typically, British secondary schools tend to have student numbers between 600 and 1000 compared to less than
400 in French schools. This difference in the number of registered students was reflected in the number of completed questionnaires returned.

![Diagram showing Muslim participants by year group in Britain and France](image)

*Fig. 5-1 Frequency of Muslim participants*

For interviews and group discussions, only pupils of Muslim heritage were selected. The following process was used for selecting participants:

a) The school identified Muslim children and generated a list arranged in subcategories for gender and school year

b) Each child was then assigned a number by the school

c) I then randomly picked a number

d) The school cross-referenced numbers to names and checked if the child was able to communicate well in English (or French); where this was not true, I would pick another number

e) Steps c and d were followed until all participants were selected

In Britain, schools can provide a list of pupils’ names through the OFSTED Inspection report in which information on the ethnic or religious background of pupils is captured and listed. The list (by surnames) was determined on the assumption that pupils of Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage were of Muslim faith. Unfortunately, French schools do not have information on ethnic origins as it is prohibited by legislation. Thus, it was at the discretion of the headteacher that the data collection was allowed to progress. The ethnic origins of the French participants were
determined indirectly through parents’ place of birth. The rationale was that there is a greater likelihood that a person born in a country with a declared state religion follows that religion and is inclined to pass it on to his children.

Figure 5-2 shows that 80% of British Muslim participants were born in Britain; 11% in Bangladesh; 7% in Pakistan and 2% in Europe. In contrast, 95% of French Muslim participants were born in France; 3% in Europe and 2% Africa (Figure 5-3).

Looking at the data on the birthplace of parents of the participants, a majority of them were born abroad. Only 16% of mothers and 11% of fathers were born in Britain, and 21% of mothers and 10% of fathers were born in France as shown in Figure 5-4.

Figures 5-5 and 5-6 show the countries where parents of British and French participants were born. The data shows that the parents of British participants were born predominantly in Bangladeshi or Pakistanis, whereas those of French participants were born in North or Sub-Saharan Africa.
About 12-15 Muslim pupils from each school were selected for face-to-face interviews. Also a group discussion was organised in each school. The pupils were randomly selected by gender and school year. Annex B provides details of the number of interviews, including gender breakdown, conducted at each school.

5.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

The research involved the design of two methodological tools for gathering data. The first used a quantitative approach in the form of a questionnaire; the second used a qualitative approach consisting of face-to-face, semi-structured interviews and group discussions. Ragin highlights the existence of a traditional conflict between quantitative and qualitative research, especially between professionals in the social sciences. For him ‘qualitative researchers tend to look at cases as wholes, and compare whole cases with each other, viewing them as combinations of characteristics’ (Ragin, 1994:112). Quantitative researchers on the other hand tend to take each case as a specific variable but, in doing so, lose social value and peculiarities. The rationale behind the use of combined methods lies in three aspects: firstly, the wish to gain a general perspective of the subject researched (i.e. Muslim children) as the fusion of mixed methods and the enriched findings from analyses add another dimension to the study; secondly, the need to address different aspects of the same question in survey and face-to-face interviews in order to capture the insights of the participants; finally, the aim to create complementarity in the analyses.
Questionnaire

The design of the questionnaire took into consideration the British and French policies with regards to the type and nature of data that was possible to collect. Consequently, only those questions that could be legitimately asked in both countries were used. This referred more pertinently to the data related to 'ethnicity', since one could not legally collect such data in France. As a result, this measure was not included in the study.

The questionnaire was anonymous and aimed to elicit three types of information:

- **details of the participant**: age, gender, school year, country of birth, parents' country of birth, language skills, religious affiliation.
- **views and opinions about themselves and the Muslim community**: the importance of describing themselves to others, significance and feelings about nationality, about Islam, role of religion, attendance at a place of worship, understanding of integration, views on the Muslim community.
- **life at school**: views and opinions about their school, teachers and education in general, friendships inside and outside of school.

The questionnaire consisted of a mixture of closed questions and ranking scales questions (Likert scaling). A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Annex D.

The English version of the questionnaire was translated into Sylheti (by a professional translator) on the recommendation of the headteacher of School A. This is because school has many Muslim children who have recently arrived in Britain from Bangladesh tended to have limited understanding of English. In the end, only one participant completed a Sylheti questionnaire (see Annex E). The translation of the Sylheti questionnaire was a direct one, following the questions from English to Sylheti. For French participants, the questionnaire was translated into French by me. A copy of the questionnaire is in Annex F. Other language questionnaires were not required for any of the French participants.

Questionnaire data were coded and analysed using SPSS 14.0 for Windows. The data of the non-Muslim participants (95 in total) were used as a way of contrasting Muslim vs. non-Muslim within the countries, in order to establish whether any significant differences in responses could exist. An initial analysis comparing the schools in each
country found no significant differences. As a result, the analysis concentrated mostly in comparing Muslim participants between Britain and France and, at relevant points, comparing Muslim and non-Muslim within Britain and France. The analysis included several aspects, such as comparing the views of young Muslim people about themselves, about the importance of religious identity and about the notion of integration. These comparisons were made across age and gender.

Quantitative work was used as preliminary data only with the aim to present an initial background of impressions and notions on the participants’ understanding of identity. Hence, no statistical analyses were made, as the real focus and interest was on the qualitative findings.

**Face-to-Face Interviews and Group Discussion**

The interviews and group discussions were conducted with Muslim pupils only, at school, during school hours and over a period of one week. The ‘where’ and ‘when’ was negotiated and planned accordingly with the help and support of the headteacher and/or coordinating teaching staff.

The interviews were conducted by me in English in Britain and in French in France. Each participant was asked to establish their own pseudo-name in order to protect his/her anonymity (see Annex G). These names are used throughout the analysis. Each face-to-face semi-structured interview lasted around thirty minutes and each group discussion around forty minutes.

An interview schedule (see Annex H) was designed and used for conducting both interviews and group discussions. Visual prompts were adopted to encourage the participants. These included a selection of visual material, for example drawings and photographs. They were used to probe interviewees by either providing some visual reassurance when outlining opinions, or by allowing the discussion to open up. These pictures aimed at prompting the participants’ willingness to empathise with the characters on the pictures and to comment on motivation behind their behaviour. They represented:

- A Muslim woman wearing the headscarf but having no facial features (Probe 1 in Annex I).
• A young Muslim school girl wearing the headscarf and hiding her face (Probe 2 in Annex I).

• Two women facing each other, one Muslim wearing the niqab and allowing the reader to see only her eyes, and the other, a Westerner whose eyes were blocked by a black stripe (Probe 3 in Annex I).

• A young Muslim girl standing under a mural poster (Probe 4 in Annex I).

The presentation of photographs and pictures was an effective way of obtaining the participants' attention, as they demanded some degree of concentration and thinking. In addition, the pictures were used as a visual anchor when explaining a point of view (i.e. the participant could consult the image for personal reassurance). The use of pictures and photographs allowed the participants to construct hypothetical suggestions about what might have been happening. Participants were enthusiastic and confident about talking and reflecting on this material, which encouraged the free flow of information. The choice of pictures representing mainly female characters was deliberate, as I wanted to provide the opportunity to explore issues by speculating on the feelings and interests of the participants. I noted that, although capable of empathising with members of the opposite sex, participants seemed to concentrate on characters or figures of their own sex. The content of these pictures provoked thoughts and reflections, showing signs of involvement from the participants.

Group discussions were harder to organise as six to eight participants had to be gathered at the same time. They were also challenging to manage and control, as some pupils contributed more than others (usually the older ones). Therefore, I had to ensure that each member of the group had the opportunity to express their views.

The data collected during face-to-face interviews and group discussions did not differentiate in regard to the type of information and content. Participants expressed similar views, opinions and comments. All interviews and group discussions were recorded on tape and subsequently transcribed by me in the language they were conducted. The transcripts were analysed using qualitative thematic analysis utilising the key procedures of grounded theory. For French transcripts, I decided to present the original version followed by its English translation as shown in the following example:
Preparing for fieldwork: Piloting

Prior to conducting the field study, I piloted the questionnaires and interviews. The piloting took place in Britain. No piloting was made in France. The rationale for this decision was based on the fact that finding two French schools willing to open their doors for fieldwork proved to be more complex and difficult than anticipated and hard to achieve, as previously discussed. The piloting conducted in Britain proved to be conclusive. On this basis, I assumed that the methodological tools would be appropriate in France.

School A was selected for piloting. The questionnaire was distributed to fifteen pupils between the age of 11 and 15, and five face-to-face interviews with Muslim children were conducted. In general, the outcome of the piloting pointed to some imprecise aspects of the questionnaire, leading to some confusion about how to understand the question or how to answer it. In the light of these comments, further modifications were brought to the document. Face-to-face interviews revealed that the interview schedule was a great help in enabling a constructive and informative dialogue.

Ethical considerations

The research followed the Surrey University ethical guidelines and the Social Research Association ethical practice and guidelines. Participants were given an ‘Information Sheet’ (in both languages) explaining the purpose of the study, the conditions under which the data was used, how it was going to be published, how anonymity of individual participant was protected, and how confidentiality of the final dataset was safeguarded. A copy of the Information Sheet is at Annex J.

A distinction must be made between the term ‘Consent Form’ and ‘Assent Form’. Whereas a ‘Consent form’ is used to acquire consent from subjects aged 18 years or older, an ‘Assent Form’ is used to obtain agreement from subjects under 18 years of age to be in the study. Consequently, an Assent Form (in both languages) was
required for each participant, giving them the opportunity to convey their own independent decision to participate in the research (see Annex K). However, the assent form alone was not sufficient to include the child in the study due to the age of the participants, and parental/guardian consent was also sought (a copy of the Assent Form is at Annex L). An ‘Information Sheet’ (in both languages) was given to the parent(s)/guardian, with a similar content to that given to the participants. A copy is at Annex M.

Due to the sensitive issue of the research, the study was considered from the perspective of all participants. During the process of interviewing, care and consideration were taken so that participants did not get distressed or upset. In the eventuality of such a situation, I was prepared to stop the interview and to advise the participants to talk either to someone at school (e.g. a teacher, a tutor) and/or be offered the possibility to contact a Childline support. In the case where participants would disclose information of a more confidential nature, I was prepared to inform them of possible support/access from Childline/Careline phone numbers and/or websites that operate both in Britain and France (see Annex N). During the fieldwork in Britain and France, I reported no such situation and participants did not disclose any information that I thought was of a more confidential nature or otherwise.
CHAPTER 6

SELF-IDENTITY ... ÊTRE MUSULMAN

One of the research aims is to understand from the children's perspective what they believe and feel about their sense of self-identity. Chapter two described the making of British and French civic society, which provides a framework for understanding how young Muslim people situate themselves in their host society. The fieldwork study attempted to answer the following two questions relating to how Muslim pupils define their sense of self-identity: 1) How do the participants situate themselves with respect to nationality and religion? 2) How significant is the subjective importance of religious identity to Muslim participants?

This chapter presents the findings from the qualitative and quantitative data collected on two aspects considered central to what it means being Muslim. First, the importance of maintaining cultural ties is examined through the languages spoken, religious education (i.e. the reading of the Koran), performance of faith and its practices/celebration (i.e. fasting a Ramadan and the celebration of Eid) and the display and symbols of faith (i.e. the wearing of the headscarf). Second, feelings about being a Muslim are discussed through the role and importance of religion, views on nationality and the subjective notion of self-identity. At relevant points, the data collected from non-Muslim participants are presented as a way of contrasting 'Muslim vs. non-Muslim' within countries.

6.1 MAINTAINING CULTURAL TIES

Languages spoken by participants

Mother tongues and national languages are linked to culture. Knowledge of the national language serves as a standard by which integration into the host society takes place. Also, language provides one of the main ethnic markers by which ethnic groups may distinguish themselves or are distinguished by others. For the purpose of the study, the mother tongue is considered as a good indicator of ethnic origins and
the collection of this data helps to establish whether participants keep ties with their cultural background.

Overall, the findings show that all British participants are multilingual in comparison to 76% of the French participants. Figure 6-1 shows the range of languages spoken by British and French participants. In essence, one can assume that cultural background, including mother tongue, is more likely to be maintained and passed on to the British participants than to the French ones.

If participants know how to speak their mother tongue, is this the one with which they communicate at home with their parents? Figures 6-2 and 6-3 show the languages spoken at home by British and French participants, respectively. 75% of British participants indicated that they speak in their mother tongue (68% Asian, 6% European and 1% African languages) with their parents. In contrast, only 19% of the
French participants speak in their mother tongue (10% Arabic\(^{45}\), 9% African languages) with their parents. 45% of French participants speak only French at home compared to just 6% of British participants, who use only English to communicate with their parents.

Among friends at school, British and French participants indicated their clear preference for English (80%) and French (100%) respectively. Outside school, 65% of the British participants preferred to converse with their friends in English. This contrasts with the 98% of French participants, who prefer to communicate only in French. In light of these findings, it appears that British participants are more likely to keep strong ties with their cultural background than their French counterparts, demonstrating a nation that gives free rein to minority groups to deploy their cultural heritage. In contrast, their French counterparts tend to inhibit using their mother tongues, showing the dominant status of the French language instead.

**Religious education: reading the Koran**

For British and French interviewees, Religious Education and its transmission is essential. Examination of the processes and religious practices, however, indicate that there are differences between the two nations.

For British interviewees, Religious Education is mainly given at the Mosque by an Imam, usually for a few hours a week after school or during week-ends. On average, the process of learning starts as early as four or five years of age, for boys as well as for girls. During these classes, young people learn how to read ‘Koranic Arabic’. There are different stages in this learning process, starting with the alphabet and finishing with the completion of the Holy Book. However, for some the teaching approach by the Mosque can be too stringent and as a result they prefer the familial and more casual approach to learning. Home learning is either through private tuition or with grand-parents and/or other relatives.

\(^{45}\) A number of French participants indicated that they spoke Algerian or Moroccan. However, it is worth noting that such languages do not officially exist but are dialects of the Arabic language. Arabic may refer to either ‘literary Arabic’ or the many localized varieties of Arabic commonly called ‘colloquial or dialectal Arabic’. Literary Arabic refers both to the language of present-day media across North Africa and the Middle East and to the language of the Koran. Colloquial or dialectal Arabic refers to the many national or regional varieties derived from classical Arabic, spoken across North Africa and the Middle East, which constitute the everyday spoken language. So, in the case of French participants whose cultural origins are Algerian and Moroccan, their mother tongue is a colloquial Arabic.
(Katrina, 14, Surrey) I read at home, my Nan, my uncle, my Mum and Dad they know everything so they teach me everything. At the Mosque, they are really strict and I don't like being taught in a strict way like that. I found them really over the top. I like to be taught in a friendly way ... so that's why I prefer my family to teach me.

(Amisha, 12, London) I learn the Koran at home ... private ... a person comes at home. I suppose to spend two hours, but I spent one and half ... Saturdays and Sundays.

(King, 14, London) ... I just read at home like half an hour the Koran and put it away. When I come back, I read it and my grandma teaches me. I have to finish the Koran. It's work on the top of school work. My grandma wants me to read at least one hour and a half every day. I read at least 4 to 6 pages. But if I don't feel like doing it, my grandma will tell me that I will have to double my reading time on the next day. So, I don't want my time to get added ... and if I read on the same day for two hours on one day, my grandma says 'OK, now you can read for one hour and go wherever you want'. It's my own choice if I want to read the Koran and my grandma tells me stories about the past, history, Muslim stuff.

From these interviews, at least some British participants are exposed to a regular and supervised teaching, which the grandparents or family relatives were responsible for. This reflects not only the grounded belief in the transmission of cultural and religious values but also the acceptance and recognition of these values on the part of the receivers.

For French interviewees, religious classes take place more often at home than at the Mosque. Participants tend to learn Arabic at a much later age than their British counterparts. The classes usually involve members of the family, who offer a more liberal and laissez-faire method to teaching, suggesting a less rigorous approach to religion and its practices.

(Jude, 14, Bordeaux: J'ai pas lu le Koran mais on me l'a raconté en Français. (I did not read the Koran but someone narrated it for me in French).)

Learning Arabic and reading the Koran can also occur while on holidays in Morocco or Algeria, the countries of origin of some of the grandparents. North African Muslims have usually received little Religious Education either within or outside the family. At home, they are exposed to minimal Islamic observance and Koranic study by parents, who tend themselves to compromise and neglect Islamic prescriptions.
The French approach to learning Arabic and Religious Education contrasts with that in Britain. Although not as rigorously and scrupulously provided as in Britain, it does not mean that it is treated with any less importance. French participants start their initiation into religion at a much later age than their British participants. Nevertheless, the relaxed attitude reflects the minimal observance of Islam by the parents and families.

In summary, Religious Education reflects both the central role of religion in the family socialisation process as well as the parental commitment to pass on a set of religious traditions and norms. The concept of an ‘extended family’ is common in non-Western cultures, unlike the concept of a ‘nuclear family’, which means a family consisting of just the parents and their children that is common in the West. The grandparents often have an important role in providing the socialisation and value orientation of their grandchildren. Alongside parental wishes to transmit a set of correct values and practices are the efforts to preserve a cultural and religious heritage in the domestic sphere.

Views on learning the Koran

All British and French interviewees agreed with the idea of receiving Religious Education and Arabic classes. It is perceived as a personal gain that is strongly linked
with the satisfaction of learning and understanding and a sense of sharing that enhances a greater awareness of Muslim identity. Being the liturgical language of Islam, the process of learning the sacred and authentic language of the Koran becomes the quintessence of being a ‘proper Muslim’ who respects the religion.

(Esteban, 14, London) If I learn something new, and just see one of my friends ‘did you know that?’ ..., so I’ll go and tell him and they will say what they think as well ... so they will say ‘I don’t agree with that’. So, we will start talking, saying what we think.

(Harry, 13, Surrey) I’m happy learning the Koran, it’s not a problem. It doesn’t matter if I have a lot of homework from school; I just read what I need to do for an hour and a half ... that’s from 5 o’clock till half past six.

(Yassim, 13, Bordeaux) J’apprends le Koran et c’est ma grand-mère qui me l’apprend. Au début, je dois l’apprendre en Français pour savoir ce qu’il dit et après en Arabe. Là, je commence en fait à le lire en Arabe quand je vais au Maroc. J’aime bien, ça ne m’embête pas ... c’est intéressant. Au début je m’étais dit : ‘Tu verras, c’est barbant et tout, surtout tous les jours’ ... mais en fait non, pas du tout. (I’m learning the Koran and it’s my grandmother who teaches me. First, I must learn it in French to know what it says and after in Arabic. In fact, I begin to read it in Arabic when I go to Morocco. I like it, it doesn’t bother me ... it’s interesting. At first, I thought: ‘You’ll see, it’s boring and all, especially everyday’ ... but in fact not at all).

However, this type of education is described as hard work, creating extra work on top of school work and minimising free time with friends. Despite the load, participants show no sign of discouragement or desire to quit. Instead, they look forward to learning the Koran, which is considered central to their experience of Islam.

(Amisha, 12, London) I need to learn Arabic ... it’s hard work! I do want to do it and it’s my tradition ... I really have to finish the Koran (long sigh) ... so I can be a proper Muslim! I’m going to try hard to finish my Koran before the age of 15 ... it’s very hard. There are a lot of things to do in one week. I don’t have much time to play with my friends.

(Susie, 13, London) I go on Saturday to learn the Koran and I spend few hours a week learning how to read Arabic. It’s a difficult thing to do but I have to do it ... it takes a lot of time and a lot of patience.

(Isha, 15, Surrey) I learnt the Koran at the Mosque. I learnt how to read Arabic and used to spend one and half hour to two hours every day. Sometimes it’s hard to manage school work and religious study but I can handle it.
If the Mosque is the space where teaching occurs, it is also a place of conviviality where young people can socialise and engage in debates. In addition, the Mosque can be involved in organising visits and outings.

(Belal, 14, London) I go regularly to the Mosque ... at any time ... it's always open for anyone who wants to go. I go for prayer times, to sit there, sometimes read the Koran and talk to somebody. I spend maybe one hour or more, most of the days.

(Raxtar, 14, Surrey) When I am at the Mosque, we have discussions about the Koran.

(Mémet, 15, Bordeaux) Des fois la Mosquée organise des sorties. Pendant les vacances de Noël, il y en avait une et j'y suis allé. J'étais avec tout un groupe de Musulmans et on est parti dans un autre endroit, une autre ville à la campagne pour apprendre notre religion. On était dans une maison, logé et nourri, et on a parlé. C'était pas mal. (Sometimes the Mosque organises trips. During the vacation of Christmas, there was one and I went. I was with a group, all Muslims, and we went to another place, another town in the country to learn our religion. We were in a house, food and bed all inclusive, and we talked. It was not bad).

The vast majority of Mosques currently serve as places of worship, the principal activity that was regarded as the priority when most Mosques were first established. However, the Muslim community moved on and Mosques felt the need to adjust to the needs of their communities and new generations. As a result, they became a space where opportunities for the elderly and the younger generations can be offered (e.g. trips, local visits) and where new measures allow them to perform a diversity of roles. By serving the community’s needs, Mosques continue to occupy their traditional place at the heart of Muslim society.

In essence, Religious Education is important to British and French Muslim participants for many reasons: firstly, because religion is at the very heart of culture and of morality and it is important for children to understand the basis of the beliefs and values of their parents, family and community and secondly, because understanding religion will help them to preserve their own group identity and play their part in the broader pluralist society. The Koran is culturally constructed and
The performance of faith: practices and celebrations

In essence, traditions and rituals have the function to maintain a common history, culture and collective memories of a community. Traditions can be best understood as ‘social practices which seek to celebrate and inculcate certain behavioural norms and values’ (Marshall, 1994:537). Rituals can be best understood as a set of actions charged with symbolic value. For Durkheim, ‘rituals create social solidarity which is necessary to hold society together. Rituals are necessary to affirm what defines a society, the basis of the shared identity of its members’ (Durkheim, 2001:11). In light of this, Muslim traditions and rituals can be said to reflect the cultural meaning of the community, reproduced and transmitted within and beyond the community. The performance of faith through fasting, collective celebrations, rituals and dress provides strong symbols of religious identity and signs of the all-embracing dimension of Islam. During the interviews, participants were asked about their religious practices, with an emphasis on celebrations, namely the keeping of Ramadan and the celebration of Eid.

In general, a large majority of British interviewees followed the practice of five daily prayers, acknowledging that the school provides not only the adequate facilities, namely a prayer room and even a wash room, but also the time required to conduct this practice. In contrast, French interviewees experienced difficulty in keeping regular practice, because no adequate facilities exist due to the principle of laïcité that schools apply. Within schools and countries, a variety of answers reflect a diversity of attitudes, ranging from those who prayed regularly to those who tried and those who showed little interest in observing religious events and practices.
Fasting during Ramadan

Ramadan takes place during the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and this month of fasting is the holiest period for the Islamic faith. Consumption of food and drink is not allowed between dawn and sunset. In essence, Muslims observe the month of Ramadan through increased worship and contemplation, with more time devoted to reading the Koran and other acts of piety.

British and French interviewees identified this special event as one of great importance, considering fasting to be a key indicator of one’s status as a Muslim, no matter what gender or age group. However, this was often described as difficult by most of the interviewees of both genders. Whereas British participants tended to receive greater consideration from their teachers, French participants appeared to receive none.

*(Beyonce, 13, Surrey)* When I do Ramadan I feel tired and hungry and I can’t always concentrate ... it’s really hard when I do PE as well.

*(Steven, 14, Le Havre)* J’ai fait le Ramadan et quand ça arrive à la fin je me suis senti fatigué. Alors quand je dois faire sport, c’est difficile ... mais le professeur ne me donne pas toujours la chance de souffler un peu, de me reposer, je dois faire comme les autres ... et ça c’est dur. *(I did the Ramadan and when it approaches the end I was feeling tired. So, when I must do sport, it’s difficult ... but the teacher does not always give me a chance to recuperate, to rest a bit, I must do as the others ... and that it’s hard).*

*(Ménet, 15, Bordeaux)* Je fais le Ramadan et quand il y a sport, je ne le fais pas. Je veux dire que quand j’arrive presque à la fin du Ramadan, je suis trop fatigué pour courir ou faire ce que les autres font. C’est fatiguant et je n’ai pas d’énergie. *(I do the Ramadan and when there is sport, I don’t do it. What I mean is that when I arrive almost at the end of the Ramadan, I am too tired to run or do what others do. It’s tiring and I have no energy).*

Within British schools, a strong community spirit is favoured, because everybody has something very special and unique to bring to the general group. Muslim pupils celebrate Ramadan and Eid as a way of celebrating a culture they are proud of. The message is that one should in fact cherish one’s own traditions. Within the French schools, the community spirit is favoured as long as nobody draws attention to it and could possibly disturb the dynamic of the general group.
The celebration of Eid

The celebrations of Eid, which mark the end of Ramadan, are traditionally of great importance in the Islamic calendar. They are performed by Muslims around the world and provide a powerful symbolic sense of connection and unity.

British and French interviewees described Eid as a very significant celebration. First and foremost it is an event of conviviality and joy where families and friends get together. Firstly, there is the religious moment with the prayers at the Mosque where everyone is dressed up in new clothes for the occasion. Then afterwards comes the time of the visits to family members, followed by the traditional meal.

(Roxy, 15, London) I feel strong about the Muslim celebrations because I have to do them properly. I want to do them. At Eid everyone celebrates the end of Ramadan; they go out with nice clothes visiting friends and family ... everyone in the community does that.

(George, 15, London) At Muslim celebrations, people feel that they are part of it, we all respect it and that's why it is important to everyone, me included. It is as if we were one.

(Mysa, 13, London, Group discussion) I miss school because at the end of Ramadan, it's Eid ... it's marked what we achieved, so usually I don't go to school. I want to concentrate on celebrating Eid.

(Bob, 13, Surrey) I feel strong about the ceremony ... it's very important. I don't want to miss them. We have like special food, and then in the morning, we mostly go to prayer. So, first we pray and then when we come back we have the celebration and the food. I have a good time.

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) Les fêtes sont importantes parce que c'est notre religion, on doit respecter et puis c'est la coutume. (Celebrations are important because it's our religion, one must respect them, and besides it's the custom).

It is important to note that in the two British schools, Muslim pupils could enjoy a day off from school, which they understood as a sign of respect for their religion by the school. This is not the case in France, where the acknowledgement of such celebration is not officially recognised by the school, although it is accepted by the teaching staff.

(Sarah, 14, Le Havre, Group discussion: Des fois, pour la fête de la Eid, si c'est en semaine, je manque l'école. (Sometimes, for Eid if it's during week days, I miss school).
The teaching staff in the French schools are well aware of the importance of Eid and generally accept that children will miss school on that day. It is worth noting that, concerning feast days, the Stasi commission were asked to ‘take into consideration the significant holidays of the most represented religions’ (Maurer, 2006:65). However, the request was rejected on the grounds that it may give prominence to religion over state affairs. Thus, ‘the regime of authorised absences in relation to religious festival days follows a regime of ‘accommodation’ which denies official recognition of these holidays’ (Maurer, 2006:29). It is worth noting that some French Muslim children prefer not to miss school and celebrate Eid afterwards and consider such an event not to be a legitimate reason to miss school, stressing the importance of receiving a public education.

Muslim parents take an interest in their children’s education. They want their children to have the opportunity to receive a good education that will ensure them professional gratifications and success. This is consistent with Vallet and Caille’s study (1996) that shows education expectations and aspirations are high amongst children of immigrant families. Parents are more likely to prefer a general track of education resulting in an academic baccalauréat than a professional one. For them, schooling and getting a good education are trusted means of ensuring upward social mobility.
Display and symbols of faith: the wearing of the headscarf

Right from the start, it can be said that the wearing of the headscarf ignited passionate and polemical debates. Eicher pointed out that ‘dress is a coded sensory system of non-verbal communication that aids human interaction in space and time’ (Eicher, 1995:1). As such, it is not only a ‘cultural symbol facilitating lived experience of a given or chosen identity, but is also a display, a statement of that identity, and has an important political significance’ (Brown, 2001:105). The headscarf is an item of dress with immense socio-political importance as well as coded cultural significance. Much of the debate in France about the wearing of the headscarf has been based on its meaning or code, with a related assumption that there is a conflict between French Republican values and the emergence of an Islam tainted with fundamentalism.

British and French participants expressed often an ‘easy-going’ attitude or feeling of ‘free choice’ towards the wearing of the headscarf. However, it became possible to understand more defined positions and set opinions. The headscarf means different things to different people, whether they wear it or not. To some it means religious devotion, a clear marker of traditions and culture, to others it means oppression. To some it engages with sexism, to others it values women. Also, a headscarf can be seen as an expression of self-identity. Two pictures, a drawing and a photograph, of a female wearing headscarf were used to elicit views and opinions (see Annex I, Probe 1 and Probe 2).

The headscarf: a distinct marker of religion, traditions and culture

The headscarf is perceived as both an individual choice and a religious duty. Although the headscarf is not necessarily a Koranic obligation for all Muslims, it becomes a Koranic obligation for some Muslims in the context of a particular understanding of the purpose of the Koran.

(Zak, 13, London) A woman wearing a headscarf is a decent Muslim, showing to other people ... proud to be one .... respecting the tradition. You should show people our culture, their culture, everything, to learn about them and us. Showing a headscarf, tell to others who you are.

Also referred as hijab or niqab. The former is a veil worn by women who are required to cover everything except face and hands in the sight of a man. The latter is a garment, often two pieces, that covers the entire body, the nose and mouth – the face except for the eyes.
(Harry, 13, Surrey)) There are some girls who are proud to show that they're Muslim girls.

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) ... c'est dans la religion de le porter ... le foulard c'est notre religion et les femmes qui le portent sont fières d'être qui elles sont. (It's in the religion to wear it ... the scarf is our religion and the women who wear it are proud to be what they are).

(Kalim, 15, Bordeaux) Une femme voilée montre qu'elle est religieuse et qu'elle respecte les traditions ... c'est le respect envers la culture, la religion. (A woman wearing the veil shows that she is religious and that she respects the traditions ... it's the respect towards culture, religion).

(Mohamed, 13, Bordeaux, Group discussion: Elle n'a pas le droit de se montrer. (She doesn't have the right to show herself)

(Adem, 13, Bordeaux, Group discussion: Les femmes mettent le foulard parce que c'est la marque de respect pour la religion. (Women wear the headscarf because it's the mark of respect of the religion).

From these statements, a stricter and uncompromising view sees the headscarf as being primarily associated with respect for Islam, traditions and culture. It is strongly related to the action of being a proper, good and decent Muslim and should be seen as obedience by women and young girls to bodily and religious codes of conduct. Within the Muslim culture, the wearing of the headscarf promotes pride, grants respect and dignity and provides a protected space emancipated from men's authority. Veiling must be undertaken willingly, following individual conscience. At the same time, it is an essential process that encourages a religious behaviour defined by religious authorities.

With regards to the pictures shown, two inferences were made in reference to the absence of facial features. The first relates to the feeling of spirituality/piety and the act of praying that the pictures inspired.

Raxtar, 14, Surrey: She is religious and she is like kind of holy... you don’t need to see her eyes, her nose, her mouth because she is praying. The lack of face shows that she is very spiritual.

Esteban, 14, London: She is a Muslim woman wearing the hijab ... it's like a type of clothing to show you’re someone ... like a big halo on your head saying 'I am a Muslim'.
Nadia, 11, Le Havre: C’est une fille qui porte le hijab, le foulard, qui est en train de faire la prière. (It’s a girl who wears the hijab and she is praying).

The second relates to the fact that being Muslim does not indicate anything about one’s race, ethnicity, culture, nationality or citizenship. Being Muslim does not constitute one race or nationality, making the religion neither racial nor sectarian.

Susan, 12, Surrey: The fact there is no face means that anyone can be Muslim, no distinction between races.

Beyoncé, 12, Le Havre: Si on ne voit pas le visage c’est peut-être parce que n’importe qui peut-être Musulman, un blanc, un noir. On ne regarde pas à la couleur de la peau. (If we don’t see the face it’s maybe because anyone can be Muslim, a white, a black. We don’t look at the skin colour).

Hakim, 11, Bordeaux: ... n’importe qui peut être Musulman ... on regarde pas à la couleur de la personne. C’est pas parce que quelqu’un porte le foulard que cette personne est automatiquement Arabe. (Anyone can be Muslim ... we don’t look at the person’s colour. It’s not because someone wears the headscarf that she is automatically an Arab).

If Islam is a religion that stands for no ethnic and racial distinction, it is generally regarded as a religion hostile to images, as representations of living beings have been forbidden since the time of the Prophet. The use of illustrations, icons or figurative art as religious embellishment is strictly forbidden. This is mainly based on the belief that the Prophet spoke critically of the use of visual support (e.g. statues and deities) that result into the veneration of a cult to whom the images are dedicated. Consequently, the lack of imagery has embodied the status of sanctity and devoutness. It is under this tenet that participants gave meanings to the pictures.

The headscarf: a means of oppression

British and French interviewees share the views that Muslim girls are consistently compelled to categorize the headscarf as either a choice or an obligation. Accepting the headscarf does not necessarily mean that Muslim girls are willing to wear it. Yet most of them feel obliged to do so, as they are forced by their parents to wear it. The notion of obligation implies restrained freedom or total lack of liberty.

(Susie, 13, London) It makes me feel upset; sometimes people they get forced to wear the headscarf they don’t want to wear. Sometimes, parents force the girl to wear it ... they do that by talking about respect, about showing respect to your
elders, to your parents, by talking about modesty ... not showing your hair ... that’s how a girl feels forced to wear it.

(Beyonce, 14, Surrey) For some girls, wearing the headscarf can be used to manipulate them, to do what they have been told to do. In our religion, most girls do have to do that.

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Il y a certains Musulmans qui forcent les femmes des fois à truquer, à porter le voile, mais moi je ne suis pas d’accord avec ça. C’est un choix de porter le voile, c’est pas obligatoire, c’est un choix personnel. (There are some Muslims who force women sometimes to fake, to carry the veil, but I don’t agree with that. It’s a choice to wear the veil, it’s not obligatory, it’s a personal choice).

(Esteban, 14, London) Muslim girls have a restrained life, not that they chose it freely but because of their culture ... and other girls seem to be free.

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) Muslim women have more responsibilities and not much freedom. Western women, have more freedom and maybe less responsibilities. The Muslim woman has responsibilities like family, parents, shopping for the family, house, looking after children.

(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux) Je le vois, je l’ai déjà vu quand j’allais en Algérie ... je vois que quand les copines sortent, les filles musulmanes, elles, elles sont ancrées à faire à manger, à faire la vaisselle, garder le petit frère à la maison. Les hommes là-bas, même ici, leur donnent des restrictions qu’en France on ne peut pas donner à une femme non Musulmane. (I see it; I already saw it when I went in Algeria ... I see that when friends go out, the Muslim girls they are anchored to cook the meal, to do the dishes, to baby-sit the little brother at home. The men over there, and even here, give them restrictions that no one could give to a non-Muslim woman in France).

(Mémet, 15, Bordeaux) Pour l’Européenne, la Musulmane est perçue comme quelqu’un qui n’est pas libre. (For the European girl, the Muslim one is perceived as someone who isn’t free).

(Oui-Oui, 12, Bordeaux) Je trouve que ce n’est pas normal qu’elle n’est pas de liberté. Elle devrait avoir la même liberté que les hommes. (I found that it’s not normal that she has no freedom. She should have the same liberty as men).

In essence, interviewees see the headscarf as an item that stands for the oppression of women and acts as a direct mechanism for their oppression. Girls who refuse to wear the headscarf are told they should wear it and are forced to do so. Familial or peer pressure manipulates girls, making them think that they need to wear the headscarf. In France, the understanding of difference is organised around seeing the ‘objectification of Islam as a system that oppresses girls, on one side, and French Republicanism as a system that liberates them, on the other’ (Scott, 2007:155).
one side of the debate, the wearing of the headscarf is closely linked to a symbol of little or no freedom (i.e. that is not equal to that of Western women); on the other, it is closely linked to a sense of independence ruled by a cultural and religious code. In essence, the public debate in France was promoting the ban of the headscarf 'in terms of a conflict between emancipatory modernity and oppressive tradition' (Scott, 2007:155).

The headscarf: sexism versus the equality of women

From a feminist perspective, the wearing of the headscarf is a sign of sexist discrimination that defines Muslim women as being locked in patriarchal system of obedience to their fathers, their brothers and eventually their husbands. Wearing the headscarf is perceived as a sign of losing their female identity, individuality and even beauty.

(Roxy, 15, London) When you wear a headscarf you can't see the face, the person disappears behind it ... I've got a friend who used to be really loud and she used to be different and now she starts wearing the scarf and she behaves in another way ... as if she changed personality. To me, she was before her true self ... not now.

(Sania, 15, London, Group discussion) She doesn't have any face. By wearing a headscarf, she is no one ... as if her personality disappeared.

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) Wearing a headscarf makes the girl lose her individuality.

(Amel, 15, Le Havre, Group discussion) C'est une musulmane qui n'a pas de visage .... c'est peut-être pour dire que si on est musulman, on est personne. (It's a Muslim girl with no face ... it's maybe to say that if one is Muslim, one has no individuality).

(Chainez, 14, Bordeaux) On ne peut pas voir la beauté du visage ... comme si le voile enlèvait la beauté de la femme, il cache cette beauté. (One cannot see the beauty of the face ... as if the veil was removing the woman's beauty, as if it was hiding this beauty).

(Oui-oui, 12, Bordeaux, Group discussion) On sait que c'est une femme musulmane mais on voit qu'elle n'a pas de visage. J'ai l'impression qu'elle est effacée. (We know it's a Muslim woman but we can't see her face. I have the impression she is fading).

From this point of view, British and French interviewees translate the fact of wearing the headscarf as a progressive vanishing of individualism and distinctiveness. This analysis joins that of Western feminists who consider the headscarf as a symbol of
feminine submission. This position tends to look at social practices and the role they play to help women achieve equal treatment with men. In other words, feminist criticism approves the ban because it will give Muslim women the means to resist the pressure that their community may exercise on them to obey the rules that they do not want to abide by. The religious meaning of covering the head implies that the head ought to be covered because the body itself presents a problem. Here, the challenge becomes the girls’ attitudes towards their own bodies and the belief of shame about one’s body. It is precisely this ‘shame’ that feminist criticism condemn behind the wearing a headscarf and the refusal to play sports in the company of boys (e.g. refusal to attend swimming class).

For others, the practical impact of wearing the headscarf appears to value the treatment of women’s bodies as their garments translate cultural symbols rather than the expression of individual women’s intentions and aspirations.

(Isha, 15, Surrey) I wear the headscarf all the time, at school, outside school, everywhere. I wear it because I want to show that I am Muslim and that I am happy to be a Muslim.

The headscarf also provides an opportunity for women to express their religious piety, to reject the Westernised view of the ‘woman-body-object’, to express solidarity with other Muslims and to act as a rebellious sign against Western social model. By observing this practice, Muslim women empower themselves with the project to transform prejudiced practices in their community, making the headscarf the legitimate marker of Muslim womanhood and cultural identity.

The headscarf: an identity statement

The headscarf is the strongest visible marker by which a person is easily identified as ‘being Muslim’ making the association of the clothing with Islam a taken-for-granted assumption that cannot be mistaken. Wearing a headscarf is a process that defines Muslim girls and women in Islamic terms.

(Cary Smith, 14, London) You wear one if you’re really ready not because you’re told to do and you’re not ready. You wear it when you are fully committed ... you try to do less things like going out, you don’t show yourself up. I am half way there. I am not completely ready because I am not still sure of why I should wear it. There
are so many people going against you and all, they're wearing it ... so I am not sure.

The choice to adopt Islamic dress, including the headscarf, is part of efforts to construct an identity of becoming a better Muslim. In such cases, women want to visibly express their Muslim identity because it is for them a constant reminder to remain true to the values that Islam promotes (including that of modesty that Muslim men and women are commanded to obey). Yet, the most prevalent reason for such choice is one of sincere conviction, of a conscious effort to create an identity, of a personal quest and soul searching that result in a state of readiness and commitment.

However, for those who choose not to wear the headscarf, the reasons and motivations are not uniform and reasoning differs.

(Roxy, 15, London) When people go to the Mosque, it's to pray ... so, I can pray at home! Wearing the scarf to go to the Mosque put me off.

(Beyonce, 14, Surrey) I am proud of who I am. I do respect my religion and I respect it in my own way. You can still respect your religion in other ways as well. You don't have to wear a scarf to respect Islam. I used to wear the headscarf when I was much younger but I took it off now ... yet I still respect my religion.

Defined as essential for some participants, the headscarf does not always reflect one's personal spirituality or religious practice. For some the performance of faith through a dress code is unjustified. This view reflects a different interpretation of the Koranic verses, as some girls believe that wearing the headscarf is more of a cultural interpretation than a requirement. Their refusal does not diminish their respect to the religion in any way.

If the wearing of the headscarf is a clear signal of identification, it is used for others as a way of redefining the boundaries or defying a defined attitude of what it is to be Muslim. For some participants, this attitude is considered regrettable.

(George, 15, London) In this school you don't see girls wearing it properly ... they don't really care ...I have seen only four or six girls in this all year wearing the niqab and the rest they were stuff that look like a scarf. If they wear the headscarf like they do, I feel ashamed of them and I think they don't deserve to wear it if they commit so many other stuff, and other sins (e.g. show parts of their body).

(Harry, 13, Surrey)) There are some Muslim girls who show but are not actually playing the role to be a Muslim girl ... what a Muslim girl does. A lot of girls wear
the headscarf, I've seen a lot of girls, and they are actually playing the role of 'being Muslim'. A lot of girls wear the headscarf here and yet they hang about, go out, I just see them.

(Nadia, 11, Le Havre) Il y a des filles qui le mettent comme ça pour se montrer différentes et pour elles le foulard n'a pas de signification ... c'est juste une façon de se montrer. (There are some girls who wear the scarf just like that, to show that they are different, and for them the scarf has no meaning ... it's just a way to show off).

(Susan, 12, Surrey) You don't have, like, wear something to show who you are at school. By wearing the headscarf you identify yourself against all the other children as being a Muslim person. I don't feel like wearing the headscarf because people know I am a Muslim by my colour and that is sufficient enough.

A common reading regarding women wearing the headscarf shows that they must abide by a certain standard of behaviour. Yet, to break away from this, some Muslim girls choose to adopt wearing the headscarf as a role-play accessory that can be perceived to contradict the Islamic ethos or to state an identity that is wished to be perceived as such (e.g. wearing the headscarf while smoking).

Beyond the identity statement, the headscarf appears to have another dimension charged with a significance that encompasses a much larger scope.

Cary Smith, 14, London: This picture makes me think about the Midlands ... you know after the problems there was a lot of attention on Muslim's headscarf and things. About that scarf, straight away you think about that.

For this British interviewee, the headscarf summarises the social and national significance that the symbol holds while relating to the questions about the place of the Muslim community and society. In broader terms, one can argue that Muslim identity has often been constructed in opposition or, at least, in contrast to Western identity values. In other words, it is an emotionally charged symbol of the struggle between tradition and modernity between Islam and the West.

In summary, British and French participants expressed similar positive and negative views on the wearing of the headscarf. It means different things to different people: for some, it is a statement about their identity, while others refuse to wear it or wear it reluctantly. In general, it can be said that within the diversity of understanding and experience of what Muslim identity is, the latter is far from being homogeneous and absolute. If, anything, it is ambiguous, various and changeable. As Khan explains
'some desire to maintain a Muslim identity in a non-Muslim environment, while others avert the discriminatory and complicating aspects of their cherished religion. Some find a sense of security in their religious identity but cannot be comfortable with its totalising directives. Others are attracted to the opportunities the country they live in provide to them, but cannot tolerate the mythologies about Islam and Muslim women' (Khan, 2002:xxiii).

I can conclude that Muslim women are facing predicaments for which alternatives are often presented as follows: belief versus autonomy, spiritual versus secular and community spirit versus individualism. Some of these feelings were expressed by British Muslim girls who appear to privilege belief and spiritual community life, while their French counterparts are inclined to show the opposite.

6.2 FEELINGS ABOUT BEING MUSLIM

Role and Importance of religion

Religion can be measured in terms of affiliation, practice and belief. In terms of affiliation or ‘belonging to a faith’, Islam can be viewed as a religious community whose membership is defined without any reference to frequency of attendance. Looking at religion in terms of belief is equal to asking what someone means when they say that they believe in God. Ramadan points out that ‘there is no Islamic theology as in Christianity; Islam is viewed as a relationship between God and the individual, a relationship leading to the view that faith in Islam is natural and essential’ (Ramadan, 2004:9). It is of significance to understand the reasons why Muslim people feel connected with each other through their faith, the elements that define them as a group, and the ways they portray themselves in regards to non-Muslims.

The field study collected quantitative data to understand the role and importance of religion in Muslim and non-Muslim participants’ lives, their feelings about it and the degree of attendance to a place of worship.

Views of non-Muslim participants

Figure 6-4 shows the religious denominations of the non-Muslim participants in the two countries. It is interesting to note that among this population, 30% in Britain and 45% in France said they did not have a religion.
Figure 6-5 shows how often non-Muslim participants attend a place of worship in the two countries (36% in Britain and 17% in France). Both British and French non-Muslim participants appear to show similar preferences for attending on special occasions. On the question of importance and role of religion, 18% in Britain and 37% in France responded negatively. Overall, the British non-Muslim participants appear to be more involved with their religion than their French counterparts.

Views of the Muslim participants

Figure 6-6 shows that Islam is highly considered among participants, with 87% in Britain and 79% in France. Figure 6-7 shows that it is mostly British participants who perceive the role of religion as being very important to them, with 92% against 72%
for their French counterparts. A similar trend was observed in the responses from non-Muslim participants with 57% in Britain and 40% in France.

It can be said that the approach that young French Muslims have about Islam resembles a ‘pick and mix’ style, where certain tenets are favoured against others and where certain rulings are adopted or rejected. Cesari explains that this approach ‘provokes questions of purpose since young people demand personal meaning as a prerequisite to religious observance’ (Cesari, 2002:41). For Cesari, young people have developed a relation to Islam where they acknowledge the authority of Islamic rules and values without its conformity. As a consequence, they are able to entertain a bond with their parents’ community (e.g. participation at weddings and funerals) without feeling any embarrassment, blame or friction. For some of them, Islam and its religious practices are understood as a clear form of self-identification rather than one of real religiosity.

It can be said that religion is the most essential feature in Muslim identity. In general, Muslims will always identify themselves with the Islamic family at large, even when they reside in a non-Muslim country. It is clear that a solid bond exists through a common belief rather than a nationality or ethnicity.

Understanding religion in terms of its practice refers to attendance at religious meetings and the frequency of such. Practice can also be measured in many other ways that assess the behavioural manifestation of a person’s faith (e.g. reading the Koran or praying). Overall responses show that 33% of participants attend the Mosque on a weekly basis, and 30% for special occasions. All participants attend a
Mosque, some more often than others. For example, British participants tend to go more often on a daily and weekly basis (32% and 35% respectively). They also go for special occasions (27%). Although 28% of French participants tend to go on a weekly basis, they are more likely to go for special occasions (38%) as shown in Figure 6-8. Yet, 19% of them never go to a Mosque.

![Attendance to a Mosque](image)

**Fig. 6-8 Attendance to a Mosque**

Some differences and similarities appear to exist between the genders and countries as shown in Figure 6-9. British boys tend to worship on a daily and weekly basis (23% and 21% respectively) compared to girls, whereas French boys tend to go mostly on a weekly basis (21%), on special occasions (15%) or never (14%). It is interesting to note that British and French girls share the common preference to attend mosque for special occasions (e.g. weddings) with 19% and 22% respectively.

![Attendance to a Mosque](image)

**Fig. 6-9 Boys and girls attending the Mosque**

In essence, a place of worship is fundamental to a religion and the attendees. For Islam, this place is the Mosque, a place where people can gather and exchange ideas and develop a sense of belonging. Recognition of this function of the Mosque gives Muslims a place to turn to. Most young people attend the Mosque because it is
something that young people do. The obligation to read the Koran is something that is
instilled into them from an early age. They grow up seeing their fathers and family
members attend the Mosque and this creates a sense of community. Attending
Mosque is like attending school; it is expected of them. Gender differences are found
as boys are much more likely to attend the Mosque than girls and more regularly. A
possible answer to this is the alternative for women to pray at home or in the company
of other women such as family or relatives. Attending the Mosque regularly is a sign
of commitment both to Islam and to the community.

Self-identity
Among young Muslims, there is much heart-searching about where they belong (i.e.
in Britain/ France or in a Muslim community?) They are developing their perceptions
of national, ethnic and religious belonging, and negotiating new ways of being
Muslim in Britain/ France, in which the British/ French element of their identity forms
an important part of the equation. The need to retain aspects of their culture and
religion viewed as fundamental to their way of life while embracing the nationality of
the country of residence raises the notion of identity and belonging in a country or
with a group of people.

Feelings and importance of nationality
Barrett argues that for someone to have a sense of their own national identity or
nationality, 'they must have some knowledge of the existence of the national group,
that is to have some awareness that there is a group of people who are categorised
together and labelled British people or French people' (Barrett, 2000: 4). This implies
the vital need for the individual to know that he is part of a group. In such cases, the
feeling of belonging to the national group is deeply related to that of full membership
to the group rather than its separation or rejection. National identity is also linked to
the notion of geography or territory, carrying not only emotional links but also various
symbols, customs and traditions. These can be said to translate significant emblems or
representations of the national identity. According to Barrett, 'the sense of national
identity can also involve implicit beliefs about the self in the relationship to the
national group, particularly about how similar or not the self is to the national group,
or how accurately one's self-concept matches the characteristics ascribed to the
national group' (Barrett, 2000: 6).
The importance of nationality to Muslim and non-Muslim participants was explored by first assessing the relative feelings about it, and secondly assessing the subjective importance that participants attributed to being British or being French. In order to establish whether there are any differences between the views of non-Muslims in the two counties, I needed a baseline to compare the results with. For this, the views of non-Muslim participants with regards to the sense of pride and importance into their nationality were analysed. No differences were observed between British and French non-Muslims. Furthermore, the data from Muslims were compared with those from non-Muslims. No significant differences were found between Muslims and non-Muslims with respect to the sense of national pride. However they differed in their assessment of the importance of nationality, with 53% for non-Muslims against 65% for Muslims who believe that nationality has a significant importance in the construction of self-identity.

Figure 6-10 shows that British participants feel greater pride in their nationality than their French counterparts with 32% feeling very proud and 43% feeling proud. In contrast, 41% of French participants do not share any view on this question. This could suggest a lack of pride in French nationality, a lesser sense of membership, which could be related to a negative feeling about one’s worth, one’s use and value as member of the national group. This could translate the perception and feeling that French participants have about the idea of equality, which is supposed to hold pupils as equals, no matter what social, religious or ethnic particularities they might identify as their own source of identity.
If the construction of Britishness is to be understood as a recognised internal plurality, the construction of Frenchness relies more on a normative indifference for cultural affiliations. However, French Muslims appear singled out as their religion differs from the norm in France and contributes to the vernacular formation of group categorisations. Figure 6-11 shows that it is mostly British participants who consider nationality as important with 47% against 31% for their counterparts.

Despite the prevailing view that defines Britishness as (post)-Christian and multicultural, Muslims in Britain have developed a feeling of being considered as outsiders, while being confronted with their identification with Britishness, frequently being questioned. However, for some young Muslims Britishness is frequently defined in terms of citizenship, before being described in terms of an affectionate and collective bond shared with the rest of the population. The claim on maintaining one’s own culture does not interfere with the self-attribution of being British. As Mannitz explains ‘Britishness does not require to get rid of ethnic or religious identifications and as such young Muslims easily adopted it as an additional layer of identity’ (Mannitz, 2004:276). Like their peers from other ethnic groups, they understand that being British means diverse cultural ways to demonstrate it without losing cultural distinctiveness. For the participants, being British is understood as the first step towards claiming equal rights in society.

In essence, these differences may suggest that French nationality is not perceived as such a compelling force as in Britain, where people attribute a considerable importance and even emotional response to their national identity. It can be assumed
that the strength of national identity is revealed by the pride and importance that people take in the cultural heritage of their country. That feeling is not always expressed by French participants, suggesting a sense of detachment caused by a lack of 'belongingness' to the national group.

Subjective importance of religion

It appears that defining Muslims officially presents some challenge in the light of the various characteristics of Muslim communities. For example, Nielsen argues that 'the term 'Muslim' has been applied to those for whom Islam is considered to have some significance in the ordering of their daily lives, for whom Islam continues to be the 'master signifier' (Nielsen, 1987:386). But Halliday claims that 'Islam may be the prime form of political and social identity, but it is never the sole form and is often not the primary one' (cited in Ansari, 2004:12). The Home Office Citizenship Survey 2001 indicated that religion was a more important aspect of identity for Muslims (second to family) and more important than ethnicity. The notion of identity for young British Muslims does not necessarily encourage their interest in ethnic affiliations. On the contrary, Islam appears to play the largest part in their lives as opposed to ethnicity.

The degree of importance that Muslim and non-Muslim participants attribute to the way they describe themselves to others was investigated. A question was designed to assess the relative subjective importance that participant attributed to the following four descriptions: age, gender, nationality and religion. For each description, the participant was asked to choose one score, ranging from 1 (being 'less important') to 4 (being the 'most important').

Table 6-1 shows the overall responses from Non-Muslim and Muslim participants on the importance of the following four categories in describing themselves: Age, Gender, Nationality and Religion. While Muslim pupils considered “religion” as the most important way of describing themselves, the Non-Muslim pupils indicated that it had little bearing on their sense of self-identity.

47 The survey asked participant to list the top ten things that would say something important about themselves. For Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs the top three were family, religion and ethnicity. For Christians, religion was seventh on the list. Home Office Citizenship Study 2001, Home Office Research Study 274:20.
Table 6-1 Relative importance of Age, Gender, Nationality and Religion

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Figure 6-12 shows the comparative national scores on how non-Muslim participants perceived the importance of religion in their self-description. In all, non-Muslim participants concurred that religion was less important to them. Figure 6-13 shows the comparative national scores for the Muslim participants, with 74% of the British and 55% of the French participants who perceived religion as being very important when describing themselves. There were no significant differences between age groups and gender between countries in the views about the importance of religion. They all considered it to be most important.

On the other hand, 17% of French participants share the view that religion is less important indicating a possible uncertainty or indecision to think that religion has some significance for them.

With an overall response of 95%, British and French participants share the view and opinion that being Muslim is of great significance, associating with it all the affective aspects that amount to a sense of cultural identity.

"(Amisha, 12, London) It makes me feel that I have to be a proper Muslim. I feel that because I haven’t finished reading my Koran and stuff. I will feel a proper"
Muslim when I wear the scarf, do my prayers and other stuff ... but I don't feel ready yet to do all that ... I don't know if I want to do that.

(Kayla, 11, Surrey) It feels great because, well ... I like to make my God happy ... I like wearing the scarf and I like praying for him. I don't get into bad situations.

(Christophe, 15, Bordeaux) Je me sens heureux d'être Musulman. Je ne dois pas boire d'alcool ... toute ma famille fait le Ramadan. (I am happy to be Muslim. I mustn't drink alcohol ... all my family does Ramadan).

(Samina, 15, London) I've been brought up by my parents to learn about the Prophet and Islam culture. I feel proud of being a Muslim girl.

Reference to the conduct and commitment to live Islam as a system of beliefs, norms and codes translate a defined behaviour associated with becoming a proper Muslim. The understanding of such commitment involves a high standard of conduct, which validates religious identity. The importance of reaching this status is understood by Muslims to be the authentic form of Islam, for which the focal point is the embodied performance of virtue.

For French interviewees, being Muslim is described in terms of parents' heritage, origins and as life itself. It is an entity that makes sense to them and that they do not question.

(Kenza, 14, Le Havre) Ça me plaît d'être Musulmane. C'est important dans ma vie, c'est toute ma vie. (I like to be a Muslim. It's important in my life, it's all my life).

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) C'est important ... je me sens fière d'être Musulmane. Mes parents le sont alors je le suis aussi. C'est mon origine. (It's important ... I feel proud to be Muslim. My parents are Muslim so I am also one. It's my origin).

(Alexandre, 14, Bordeaux) Moi je suis entièrement Musulman, en fait. Mes parents le sont alors je le suis automatiquement. Mes grands-parents sont Algériens, mais mes parents sont nés en France. (I am completely Muslim, in fact. My parents are Muslim so I am automatically. My grandparents are Algerian, but my parents were born in France).

For successive generations of Muslims born in France, it can be argued that their cultural background and developed sense of religious belongingness are inherited elements of their culture. Today, young Muslims argue for their right to claim an open acknowledgment of their identity, while speaking of Islam in terms of a legacy, a ritual or an origin. French participants show that their culture becomes
representative of their alleged difference. Despite the loss of some aspects of Muslim culture, such as the linguistic legacy, young French Muslims have developed their sense of identity through a supposed control of a religious belongingness. A survey carried out in 2001 revealed that identification with Islam was stronger than it had been in 1994 or 1989 (OSI/EU, 2002:76).

For British and French Muslim feelings of pride, happiness and safety can be said to be intertwined or derived from those felt of being a proper Muslim.

(Edward, 15, London) I feel proud because I believe that all religions have the right to exist. By being a Muslim, it's like nothing different to other religions because ... it's what you believe in. I follow the Koran and the prophet Mohammed and others, like Christians, follow Jesus. So, I feel proud about my religion.

(Roxy, 15, London) It makes me feel like there is things that I have to do ... like in order to be a Muslim ... to make my parents happy ... so I know that they like me.

(Mysha, 13, London, Group discussion) It's a great feeling, a great atmosphere you have because people are friendly to each other particularly when we have Eid. It's a nice feeling of being together.

(Bob, 13, Surrey) I feel very proud because I like my religion and I like what my parents taught me. It makes feel great and safe.

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) ... proud of my religion because I understand and I am not like embarrassed or shy to show who I am, what I do. It's my culture.

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Je suis une personne comme les autres, j'ai ma religion, je suis Musulman et je suis fier d'être. Toute ma famille est aussi Musulmane alors je le suis aussi et ça me fait plaisir. (I am a person like any other, I have my religion, I am Muslim and proud to be. All my family is Muslim so I am also Muslim and it makes me feel happy).

(Samy, 13, Bordeaux) Je suis fier d'être musulman parce que grâce à ma mère j'apprends la langue arabe, le kabyle pour pouvoir discuter avec des membres de ma famille qui habite en Algérie. (I am proud to be Muslim because thanks to my mother I learn Arabic, the Kabyle language so I can talk with members of my family who lives in Algeria).

(Yassim, 13, Bordeaux) Je suis content ... le fait d'être musulman, je me sens différent, d'une autre culture. (I am happy ... the fact that I am Muslim, I feel different, from another culture).

Reference to cultural heritage (e.g. religion, history, traditions and mother tongue) represents the ingredient that contributes to the affective aspect of one's cultural
identity. Parents’ and family’s love and ways of bringing up children also provides a sense of safety. Children learn from their parents’ conduct in living Islam and this is crucial to ensure the development and feeling of pride in being Muslim. The display of values and morals that are aligned with the teachings of Islam are the epicentre of a solid Muslim identity. Furthermore, the acknowledgement of being different is considered a positive element of one’s cultural identity.

6.3 SUMMARY

While there are different ways of being Muslim in Britain and France, they all engage with the realities of living as a minority in a non-Muslim country, to work out strategies and processes of negotiation in a wider society to ensure the survival of Muslim identity and its transmission to children.

No matter what the notion of Muslim identity involves, it will also relate to and embody a prevailing religious characteristic. The research shows that for British and French participants, religion plays a central role in their life. British participants are more inclined to define and associate the notion of self-identity in terms of religious devoutness (i.e. importance of being a ‘proper’ Muslim) where commitment to live Islam as a system of belief, norms and codes is the quintessence of being who they are. French participants appear to show less devoutness but are inclined to define and associate the notion of self-identity in terms of parents’ heritage and origins, a transmitted entity that is fully embraced.

All participants agree to having Religious Education (i.e. learning Arabic and reading the Koran) and performance of faith, for example observing Ramadan and celebrating Eid as significant events for them. They see themselves as Muslims and are proud and happy about it. For them, the headscarf means different things to different people, whether they wear it or not: to some it means religious devotion, a clear marker of traditions and culture, to others it means oppression. To some it implies sexism and to others it valorises women. To others it translates an identity statement.

There are significant differences between the British and French participants. The more noticeable one is in the languages spoken with friends and families, as the British tend to use their mother tongue much more. The British participants consider religion as more important and attend a Mosque more often than their counterparts.
There is a greater tolerance to the wearing of headscarves in Britain than in France and there is also a greater emphasis put on being a proper Muslim in Britain.

Some initial inferences can be derived from these findings. The British model of multiculturalism is the legacy of a political ideal of tolerance for which the basic tenet is a commitment to freedom of conscience. The principle of multiculturalism is the respect for different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in society, with the state making a distinction between the roles of public citizens and their private beliefs, while maintaining a commitment to freedom of religion. Within this framework, the Muslim community is enabled to look at itself from the perspective of others, creating an identity that provides the framework through which they define and relate to other identities. British Muslims take their citizenship seriously while accepting British values and practices but deriving their grounds and motivations from Islam.

In contrast, the French rejection of ethnic and religious plurality is based on the Republican principle of laïcité. The latter denotes the idea that the state should not be in the business of imposing, advancing or privileging any particular religion, religious belief or religion in general. The emphasis is on the need for citizens to identify and engage with French nationality above individual cultural origins. Within this framework, the Muslim community is absorbed into the idea of neutrality and homogeneity while at the same time they become the symbol of difference undermining the unity of citizens. Cesari, for instance, found that

‘due to isolation from natural modes of transmission there is a cultural gap between Muslim immigrant parents and their children. Parents have lost crucial battles against dominant French educational, cultural, and social institutions in their struggle to inculcate the cultural values of their home countries. Most notable amongst their defeats has been the abandonment of Arabic language’ (Cesari, 2002:40).

Yet, the study shows that French participants are being taught Arabic and Religious Education, following a desire and effort to transmit a cultural and religious heritage.
CHAPTER 7

MY SCHOOL ... ET MOI

The principle goal of the research was to understand the everyday life of young British and French Muslims at school. The study had two objectives: 1) to investigate how state funded schools in Britain and France differ, and 2) to understand whether and to what extent the school systems in the two countries accommodate the needs of Muslim pupils. The first objective has been addressed in Chapter Three, which compared the education system in the two countries and looked at what each nation is doing in regards to the education of its Muslim community. This chapter focuses on the second objective. The fieldwork involved collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from the participants in the two countries and concerned their views on the ways school provided and accommodated their cultural needs as well as their perception and relationship to their school, teachers and peers.

7.1 MY LIFE AT SCHOOL

To assess the participants’ views and opinions of their life at school, the survey included questions on the school environment. Opinions were elicited in the form of six proposed statements, asking the participant to choose either ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’ or ‘Strongly Disagree’. Table 7-1 shows the relative percentage of overall responses for combined answers ‘Strongly Agree/Agree’.

| Point A | Your cultural needs ought to be considered (e.g. halal food, prayer room) | 89 |
| Point B | Aspects of your cultural traditions ought to be taught at school | 87 |
| Point C | School ought to be the place to talk openly about your culture (e.g. organised discussion groups) | 85 |
| Point D | Being Muslim does not affect your school life | 74 |
| Point E | You feel that teachers ought to be more aware of your culture | 77 |
| Point F | You would like to be accepted for who you are | 96 |
Overall, the answers suggest that there is a shared agreement that the schools do generally care for their cultural needs. However, there are significant differences between what ‘accommodating cultural needs’ mean to British and French schools. For example, the research revealed that British schools provided halal meals, a prayer room (one of them provided a wash room), allowed the wearing of headscarves and granted school leave to celebrate Eid. This was not the case in the French schools, which only go as far as not serving pork in their canteens; wearing of headscarves is strictly forbidden.

![Combined answers Strongly Agree/Agree for each point](image)

Fig. 7-1 Life at school

Figure 7-1 shows the comparative combined “Strongly Agree/Agree” answers of British and French participants on the questions about their life at school, particularly on whether the school provides for their cultural needs. All participants firmly expressed their wish to be accepted at school for who they are (Point F). For the rest of the questions, British participants scored higher than their French counterparts. It is interesting to note that more than two thirds of the French participants feel strongly about their cultural identity and expect the schools to provide for it (Points B and E). Point C is of interest, as 72% of French participants express an interest in seeing school as a place to talk openly about their culture. This suggests that they have a strong and eager desire to talk overtly about who they are despite the well-understood principle of *laïcité* at school. However, 71% of French participants considered their cultural needs to be adequately addressed by the school. On the one hand, this indicates that their expectations have been conformed to *laïcité*, however on the other hand, they do not know any better and could not envisage anything different. Also of interest is the score of 79% by British participants on Point D, which suggests that
there does not appear to be any conflict between school policies and their cultural identity.

In summary, schools are places regulated by rules and principles, which are administered through management and the daily chain of command. State-financed schools reflect some central aspects of the nation-state by the way they deal with the outside world, suggesting that their role symbolises certain premises regarding the civil society (Baumann & Sunier, 2004:21). In Britain, 'the lack of acknowledgement and recognition of faith identity of Muslim children could have adverse consequences in schools. Recognising its importance can lead to the development of creative and effective solutions to issues concerning schools' (Ward, 2004:8). In France, the lack of acceptance and recognition of faith identity of Muslim children reflect the secular prerequisite that schools implement.

School provides for Muslim children

All British interviewees acknowledged that school respects both their religion and other religions, and accommodates their cultural needs. Time is given for prayers, consideration is shown at the time of Ramadan and teachers are aware of the role and importance of gender difference in classroom.

(Zak, 13, London) They do provide us with a lot of things, with a room for us to pray, halal meals ... don't do it just for us or because of us Muslims, they do it for other religions and that's a good thing. It shows that they respect us and we respect them back.

(Amisha, 12, London) Yes, they have all the stuff. They give halal food everyday of the week; they even have a halal certificate. There is a prayer room and washing upstairs. They allow the girls to fully cover with long dress, the headscarf. They even allow long coats.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) Yes, they do provide things like at the canteen there are halal meals; there is also a prayer room. The girls can come to school wearing the headscarf. All of that it's good, it's a good thing.

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) They have a praying room upstairs; a lot of people go upstairs and pray. At the canteen, there are vegetarian things, halal meals. Dress code, you can wear skirt ... if you want you can wear trousers. My friend wears a long black skirt and that is OK with them (i.e. the school), they say that's fine. I think it's nice from the school to have such an open approach to Muslim girls.
British interviewees share positive views about their school as far as their cultural needs are concerned. As important, if not more so, is the concealed curriculum that schools are willing to offer to the needs of their pupils, displaying schools’ values and attitudes towards the matter. Schools ought to consider the cultural background from which their pupils come from to avoid possible conflict between specific conditions of religious beliefs and that of the rules and practices of the school (e.g. school policies on dietary customs, school uniform and ethnic dress code). The dominance of the religious dimension in the identity of young British Muslim is of significance in schools, seeing that distinct identities have begun to emerge among Muslims in Britain, most of which have a solid religious dimension. The OSI/EU report is right to suggest that an affirmative recognition of one’s ethnic and religious identity may be a prerequisite for education success and consequently the accomplishment of potential and full participation in society (OSI/EU, 2005:146). However, such a situation can be achieved if efforts are made to recognise faith identities in official documentation and if education authorities, at all levels, make the commitment to do so whether they are the Department for Education and Skills, LEAs or individual schools.

French interviewees, on the other hand, considered that the school cares for them as far as not serving pork in canteens and recognise that their school makes an effort. Yet, as no worship facilities exist on school premises, most interviewees go home at lunch time to do their daily prayer.

(John, 13, Le Havre) ... quand il y a quelque chose avec du porc, ils le disent et ils donnent quelque chose d’autre ... il y a un choix. On peut pas avoir une pièce pour faire la prière parce qu’il n’y a pas d’église dans l’école. Et puis, il ne faut pas montrer sa religion ... alors ça ne marcherait pas. (when there is something with pork, they say it and they give something else ... there is a choice. We can’t have a room for prayer because there is no church in the school. And we can’t show our religion ... so, it wouldn’t work).

(Nadia, 11, Le Havre) Oui, enfin pas halal, mais comment dire ... c’est pas halal, mais ils font en sorte qu’on ne mange pas de porc, parce que quand on est en primaire aussi ils ne font pas faire manger du porc, ils font manger un autre truc, soit de la salade ou autre chose. L’école fait attention à la nourriture mais pas à d’autres trucs comme porter le voile à l’école. (Yes, well not halal, but how to say ... it’s not halal, but they make sure we don’t eat any pork, because when we are in
junior they also make sure we don’t eat pork, they make us eat something else, a salad or something. The school pays attention to the food but not to the other stuff like wearing the headscarf at school.

(Ménet, 15, Bordeaux) A la cantine, ils ne servent pas de porc mais il n’y a pas de nourriture halal. Moi, je mange à la cantine et je mange ce qu’ils proposent comme second plat, le jour où ils servent du porc. Ils pensent aux musulmans qui sont ici mais c’est vrai que la nourriture n’est quand même pas tout à fait musulmane, de la cuisine halal. (Yes and no. At the canteen, they don’t serve pork but there is no halal food. I eat at the canteen and I eat what they offer as second dish the day they serve pork. They think about the Muslims who are here but it’s true that the food is not really for us, halal food).

(Oui-Oui, 12, Bordeaux, Group discussion) A la cantine, c’est vrai ils ne servent pas de porc mais c’est pas non plus de la nourriture halal. Mais c’est déjà bien dependqu’ils nous forcent pas à manger du porc, il y a quand même le choix! (At the canteen, it’s true that they don’t serve pork but it’s not halal food. Well! it’s quite good that they don’t force us to eat pork, that there is the choice at least!).

There is no regulatory text concerning the provision of meals without pork in school canteens and no schools provide halal meals. In practice, schools do offer meals without pork to children of Jewish and Muslim faith. However, this depends on the determination of schools and local authorities, and the municipal financial budget (Maurer, 2006:24).

British interviewees expressed happiness and ‘feeling comfortable’ regarding the school they go to. These positive comments reflect the acknowledged efforts that the schools make towards the Muslim pupils. Interviewees identified this as a mark of respect to their religion which, in turn, contributed to their positive attitude towards their school. In addition, they expressed a sense of safety and a ‘homely’ feeling, with the knowledge that other people of the same faith are there and able to congregate.

(Zamunda, 14, London) I like my school because it’s mixed and we are allowed to do what we want to do. And like, it is really homely in school.

(Harry, 13, Surrey) I’m happy to stay in this school; there is nothing that’s missing. I feel comfortable here.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) If the school was not doing all that, it will mean that they’re not respecting us. Because we know that they do it, we know that they’re showing respect and that they care for us so we respect them back.
The idea of a school that would not provide and respect their religion could be a source of tension, distress and even anger for the students and their parents.

(Benjamin, 15, London) If they didn’t do all that, I would be angry. It’s important that the school listen to what we need.

(Mysha, 13, London, Group discussion) I would feel angry. I would not even consider coming to a school which doesn’t allow celebrating Muslims traditions; it’s all about together celebrating.

(Myriam, 14, London, Group discussion) I would feel very bad.

(Jazmin, 12, London, Group discussion) I would change school; I think my parents would not like me staying in a school that doesn’t respect Muslim celebrations.

(King, 14, Surrey) It’s good they do that, if they didn’t there would be a lots of arguments from the Muslim students and the parents.

One could not imagine a greater contrast to the acknowledged cultural diversity represented in British schools than the Republican school model. For the French interviewees, the issue of feeling comfortable at school received no comments. Their remarks concentrated largely on the idea that a prayer room is as much enviable as it is unattainable.

(Ikban, 15, Le Havre) L’école le fera jamais de prendre en compte les besoins des Musulmans. C’est vrai que ça serait une bonne chose d’avoir une pièce pour faire la prière. Mais, le problème c’est que des fois ça va être pendant les heures de cours, les heures de prière. Mais ça se fera jamais parce qu’il est interdit de montrer sa religion à l’école. (School will never take into account the needs of the Muslims. It’s true that it would be a good thing to have a prayer room. But, the problem is that the prayer will fall sometimes during the lesson. In anyway, it will never happen because it’s forbidden to show religion at school).

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Chez moi, je peux faire ma prière. Il n’y a rien à l’école pour ça parce que c’est interdit de montrer sa religion. (At home, I can do my prayer. There is nothing at school for that because it’s forbidden to show your religion).

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) Il n’y a pas de salle de prières et il n’y en aura jamais parce que c’est une école laïque et qu’il est interdit de montrer sa religion. (There is no prayer room because school is secular and it’s forbidden to show your religion).

(Youseph, 13 and Amel, 15, Le Havre, Group discussion) C’est pas possible de le faire parce que c’est interdit de montrer sa religion à l’école. Les filles qui veulent
However, British interviewees experienced some constraints in their everyday life at school, namely the wearing of school uniform, which Muslim girls considered not as comfortable as Muslim dress. However, the idea of treating every student as an equal is also important.

(Amisha, 12, London) I wear the school uniform and the jacket but I would be more comfortable wearing my long dress.

(Kayla, 11, Surrey) The school allows us to wear the headscarf, even long skirts ... as long as we respect the school dress-code.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) The school allows girls to wear the headscarf and that's good but we have to wear the school uniform, trousers and everything. That's fine because they try to make everybody equal ... because if we were allowed to wear what we want, then other people should be also allowed to wear what they want.

In Britain, religious diversity is generally accepted in daily life. This is also reflected in school life where a set of measures are adopted to adjust to religious expression of identity (Collet, 2004:122). In general, the practice of school uniform is normal and most schools make their pupils wear one. Many arguments have presented the purpose and role of school uniform, suggesting that it can help to create a sense of belonging (having all the pupils wearing the same) and that it contributes to create a sense of unity because enforcing the rule that students should wear the same clothing eliminates the stigma that may surround socio-economic differences. School uniform can be seen as a social leveller, since it makes all the children at a school equal no matter whatever their family background or income. Policy on uniform varies from school to school. Typically, uniforms are usually agreed upon by the school governors and parents' representatives. Often, decisions reflect the concerns of the local Muslim community. However, once a uniform is decided on, schools have a right to demand that their pupils wear the uniforms regardless of the religious views of the pupils or their parents. In essence, it can be argued that the school uniform achieves a sense of secularism through the symbolic sense of unity. The tolerance of headscarves in

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48 Available on www.idebate.org
state-funded schools reflects that, as long as the garments complement the school uniform.

French interviewees, on the other hand, claim that the ban of wearing the headscarf and the prohibition about displaying religion are the principal impediments that the school environment imposes upon them. In general, school uniforms were abandoned after the Second World War when pupils were told to wear overalls instead. Even those ceased to exist after the riots of May 1968, from which a philosophy of individual freedom was expressed. Today, state schools do not have school uniforms, but they apply a dress code that allows pupils to wear pretty much what they want, with the exception of headscarves, turbans or the Jewish kippa. The fundamental idea is that school is perceived as a place that creates a neutral setting in order to offer equal access to education. It is within this setting that schools resist the influences of religion (Sage, 2006). Yet this idea of offering an egalitarian programme to all children regardless of their religious and ethnic backgrounds could be challenging when liberty (for example no practice of school uniform) it seems, comes before equality. Private differences or signs of particularism have to be abandoned before entering the school (e.g. religious markers and languages - other than French) to promote and ensure equality for all. In summary, Baumann and Sunier are right to suggest that French schools are the ‘agents through which civic equality is achieved and where a removal process of private differences is applied’ (Baumann & Sunier, 2004:22). In contrast, the multicultural vision of the British school, where many identities co-exist under one roof, represents the ethos of British schooling. Here, differences means diversity and diversity is good. Belonging to a school does not have to prevail over the sense of belonging to a culture or a community. Baumann and Sunier rightly claim that ‘the school supports a composite ‘multicultural nation’ rather than a nation-state acting as an arbiter of a unifying ideal’ (Baumann & Sunier, 2004:31).

Learning about Muslim culture at school

European and Christian cultural heritage is irrefutably highlighted in the British and French school curricula. For many Muslim pupils whose families originate from other

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49 The only exceptions are the state school of the Légion d’Honneur in Seine-St-Denis and few private Catholic schools that still required pupils to wear school uniform.
parts of the world and have a different cultural heritage, this can leave them in a
disadvantaged position or give them a negative image of the importance of their
culture. However, the National Curriculum could contribute to improving this
situation by providing a more global focus of European and Christian cultures that
could be contextualised in terms of world civilisation. As such, the National
Curriculum could include the presently-ignored involvement and influence of Muslim
culture in European culture, recognising the impact that Muslim art, literature,
mathematics, science, history, philosophy, astronomy and medicine had on learning.
It is possible to envisage that such input would help pupils to appreciate the
commonalities between cultures and civilisations and to convey greater support to the
identity and self-concept of young Muslims (OSI/EU, 2005:154). The research would
have therefore explored the views and opinions on whether aspects of Muslim history
and culture could be taught at school and whether this project would be of interest to
non-Muslim pupils, as it could help them understand their peers better.

(Benjamin, 15, London) In RE, we talk about Islam, the Prophet, the Koran. It
would be a good idea ... like for example, in Art, though in Islam there is not much
paintings, it's just designs ... it's not much but it would be interested to learn about
them. I would myself be interested to see that at school.

(Harry, 13, Surrey) Yeah! I would be quite happy to learn a bit more ... maybe if
the teachers could learn about Islam. But I'm surprised about what my English
teacher can say 'Sallamlikum' ... that makes me smile, it's quite funny ... a teacher
that says that! It's when he's doing the register, and he normally says 'good
morning!' in different languages, and then he says it.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) It could be maybe a good thing to learn about our culture at
school ... it would be very different! Well! I would certainly like that because I
would learn more about it. It would show the non-Muslim people how we feel
strong about Islam, and like the other religions, how important religion is and we
respect it ... they should do the same to us.

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) Je pense que ça serait une bonne chose pour nous d'abord,
et puis pour les non Musulmans. On apprendrait quelque chose qui nous est proche
et les non Musulmans verreraient comment on vit, comment on fait des choses.
J'aimerais savoir plus de choses. (I think it would be a good thing for us first, and
then for the non Muslims. We would learn something that it's close to us and the
non Muslims would see how we live, how we do things. I would like to know more
things).
(Sarah, 14, Le Havre, Group discussion) J’aimerais apprendre plus sur ma culture ... sur ce que font les autres, comment ils vivent. Ça serait intéressant parce que ça m’apprendrait sur mes origines. Ça changerait un peu du programme et puis ça serait nouveau. (I would like to learn more on my culture ... on what others do, how they live. It would be interesting because I would learn on my origins. It would change from the program and it would be new).

(Alexandre, 14, Bordeaux) En fait, on avait travaillé sur le monde musulman, sur la Mecque, sur les guerres qu’ils ont fait. J’aurais beaucoup aimé que ça dure plus longtemps ... c’était vraiment intéressant. J’aurais beaucoup aimé qu’on aille plus dans les détails parce qu’on a vu très, très rapidement ..., mais on a pas vu assez de choses moi je trouve. Toute la classe avait aimé, même les non musulmans. Je pense que ça serait vraiment une bonne idée d’apprendre plus sur la culture musulmane. Je crois que ça marcherait. (In fact, we did the Muslim world, the Mecca, the wars they did. I would’ve liked very much to continue for longer... It was really interesting. I would’ve liked very much to go further, in more details because we did very, very quickly ... we didn’t see enough things I think. The whole class liked it, even the non Muslims. I think it would be really a good idea to learn more on the Muslim culture. I think it could work).

(Karim, 15, Bordeaux, Group discussion) Je pense que ça serait bien ... je veux dire que moi ça m’intéresserait beaucoup au contraire d’apprendre sur la culture, sur l’histoire musulmane, les royaumes, les guerres et tout ... on ne voit rien de ça à l’école mille part dans les cours ... à part en histoire mais c’est vraiment très court et très rapide. (I think it would be good ... what I mean is that I would be very interested to learn about the culture, the Muslim history, the kingdoms, the wars and everything else ... we don’t see that at school, anywhere in the subjects ... besides in History but it was so short and done so fast).

(Adem, 13, Bordeaux, Group discussion) Il y a beaucoup de pays musulmans avec des traditions différentes et on sait rien. Je viens du Kosovo et je sais que c’est différent de l’Algérie, la façon dont on vit, la façon de faire les choses, les coutumes. Ça serait bien si on pouvait apprendre plus à l’école sur ça. (I agree with him. There are many Muslim countries with different traditions and we know nothing about them. I come from Kosovo and I know it’s different in Algeria, the way they live, the way they do things, the customs. It would be good if we could learn more on this at school).

British and French interviewees strongly agreed that learning the Muslim culture through arts, music, history, geography, literacy and other subjects could be a very special and relevant thing to do. The idea of sharing their culture with others describes a concealed and eager enthusiasm, which is ready to be explored. Having teaching staff speaking partial Arabic is perceived as a pleasant surprise and would be
considered a welcoming approach. Having access to Muslim culture is considered positive for several reasons: it would bring a sense of fairness and equality as far as learning something atypical from European/Christian culture, it would expand the knowledge already acquired by Muslim pupils and most importantly, it would help raise the understanding of Muslim culture in general to their non-Muslim peers.

(Rana, 12, London) Yes, it would be a good thing because it's something quite special for us because normally you learn about the Christian world and the history and everything else. I think the non-Muslims would like because they will do something different... because they will learn about the Muslim things... you know when the teacher doesn't let you go to the prayer, they know how important it is for a Muslim boy to do his prayer.

(Myshaa, 13, London, Group discussion) It would be good because we learn about Italian art or other European artists... so it would be normal to learn about Arabic artists, what they created or painted. It would be fair to know more about it.

(Sania, 15, London, Group discussion) I think it would be a good idea because, for example, if we learn about Arabic poetry in literature, it will open our minds on something very different. It would be not only for our own benefit, learning about Muslim culture, but also for the non-Muslim people.

(Jazmin, 12, London, Group discussion): I think that learning things about Arabic culture would help learning about Islam.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) It could be a good idea to try because it would be different and new; learning about Western world is fine but learning about Muslim geography or history would be great too because it could explain why things are like that today, why they're wars in some countries.

(BG, 15, Surrey) In RS studies, the non-Muslim people do share ideas when we talk about Islam. I don't do RS anymore, but last year when we were doing it, all the non-Muslims, my friends around, they were all sharing ideas and telling the teacher about all the cultures and religions, about Islam. They were asking about how Muslims pray and what they do when Ramadan comes and stuff like that.

(The Don, 14, Surrey, Group discussion) Yes. I think it would be good because everybody, Muslims and non-Muslims, could participate and find out more about Muslim culture, where things come from.

(Steven, 14, Le Havre) Oui, je crois que ça serait une bonne idée parce qu'on parlerait de quelque chose de différent, quelque chose que je comprendrais puisque c'est ma culture. (Yes, I believe it would be a good idea because we could talk about something different, something that I understand since it's my culture).
(John, 13, Le Havre) Oui, ça serait une très bonne idée parce qu'on en parle sans trop en parler. On devrait plus apprendre sur notre culture. Ça serait bien si on apprenait sur la géographie, l'histoire, les personnes importantes, les différents pays qui sont musulmans ... comment ils vivent. (Yes, it would be a very good idea because we speak about it without talking about it. We should learn more about our culture. It would be nice if we could learn geography, history, important people, different Muslim countries, how they live).

(Ménet, 15, Bordeaux) En cinquième, on avait au programme d'histoire 'Le Monde Musulman' ... mais c'était vraiment court. Ça a duré que quelques cours. On a clairement survolé quelque chose qui je pense mérite de passer beaucoup plus de temps. J'aimerais beaucoup que l'on parle de la culture musulmane parce que ça permettrait aux autres de connaître notre culture à nous ... ça rapprocherait tout le monde en fait. (In Y8, we had in History "The Muslim World" ... but it was really short. It lasted only few lessons. We clearly rush something that I think deserve more time. I would very much like to talk about the Muslim culture because it would allow others to know our culture ... it would bring everybody together in fact).

(Chainez, 14, Bordeaux) C'est bien de savoir aussi sur une autre religion, pas toujours que sur le christianisme ... d'en parler au moins, de découvrir la culture musulmane, la faire connaître à tout le monde. Moi, j'aimerais beaucoup ça. Ça serait intéressant de le faire parce que ça montrerait aux non musulmans quelque chose de nouveau, quelque chose qu'ils n'ont peut-être jamais vu. (It's good to learn also on other religions, not always on Christianity ... to talk at least, to discover the Muslim culture, to make it known to everyone. I would like that a lot. It would be interesting to do it because it would show to the non Muslims something new, something they maybe never saw).

(Oui-Oui, 12, Bordeaux, Group discussion) Je pense que ça serait bien parce qu'il y a beaucoup de choses à apprendre sur la culture musulmane et on ne sait quasiment rien sur ça. (I think that it would be good because there are so many things to learn on the Muslim culture and we know almost nothing).

There is currently no teaching on the subject of Muslim culture in Britain, however the National Curriculum includes the study of Islam as part of Religious Studies. It is within this frame that Islam is taken seriously and taught as a belief system and a means of one's development of social ethnic and cultural identity. The fact that state schools teach pupils different faiths can be interpreted as a tool to recognise plurality as legitimate and to accommodate religious differences as equally valid. As Mannitz argues, 'the aim is not to establish religious conviction, but to further pupils'
reflections about their belief while also respecting religious sentiments of others’ (Mannitz, 2004:107).

Interestingly, the French curriculum does cover *Le Monde Musulman* within the History-Geography program in Year 8 (second year of senior school). In the textbook *Le Moyen-Age et la Naissance des Temps Modernes* (Middle-Ages and the Birth of Modern Times), the program covers what has been defined as the essential (that is the birth of Islam), the expansion of Islam, the Koran and its legacy, the Mosque of Kairouan in Tunisia, the trade, Baghdad and finally the Palace of Andalusia. A map of the Muslim world in the 8th century is also used during the class. In all, the subject is modestly covered in seventeen pages (including two pages of exercises) out of a textbook of over three hundred pages. Within the French National Curriculum, Religious Education is generally absent. The curriculum seeks absolute neutrality towards religious convictions and meaning, with no religious symbols being found within the school or any other public institutions. However, religions are discussed within history and philosophy lessons, where they are treated as theoretical systems of ideas and belief. It is worth noting that although Islam is recognised for its historical, political and intellectual contribution to the rest of the world, it is viewed, nevertheless, in an analytical and rational mode and not in terms of its relevance to personal belief (Mannitz, 2004:89).

Within their distinct historical process, Britain and France appear to have both applied a similar historical amnesia about Islam's cultural contribution to modernity. Ignoring the Muslim heritage (e.g. scientific and technological) for over a thousand years has resulted in a solid Eurocentric ‘amour-propre’ at the expense of other world cultures. Derrida expressed his views on the matter in the spring of 2003, when he participated in a public debate in Paris with Algerian intellectual Mustapha Chérif. The discussion was an attempt to tear down the notion that Islam and the West are two civilizations locked in a bitter struggle for supremacy. Derrida stressed and agreed with Chérif that ‘there was a great need to deconstruct the European intellectual construct of Islam and rediscover the reciprocal fertilization of the Greek, the Arab, and the Jew’ (Derrida & Chérif, 2008:37-38).

With that said, the British and French interviewees expressed their concerns and doubts regarding the idea of learning about their culture, arguing that non-Muslim
pupils might show no interest because of pre-conceived ideas, or might display inappropriate comments or behaviour with regards to their religion. Another concern regarded whether the school would show some degree of leniency and consideration towards such ideas.

(Esteban, 14, London) Well, it depends. You should be given the choice if you want to learn ... at school, there is always a mix, it's not always Muslims. You should be given the choice whether you want to learn your own religion.

(Kayla, 11, Surrey) If we were talking about Muslim clothes for example, I think the Muslim would like to talk about that but we should always think about the other pupils, the non-Muslims, would they want to be introduce to how our culture is, how we respect our God?

(Beyoncé, 12, Le Havre) Oui, ça serait intéressant mais je ne sais pas si l’école donnerait la permission de le faire. On parle du Christianisme, de l’histoire de France, des rois de France et d’autres choses ... mais je ne sais pas si l’école serait contente de parler autant de l’histoire et de la culture Musulmane. (Yes, it would be interesting but I don’t know if the school would agree to do it. We talk about Christianity, the History of France, the kings of France and other stuff ... but I don’t know if the school would be happy to talk as much of the Muslim history and culture).

(Mémet, 15, Bordeaux) Dans la classe il n’y a pas beaucoup d’élèves musulmans, alors je ne sais pas si les non musulmans seraient intéressés par ça ... si vraiment ils s’ennuient dans le cours et n’aiment pas ça, je pense que ça serait pas bien ... parce que je peux forcer personne à apprendre ma culture. (In the class there are not a lot of Muslim students, so I don’t know if the non Muslims would be interested by that ... so if they are bored in the lesson and don’t like it, then I think it wouldn’t be good ... because I can’t force anyone to learn about my culture).

Another aspect of Muslim culture that some interviewees would like to see at school is the possibility of learning Arabic. Despite some reservations, the wish to learn Arabic as a second language (as it is for English or Spanish) was clearly expressed by French interviewees.

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Oui, ça serait bien d’apprendre plus. Comme par exemple, quand les musulmans ont attaqué l’Espagne. On pourrait peut-être aussi apprendre l’arabe. Ça serait différent et nouveau pour les non Musulmans d’apprendre quelque chose d’autre que les rois de France et les guerres qu’ils ont gagnées, le Moyen Age et tout ça. (Yes, that would be a good thing to learn more. For example, when Muslims attacked Spain. We could maybe learn Arabic. It would be
different and new for the non-Muslims to learn other stuff than the kings of France and the wars they won, the Middle-Age and all that).

(Christophe, 15, Bordeaux) Ici en France, il y a beaucoup de Musulmans alors ça serait bien si on pouvait aussi apprendre à l’école l’Arabe et les traditions, les façons de vivre des musulmans. ... les musulmans du Kosovo, les musulmans d’Algérie, les musulmans d’Irak, etc. (Here in France, there are a lot of Muslims so it would be good idea if we could learn at school Arabic and the traditions, the way of living of Muslims ... those from the Kosovo, from Algeria, from Iraq, etc.).

It can be argued that the education system should be encouraged to cater for the linguistic needs of ethnic minority pupils and to also take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the linguistic diversity of modern society. A broader approach to language education can be said to be justified, as linguistic diversity provides the opportunity to broaden linguistic horizons. The role of the education system in relation to the maintenance and support of the languages of ethnic minority communities (generally referred to as ‘mother tongue’) should not be ignored. On a broader level, it can be argued that bilingual education, mother tongue maintenance and mother tongue teachings are significant aspects for ethnic minority pupils who consider this as fundamental to their equality of opportunity within the education system. According to Lamb, encouraging multilingualism is of significance because ‘the development of the first language is an important factor for successful learning’ (Lamb, 2001:8).

In France, the total command of the French language represents the dominant and distinctive element of the idea of egalitarianism, pushing the use of mother tongues to the private domain. This clear and exact stance means that every pupil is a pupil of the French school for whom their cultural background has no relevance to the education process. As such, pupils make a conscious decision to appear as undetectable as possible because speaking a mother tongue would reduce them to be seen as ‘foreigner’ or ‘Arab’. This awareness translates a clear understanding that their mother tongue must be abstained from, making French the principal language and the most effective way of integration into French society. Furthermore, it would be obstructive and contrary to the Republican ideal if another tongue was privileged. In the light of this, one can conclude that the French model of assimilation involves the ability to speak French, a language that has been instrumentalised for that purpose (Sunier, 2004:158-161)
Considering that cultural diversity is encouraged and praised in Britain, it may seem rather contradictory that the English language holds a prominent position in the education domain. But looking at it closely, it can be argued that English provides the key to possibilities and achievement in the National Curriculum. Broeder and Extra are correct to suggest that ‘only by mastering English properly is one able to raise the performance level of all pupils and to remove the obstacles to higher achievement. As such society is able to preserve and transmit the national values in a way which accepts Britain’s diversity and promotes tolerance and racial harmony’ (cited in Sunier, 2004:152). Unlike France, however, the British concept of integration holds a more inclusive and cultural connotation for which the objective is to create a common tie between communities.

**Mixed school versus Islamic school**

Views regarding the feasibility or wish to study in an Islamic school were explored. In general, British and French participants showed little interest in going to such schools, preferring instead to go and study in a state school. They claim that Islamic schools are too strict, narrow-minded (e.g. boys cannot mix with girls) and too focused on religious teaching.

*(Benjamin, 15, London)* I would prefer to stay in a mixed school: there is no fun in an Islamic school, learning mostly about Islam and the Koran can be too strict.

*(Roxy, 15, London)* In an Islamic school you can’t mix with boys and girls, there are certain things you can’t do; the teaching is too strict and too focused on religion. I would not like that.

*(Bob, 13, Surrey)* In an Islamic school, it’s not the same; the girls would be in a different place from the boys. And also, I think I would lose the freedom I have here.

*(John, 13, Le Havre)* Je pense qu’il y aurait plus de travail dans une école islamique, parce qu’il faudrait apprendre le Koran et tout, apprendre à lire et à écrire l’arabe. Ça serait plus sévère qu’une école laïque. *(I think there would be more work in an Islamic school because one would learn the Koran and all, learn to read and write Arabic. It would be stricter than a secular school).*

*(Alexandre, 14, Bordeaux)* Dans une école islamique, c’est pas que c’est pas bien, mais on passe du temps à étudier et à apprendre le Koran et d’autres textes religieux. *(In an Islamic school, it’s not that it’s bad, but we spend a lot of time studying and learning the Koran and other religious texts).*
However, some British and French interviewees had positive views about Islamic schools, sharing the view that getting a religious education is rewarding and fulfilling. Yet, Islamic school is not the only place where religious teaching can be gained, as such an education can be found outside school (e.g. at the Mosque).

(Colly, 13, London) I would like because I would learn more about my religion. In an Islamic school, they teach us more about the Koran, the scripts, our religious culture. Where in a normal school, they teach about everything, in an Islamic school they teach only one subject. I wouldn’t mind.

(King, 14, Surrey) I wouldn’t mind because an Islamic school would teach me how Islam is, what our religion is all about, pray five times a day. My cousin goes to a boarding school, all Asian school, nice Muslim school, religious ... in an Islamic school ... but there, he gets to pray five times a day and every two weeks he comes home and then back to school. He has mostly religious studies and things. He has to get up at 4 in the morning and then he has to read the Koran for 4 hours, I think at 8:30 he starts the boarding school. He looks tired when he comes back. I suppose you get used to this life because when we get old we have to do it ourselves.

(Beyonce, 13, Surrey) I would prefer to go to an Islamic school because I would be able to know more about my religion, what it is about, at school you can’t really ask that.

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Ce qui me plairait si j’allais dans une école islamique, ça serait d’apprendre des choses de ma religion et tout. J’aimerais beaucoup apprendre ça. L’école ordinaire ne peut pas me faire savoir ces trucs. (What I would like to do if I was going to an Islamic school, would be to learn things about my religion and all. I would like to learn that a lot. The ordinary school cannot teach me those things).

(Harry, 13, London) Outside of school, you can still learn ... most Muslims after school, they go to a place where a religious man tell us about the religion, tell us what happened before our religion started ... all sorts of things.

(Kalim, 15, Bordeaux) Je fais déjà des trucs à part... enfin en dehors de l’école. Le samedi je vais à des classes d’arabe. J’aime bien et puis je me retrouve avec mes copains. (I do already things outside the school. On Saturdays I go to Arabic classes. I like it and I meet my mates).

It is perceived that the core religious teaching of Islam can only be gained in Islamic schools, presenting them as spaces where only true and definite Islam can be revealed. This enthusiasm echoes the anxiety that some British Muslim parents have expressed about the daily act of collective worship and contents of Religious Education, despite the 1988 Education Reform Act that recognised a multi-faith society. For them, it is
the dominant Christian character in general that creates concerns, seeing there a lack of consideration for their faith and identity. In the recent years, an increased determination from the British Muslim community to establish private and independent Islamic schools has occurred. The focus on programs containing cultural and religious subjects remains the main objective. It is through Muslim organisations that the requests for denominational schools were met with success and that a number of private and state-funded Islamic schools began to open. For the Muslim communities such projects are meant to convey the intention to offset what they see as being damaging for their children, as they are exposed to a state education that regards favourably Christianity. Mannitz presents the case that ‘some Muslim parents have come to regard these separate schools as essential not only for the religious instruction of their children but in terms of their ‘cultural survival’ (Mannitz, 2004:108).

British and French participants favour mixed state schools for several reasons. Amongst them is the fact that mixed state schools are places that give a multi-disciplinary education and where mixing with other cultures is possible. It is the place which gives them some degree of freedom. The interest in getting a good education and in doing well at school so that good job prospects can be reached, is something that participants considered as very important. In contrast, an Islamic education is thought to jeopardise their chances in getting a good job later in life, as demonstrated in the following statements:

(John, 12, London) I prefer to go to a school where there are several religions together. In an Islamic school you learn more about Islam and the religion, and you are all Muslims. I think it’s important to learn also about everything else. Being in a mixed school like this one is good because you are with other people from other religions and that’s a good thing.

(Zamunda, 14, London) I rather stay in a mixed school, learn about everything else not only my religion but about other religions, so I know a little bit more about everyone else’s religion. So, not only mine. In school, I learn about everything. I don’t really want an Islamic view which teaches only Islamic things, I want to know most of the things going around the world.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) I like being in a mixed school because you’re with different people, you talk with everyone and I’m happy here.
(Susan, 12, Surrey) In a mixed school you get to know about different cultures and I do like that ... I enjoy knowing people different than me. I would miss on that if I had to go to an Islamic school. What is important is getting an education.

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) L'école laïque c'est bien parce qu'on apprend beaucoup sur d'autres cultures. On est avec d'autres élèves qui ne sont pas musulmans, qui sont d'origines différentes et c'est bien d'être mélangé comme ça. Aussi parce que j'ai plus de liberté. (Secular school is good because we learn a lot on other cultures. We are with others students that are not Muslim, who are from different origins and that's good to be mixed like that. Also I have more liberty).

(Yassim, 13, Bordeaux) Je préférerais l'école laïque parce qu'on apprend d'autres matières ... je voudrais découvrir plusieurs choses. C'est pas en allant dans une école islamique que je ferai des études ... je veux dire si je veux aller à l'université et avoir un bon travail. Je crois que ça m'empêcherait plutôt. (I would prefer the secular school because we learn other subjects ... I would want to discover several things. It's not by going to an Islamic school that I will get an education ... what I mean is if I want to go to university and have a good job. I think it would prevent me somewhat).

In 2007, the independent think tank 'Policy Exchange' published a report entitled 'Living apart together: British Muslims and the paradox of multiculturalism'. The authors, Mirza et al., stated that 60% of Muslims preferred their children to attend a mixed school compared to 35% who would prefer to send their children to an Islamic school (Mirza et al., 2007:5). This finding supports the British Humanist Association's claim that the majority of people, whatever their background, prefer mixed state schools over faith schools. Furthermore, the authors reveals that 37% of 16-24 year olds preferred to send their children to an Islamic school, compared to 25% of 45-54 year olds and just 19% of those over 55. The report demonstrates an increase of religiosity among young British Muslims, revealing an interest in Islam in a more politicised way (Mirza et al., 2007:5-7). The fact that younger British Muslims favour faith schools more strongly than older generations suggests that it is necessary to make an effort to effectively promote cross-cultural interaction among young people and what better place to start than in a mixed state school, which is open to all.

In summary, British and French parents want the same thing: a good education in a setting where diverse individuals can mix and learn from each other.
7.2 **My Relationship with Teachers**

**Positive relationship**

In Britain, the Local Education Authorities (LEA) issued a Handbook on Rights and Responsibilities under the equal opportunities legislation. The purpose of this document clearly stated the urgent need to outlaw any expression of discrimination against religious beliefs. The contents underlined the diversity of pupils and stressed the importance of guaranteeing equal opportunities to all children in state schools. Unlike France, British Muslim girls are allowed to wear their headscarf, which shows a broad-minded attitude from teaching staff regarding religious matters (Collet, 2004:128). In general, teachers should be more attentive to Muslim pupils' needs and should respond more sympathetically to their beliefs and values, in and beyond the classroom. In summary, teaching staff are required to respect Muslim children's identities, to refrain from treating pupils in a negative and less constructive way and to avoid making judgments about Islam and Muslims.

The interview data confirm that the LEA directives have been successfully implemented. British interviewees claim that they are being understood and respected with regards to their cultural background (e.g. wearing of headscarves, seating arrangements in class, tiring times during Ramadan and missing school for Eid). Mutual respect appears to be established with teachers; students feel that they can easily approach them for help and that special support can be provided (e.g. translators). Sympathy and consideration are showed during Muslim festivities. Most importantly, however, interviewees emphasise the fact they are being treated the 'same' by teaching staff.

*(John, 12, London)* Yes. Like, if I was from Bangladesh and I don't know any English ... like a boy in our class, the teachers will help him in understanding the lesson. Not all teachers do that but some do.

*(Belal, 14, London)* In general, yes they are. They understand there're certain things as Muslims ... they understand for example that boys don't want to sit with the girls, things like that. If I sit next to a girl I would feel a bit uncomfortable, not too much ... but it would bother me a little bit.

*(Mysha, 13, London, Group discussion)* Yes, I do because for example, one of my teachers, she is not a Muslim, she came to us, a group of girls, and she was seeing us fasting and she wanted to know how we felt. So to give her an idea of what it
was, she fasted for one day. I think that was nice for a teacher to do that. Now she says that she knows how it feels, because during lessons we are like tired ... so now, she gives us some slack.

(Sania, 15, London, Group discussion) I agree with that. They do understand our religion and they do respect our traditions and we respect them back.

(Mysha, 13, London, Group discussion) The only thing I would say is when it's Ramadan, sometimes the teachers eat in front of us and it's not easy. It's really hard when you fast to see them having lunch.

(Susan, 12, Surrey) You don't have to necessarily tell a person who you are ... in school you're all treated the same ... it doesn't matter if you're a Muslim or a Christian.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) They treat us like any other person, the same. Whether you're Christian or Muslim you're going to be treated the same. When it's prayer time, they let us leave the room before the end of the class so we don't miss on our prayer. That's good. There are some Muslim teachers here and they can help us if we have a problem ... but so are the others. Everybody is nice and helpful if we want to get help.

(Beyonce, 13, Surrey) Yes, like when it's Ramadan and Eid, they don't say anything why we're wearing the veil or anything, they don't say anything about it. When I do Ramadan I feel tired and hungry and I can't always concentrate ... it's really hard when I do PE as well. The PE teacher doesn't make me run as much as the others while I am fasting. We don't do as much as a normal day. The teacher takes in consideration that I am tired and it's nice.

British interviewees express positive comments about their teaching staff, stressing the degree of consideration, understanding and respect demonstrated towards them. This contrasts with the French interviewees who indicated that their teachers are 'fine'. Their responses clearly underline that 'normality' must be secured in the name of the collective, emphasising the importance of uniformity and bringing to the front the sensitive issue of being different. For them, 'being normal' or acting in a normal way refers to the fact that a person does not manifest visibly his cultural origin. In this case, 'normality' is accomplished only when no association can be made between visible cultural difference and the point of definite and absolute uniformity. This self-belief reflects a strong subjective dislike to the thought of being perceived as different by others.

(Malik, 14, Le Havre) Oui, ils sont très bien, en général. Par exemple, mon prof. de sport il me dit 'Tu fais le Ramadan, tu fais sport'. Pour lui, tout le monde est
French interviewees highlight the importance of being treated the ‘same’ by teaching staff, stressing the significance and importance of uniformity that *laïcité* embodies. Whereas references to other cultures are everywhere in British schools, they are completely absent in French schools. Pupils are regarded as just pupils, no matter what social, religious or ethnic specificities they have or belong to. French schools aim to create the conditions of equality by disregarding existing differences and as such, teachers treat pupils on an equal footing as equal individuals. In fact, it would be correct to say that teaching staff show no interest in being acquainted with their pupils’ cultural background and origins. It is a fact that questions about national origins or religions could be perceived as challenging the policy of ethnic and cultural blindness, considering that these belong to the private domain. As a result, a definite
boundary is drawn between what governs the public space and the private space, the latter in which all cultural, ethnic or religious aspects are allowed. Within the context of public space, religious and cultural diversity are considered as disturbing elements to the construction of the ‘one and indivisible’ society, unlike in Britain where they represent a shared inheritance that is to be seen overtly (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:68).

**Negative relationship**

Some British interviewees felt that they were not understood by teachers and were often treated in a prejudicial way. For example, their lack of awareness regarding the importance of prayer time forced some pupils to choose between attending the lesson or missing their daily prayers.

*(Harry, 13, London)* Some teachers are not so understanding. Let's say, I have to go to prayer and I ask 'Miss, can I come back for the work another time', and she will say 'What's more important work or prayer'. My religion is important and so is my work. So, somehow I have to choose and I don't want to choose.

Furthermore, the argument developed by the OSI/EU report on Muslim teachers being potential role models for Muslim students in schools was contested on the grounds that teachers often use their position of authority to persuade Muslim students to comply with Muslim conduct (OSI/EU, 2005:161). For example, Muslim girls expressed a strong dislike towards Muslim teachers who pressure them to wear their headscarf.

*(Samina, 15, London)* There are some Muslim teachers here ... they're fine but some (women teachers) have tendency to ask you to wear the headscarf. I don't like that. If my parents allow me not to wear it, I don't see why a teacher should make feel I have to.

Some British participants share the view that teaching staff lack information about Islam. As a result, this leads to situations where little support or sympathy is shown during the time of Ramadan, expressing a clear disregard for Islam.

*(Roxy, 15, London)* If you're saying ... like you have a lunch time detention and you say that you've to go for prayer, they will say 'tough luck, you could've thought of that before you did ... you know'.
(Rosie, 15, Surrey) Well, PE teachers do understand that I am very tired during fasting. Their understanding is about our health, but I think more about my religion. They’re caring but they don’t understand.

Participants show that there is a need for teachers to follow some training to learn about Islamic beliefs and values, as well as religious and cultural practices. Furthermore, they should be able to demonstrate some willingness to include this knowledge across the syllabus and in any extra-curricular activities (OSI/EU, 2005:160).

French interviewees, on the other hand, felt misunderstood by teachers, as they demonstrated their lack of consideration, concern and sympathy during the time of Muslim festivities. A little bit of empathy would go a long way, as it would contribute to the accomplishment of Ramadan whilst being at peace with oneself. For some, a complete lack of concern is demonstrated with regards to more familiar topics, accentuating already off-putting feelings.

(John, 13, Le Havre) Quand je fais le Ramadan, je ne me déverse pas beaucoup en sport parce que c’est fatiguant et je ne peux pas boire d’eau. Le professeur me dit jamais ‘OK, ralentis ... ou arrête toi’ ... pour lui je dois faire comme tout le monde et finir comme les autres. C’est difficile des fois. (When I do Ramadan, I don’t exhaust myself too much in sport because it’s tiring and I can’t drink water. The teacher never says to me ‘OK, slow down ... or you can stop’ ... for him I must do like everyone else and finish like the others. It’s difficult sometimes).

(Cassie, 14, Le Havre) Quand je manque l’école à cause d’une fête ou autre chose, je crois que ce n’est pas important pour eux. (When I miss school because of a celebration or something else, I think that it’s not important for them).

(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux) Ma prof. de sport elle n’a pas accepté que je me repose ou que je m’arrête un peu quand je faisais le Ramadan et quand j’étais très fatiguée. Elle ne me l’a pas accepté. Je faisais le Ramadan alors je devais faire comme les autres ... que je fasse un ou deux tours en moins, ça ne la gênait pas ! Ça serait plus tranquille, plus paisible et je pense qu’il y aurait une certaine harmonie qui fait que j’ai fait mon Ramadan proprement et complètement. (My PE teacher did not accept for me to rest or stop for a while when I did Ramadan and when I was very tired. She did not allow me. I was doing Ramadan so I had to do like the others ... whether I skip a run or two wouldn’t be a bother for her! It would’ve been much nicer and peaceful and I think there would be a certain harmony which helps me do my Ramadan properly).
For French interviewees, teaching staff display a clear lack of concern, showing indifference and very little indulgence. This attitude is clearly detected by the interviewees and accentuates their feeling of detachment. This observation echoes the vivid and yet salient problem of ethnicisation at school. Based on the discourse of ‘othering’, where differences and discrimination are constructed in a valid way around race, religious or ethnic attributes, ethnicisation is a growing predicament within the schooling system. Within this context, the child’s ethnicity is exploited as it becomes the justification for the difficulties that French-born children of immigrant workers encounter at school (e.g. interpersonal relations with teachers) and prejudice in the education received. It is correct to suggest that the schooling system is challenged by the contradiction of the Republican principle of education (i.e. equal and secular) on the one hand and the fuzzy relations that are established between ethnicisation and schools on the other. Today, using ethnicity to explain that a correlation exists between poor academic achievements and cultural differences goes against the fundamental Republican values of impartiality and secularity, indeed in doing quite the opposite in promoting distinction and differentiation. Therefore, it can be argued that social relations tend to be transformed into relations between ethnic groups, in the light of a developing focus on ethnic categories in the education system (Franchi, 2004:45). Felouzis et al. demonstrated in their study that the ethnicisation of pupils’ behaviours, educated in ethnicised neighbourhoods and schools, are also exposed to an established violence that is experienced when their cultural identity is subjected to a discrimination based on an ethnic origin that is presumed to be theirs. The use of
insulting expressions or signals related to cultural identity, race or ethnicity accentuates the identity stigmata that pupils carry within their selves (Felouzis et al., 2005:72-76). In essence, it is correct to suggest that the Republican inhibition to deal with ethnic, religious or cultural issues, has created a situation where schools are challenged by the gap between the ‘principles underpinning National Education (equality, tolerance, non-discrimination on the basis of group differences) and the ordinary practices which take place daily within schools (e.g. pupil/teacher’s indifference or negative remarks on one’s cultural heritage)’ (Payet, 2000:87-88).

7.3 **My Relationship with Other Pupils**

In the field of social psychology, Allport suggested that contact between members of different groups will reduce prejudice between such groups. He indicated that contact must be made between different groups sharing a common goal or status as the one found in the school environment. The more a pupil shares their experiences with members of other groups, the more positive attitudes are formed towards these groups and, hence, a greater sense of connection (Allport, 1954:278-79; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). To assess the participants’ views and opinions on friendships established at school, the survey explored the ways Muslim and non-Muslim participants spend their spare time with friends at school and outside school, their preferences amongst friends and frequency.

**With whom non-Muslim pupils spend their spare-time**

Overall, non-Muslim participants **often** spend their spare-time with either Muslim friends or others, both at school and outside school, as shown in Table 7-2. No significant differences were reported between countries.

| Table 7-2 Spare-time spent by non-Muslim participants (overall answers) |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                  | At school        | Outside school   |                  |                  |
|                                  | Muslim friends (%) | Non-Muslim friends (%) | Muslim friends (%) | Non-Muslim friends (%) |
| Rarely                           | 15               | 10               | 12               | 8                |
| Sometimes                        | 26               | 25               | 22               | 23               |
| Often                            | 34               | 47               | 42               | 50               |
| Always                           | 25               | 18               | 24               | 19               |

My School ... Et Moi
With whom Muslim pupils spend their spare-time

Table 7-3 shows that Muslim participants spend often or always their spare time with other Muslim friends at school or outside of school. They also tend to associate more with non-Muslim friends at school (52%) than outside school (37%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>At school</th>
<th>Outside school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Muslim friends (%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Non-Muslim friends (%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7-2 shows a comparison of national data on Muslim pupils’ preferences of friendship at and outside school. British pupils display a strong preference to spend time with other Muslim pupils at and outside school. The French pupils, on the other hand, do not appear to show any difference in the cultural background of their friends.

In essence, British participants prefer to associate and ‘hang around’ with Muslim friends at and outside of school, at least part of the time, because they feel they can be themselves; they feel closer, as they can relate to them and say whatever they feel. This preference could maybe explain a sense of awkwardness when in the company of non-Muslims, a sense that they have to conform to certain behaviours, such as doing or saying things that a Muslim boy or girl would not normally do or say. French
participants, on the other hand, appear to show no interest in the cultural background of whom they are friends with, applying a more relaxed attitude and adopting a casual approach to blend in (e.g. either you accept me or not. This is the way I am).

Relationship with non-Muslim pupils

The interviewees were asked about the type of friendship and relationship they have with non-Muslim pupils. All participants agreed that they do not feel that they are treated unfairly or negatively by other pupils (88% in Britain and 100% in France). For some, their relationship is described as that of an equal and for others, as being seen differently.

As an equal

British and French interviewees share the views that their peers treat them the same as others, on an equal footing and even as a brother, emphasising the idea that uniformity and homogeneity is a good thing. Friendship is built upon different people and personalities that the interviewees meet every day in the multicultural environment of their school. It is also constructed on mutual respect for each individual regardless of religion (although it is thought to play some influence for some).

(John, 12, London) The other pupils treat me normal, as one of them whether I am Muslim or not ... they see me no difference.

(Amisha, 12, London) I don't think that non-Muslims girls see me differently. I feel I am treated the same than anybody else, like all the other girls in Year 7.

(Harry, 13, Surrey) The other boys, the non-Muslims, treat me as their own brothers and I'm happy with that.

(Sarah, 13, Surrey) I don't feel I am perceived any differently from other girls. I have a lot of white friends and they take me for who I am. It makes me feel safe to know that I fit in with the girls, that I am considered like one of them.

(Ikban, 15, Le Havre) Normal, comme si j'étais un Français ... pareil qu'eux. Il n'y a pas de différence. (Normal, as if I was French ... like them. There is no difference).

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) Les autres me considèrent comme quelqu'un de normale. Je suis comme les autres ... je suis traitée pareil que les autres filles. (Others consider me as someone normal. I am like the others ... I am treated the same than the other girls).
For all interviewees, a positive recognition of their self-defined sense of personal identity is of enormous importance in school. Having established the increasing importance that adolescents place on peer acceptance and conformity (e.g. Brown, 1990), it can be argued that peer pressure may impact on attitudes and behaviours of Muslim pupils. Crosnoe et al. (2003) found that peer support can increase motivation, improve participation and elevate school-life to a priority in the adolescent's life. In addition to feeling connected to positive peers, adolescents from ethnic minority groups who feel a sense of cultural belonging, tend to demonstrate a higher sense of well-being. In their study, the researchers found that the presence of positive peer norms, support and cultural identity promoted the ability to protect participants from the impact of negative peer norms at school (Crosnoe et al., 2003:333-34). Furthermore, Shin et al. argue that

'social identity theorists have long asserted that individuals need a firm sense of group identification in order to maintain a sense of well-being. Being simply a member of a valued group provides individuals with a sense of belonging that contributes to a positive self-concept. Therefore, the security and self-confidence that is associated with having a strong positive sense of self may help provide protection against the various challenges and pressures that adolescents generally face' (Shin et al., 2007:383).

Being seen differently

For some interviewees the relationship with other pupils can be strained as they are perceived as a foreigner or are the embodiment of stereotypes (e.g. that of Asian people for British participants). Bad-mouthing and spiteful comments towards Muslims and Islam are endured, resulting in some feeling uncomfortable and not accepted.

(Zak, 13, London) Some other people can just see me as a foreigner, from another country. Sometimes, I feel sad, sometimes I feel ... I came here, I was born here, so I am British ... I'm lucky I be here to study, to become something.
(John, 12, London) I feel that I am different from people, but ... they should not treat me differently. There are other religions in the school. I am different to them because I am Muslim and I have the same right to be than anyone else.

(Mohamed, 12, Surrey) I think they see me differently a little bit because I am from a different religion and stuff, I am from a different race ... sometimes, it makes me feel uncomfortable.

(Mohamed, 12, Le Havre) Des fois, il y a les grands qui rigolent en nous traitant, c’est tout. Ils nous disent des choses pas sympas ... comme sale Arabe ... mais on est habitué. (Sometimes, older boys laugh at us while insulting us, that’s all. They say not really friendly stuff ... like dirty Arab ... but we are used now).

(Chainez, 14, Bordeaux) Les autres me considèrent comme une fille comme les autres mais j’ai le sentiment d’être différente des autres. Peut-être parce qu’ils me voient comme une fille Arabe! (Others consider me as a girl like any other but I feel I am different from the others. Maybe because they see as an Arab girl!).

Being seen differently is also described in terms of a gender divide. British interviewees draw attention to the fact that Muslim boys and girls maybe perceived in a different light by other Muslims pupils, including non-Muslim ones. The difference in friendship and the degree of relationship may vary according to topics of discussion (e.g. religious issues) and the interlocutor (e.g. whether a Muslim girl wears her headscarf or not). Among the girls, some express a sense of false friendship towards them, others build the safety and security of their friendship along the line ‘girls only’, whether they are Muslim or not. In all, it can be said that cultural background contributes to the make-up of relationships and friendship at school. Very few think that religion can be a divide among friends. For them, religion stays on one side and friends on another: being Muslim has no bearing on friendship.

(George, 15, London) People look at on me and say ‘Why don’t you hang out with us? Why do you hang out with whites and black boys?’ ... for them, being a Muslim should be enough to hang out with only Muslim boys and nobody else.

(Colly, 13, London) Some people meet us and come to talk to you ... they all judge you. Like some people who from far away and they start talking to you, and come up to you ... so nicely and everything ... and you might think that they’re nice and everything, but you don’t know what they’re actually saying behind your back.

(Susie, 13, London) Sometimes they see me differently. Muslim girls who don’t wear headscarves treat me differently ... because she is a Muslim and I am a Muslim ... but she just doesn’t wear the scarf. It doesn’t really bother me.
(Roxy, 15, London) The Muslim boys see us different than other girls in school ... because in our school there are more girls with the headscarf than without ... and I don’t wear the headscarf .... and they think that I am more different than other girls. At times, they feel more comfortable to talk to me because I don’t wear the headscarf ... other times, if we talk about religious things they think that the girls with the headscarf know more than I would. So, it depends on what the topic is and the context.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) I feel comfortable with the girls, not with the boys. I’ve got a lot of friends who are non-Muslims and we get along very well ... we are the same.

(Esteban, 14, London) The fact that I am a Muslim doesn’t really affect in anyway. What matters is who you are, how you behave. The fact that I am a Muslim doesn’t really matter.

(Ménet, 15, Bordeaux) Eh bien, la religion, ça reste d’un côté et être avec mes amis et tout ça, ça reste de l’autre côté. Il n’y a pas de problème ... tout se passe bien. (Well, religion stays on one side and being with my friends and all that, stays on the other. There is no problem ... everything is well).

Cultural identity is of particular significance during the adolescent phase, as young people are within a motion where process and confrontation with developmental identity formation are taking place. It can be claimed that adolescents of ethnic minorities are faced, like their peers, with general concerns about their future prospects and career goals. But they are also confronted with ‘issues related to being a member of a group that may have values divergent from those of mainstream society and often subject to racism and discrimination’ (Shin et al., 2007:381). The almost daily hassles, teasing and bullying that Muslim children experience at school, together with a familiarity to negative peer influences are pressures that adolescents have learnt to internalise, to the expense of their full engagement and participation at school.

It has been suggested that there may be a link between underachievement and the fact that Muslim students are exposed to divergent values at school. It may also be significant that Muslim students are liable to be bullied, teased and attacked because of their religious and cultural background, and that they carry the additional burden of working extra hours at mosque school in the evenings in order to preserve their religious identity (Archer, 2003:26-28). The concept of ‘culturally different’ has become the daily routine as far as creating contacts among peers. French interviewees are easily distinguished as being ‘French from another ethnic group’ or the ‘Arabs’. In
all, North African participants are subjected to jokes and defaming stereotypes by their peers, making the experience of discrimination a common one, which they all identify with.

7.4 SUMMARY

British and French school systems differ significantly in the way they deal with cultural diversity. In Britain, multicultural education is an approach to teaching and learning based upon consensus building, respect and fostering cultural pluralism. The objective is to change behaviours and attitudes towards cultural differences and it is believed that the education system is the best place to start.

As Baumann and Sunier argue, French schools are the epitome of the Republican ideal, where education has to deliver the same promise to all: that is to say liberté from discordant origins whether they are ethnic, religious or class-based; égalité of prospects in a structure aimed at that purpose; and fraternité to newcomers who have joined the social contract (Baumann & Sunier, 2004:22). It is correct to say that the French education institution has always held a neutral position, whereby no ethnic or religious differences are recognised. Within the Republican tradition, the schooling system should represent a progressive collectiveness, able to defy racism through the ‘French melting pot’ project. However, the heterogeneous school population and the growth of issues related to school failure and inequalities reflect that ethnicity has becoming a dimension that can no longer be ignored (Franchi, 2004:45). With invisible official data on the ethnic question, it can be argued that a process of ethnic segregation has been unfolded, with regrettable consequences for children of immigrants who have become the targets of public stigmatisation, which is directed at their ethnic group. As Franchi claims ‘ethnicity in schools is not only constructed through outside influences (e.g. social representations and stereotypes), but rather becomes salient and operant within the daily functioning of the school where strategies for dealing with ethno-cultural diversity become emblematic of the position that the school adopts in its interaction with minorities’ (Franchi, 2004:44).

In general, Muslim pupils in both countries share similar views as far as their preference to learn more about the Muslim culture, since this would enhance their and other pupils’ understanding and acceptance. They all want to be accepted as an equal and not be seen as different by other non-Muslim pupils. They express a preference
for mixed schools over Islamic ones, as the latter are thought to be too strict and infringe on personal freedom.

However, Muslim pupils in the two countries have very different experiences at school. In general, British Muslim children tend to feel more comfortable at school and share the view that their teachers understand and respect them. Nevertheless, they do wish for greater attention and respect towards their values and beliefs. French Muslim children, on the other hand, do not share in great length their sense of well-being at school and consider their teachers as alright. British Muslim children show a preference for same-religion friends at and outside school while their French counterparts tend to be friends with everybody, regardless of their cultural background.

French teaching staff can be said to be the perfect vehicles for representing the principle and values of laïcité. Feeling at odds with Muslim girls wearing headscarves, teachers are relieved to see that such garments are legally forbidden at school, as well as any discussions on the matter. In this way, it can be said that the teachers’ rhetoric duplicates the dominant discourse on civil culture (Collet, 2004:128).

The use and support of history as vehicle to transmit a heritage as well as an ideology shows that in the case of Britain, plurality and cultural diversity have always been there. One can argue that they form the backbone of British philosophical thought, which stands for pragmatism. For Schiffauer and Sunier, it is the calm and collected approach that Britain reflects that makes the nation capable to ‘find pragmatic solutions which respects the ‘culture-identity-community’ of each of the group which constitutes Britain’ (Schiffauer & Sunier, 2004:38). In the case of France, the use and support of history could not be any more divergent as the focus is on a prevailed process of rationality. In summary, history represents a linear conception of experiences and heritage where two currents confront head on: a progressive current that aims for equality against a reactionary current that seeks domination. In light of this, it is correct to suggest that ‘the British concept of ‘culture-identity-community’ is alien to the French conception of History and civilisation process which is culture-blind’ (Schiffauer & Sunier, 2004:39).
CHAPTER 8

MY HOME ... CHEZ MOI?

In order to understand how young Muslims perceive themselves and their community in British and French society, the concept of integration, as defined and implemented in the two countries, was discussed in Chapter Four. Britain follows the ideology of “cultural pluralism” accepting the idea of a multicultural society. France, on the other hand, subscribes to the notion of “Franco-conformity” and immigrants are expected to adopt the French language, cultural patterns and standard way of life.

Noting that the notion of integration is different in the two countries, the empirical work aimed to examine the views and opinions of young British and French Muslims. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected on the participants’ understanding and significance of the notion of integration, their personal experience of acceptance and belonging, as well as more general views on the ways Muslim community is perceived. The issue of acceptance was examined by looking at the recent dialogue of the wearing of headscarves. The notion of belonging was explored through the views on the “gaze of others”, that is participants’ reflections on the stereotypes and clichés of Muslim people, the influence of media at portraying Muslims in Britain and France, and their personal accounts of how others see them.

8.1 THE NOTION OF INTEGRATION: PERCEPTION AND UNDERSTANDING

In Britain, immigration is considered positively within the concept of multiculturalism. The objective is to integrate newcomers while accepting cultural and ethnic communities as contributors to the multicultural scheme. Ethnic heterogeneity is ‘a vital element in self-definition, and group rights are affirmatively acknowledged. Immigrants are understood as contributing by forming additional communities and individuals will be integrated through the integration of their communities’ (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:82). The British policy of integration aims at facilitating members of ethnic minorities to take part ‘freely and fully in the economic, social and public life of the country, with all the benefits and responsibilities which that entails while still being able to maintain their own culture,
traditions, language and values’ (Banton, 2001:155). This initiative duly acknowledges that impediment to complete achievement will rest mainly in the attitudes and behaviour of the majority population.

In France, the idea that cultural identity may be shaped within an ethnic community is perceived as counter-productive to the processus of integration. In other words, the Republican model of integration aims ‘to emancipate individuals from insular cultures and allow them to participate in the grand projet of a ‘one and indivisible’ society (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:83). The integration model captures three principles, namely that integration is an individual process, is materialised through the focal process of naturalisation and signifies equality in social life. (Simon, 2003:718). However, the theory often clashes with social practices, especially institutional ones, which do not reflect these general principles. In essence, French integration policies have searched to strike a balance between a form of tolerance towards cultural differences and the principle of undifferentiation with regards to how unlikely and unattainable it may be.

The field study attempted to gain an understanding of what integration actually meant to participants by presenting them with four possible meanings of the word, namely ‘assimilation’, ‘acculturation’, ‘accommodation’ and ‘communitarianism’. The participants were asked to respond by choosing between ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’, and ‘Strongly Disagree’ for each of the meaning. Table 8-1 shows the total percentage of all participants who chose either ‘Strongly Agreed’ or ‘Agreed’ for each meaning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meanings of Integration</th>
<th>Strongly agree/Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assimilation</strong>: You should keep your own culture and also adapt to the British/French one.</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acculturation</strong>: You should not keep your own culture but adapt to the British/French one.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accommodation</strong>: It is not important either to keep your own culture or to adapt to the British/French one.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communitarianism</strong>: You should keep your own culture and not adapt to the British/French one.</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50 I have used combined answers for ‘Strongly agree’ and ‘Agree’ in the analysis as it helps to better distinguish between positive and negative views of the participants.
Overall, 81% of participants indicated that 'assimilation' was the preferred term by which the notion of integration was best understood, suggesting that they were happy to adapt to British or French culture while not losing their own culture in the process. However, 37% also indicated a preference to 'communitarianism', indicating that they would prefer to retain their own culture without adapting to British or French culture. As shown in Figure 8-1, there was no significant difference between countries on the participants’ notion of integration: 83% and 33% in Britain showed preference for ‘assimilation’ and ‘communitarianism’, respectively. In France, the preference was 76% and 46% for the two meanings.

During the interviews and group discussions, the participants were asked whether they were familiar with the term 'integration', its meaning and connotations, and if they felt that they could relate to it. None of the British participants showed any familiarity with the word or its meaning and connotations. Even after explaining the question further and defining the word, the participants struggled to relate to the term. This lack of knowledge suggests that there is a difference in a quantified understanding of integration (i.e. definitions making the word more recognisable as in the questionnaire) and the cognitive understanding of what integration represents and embodies. Also, the finding plausibly reflects the fact that young British Muslim people could not consider integration to be something they could relate to because they feel included into British society, and therefore have never felt the need to question the status.

All French participants, on the other hand, demonstrated a good grasp of the word and could relate to the term. They were able to offer different definitions and meanings,
as well as provide personal accounts and experiences of integration in French society. Their sharp and sensitive understanding reflects a reality of it. For some, integration meant to obey the French law, to conform to the whole in order to create uniformity and where ‘being different’ is not an option, one has to learn what others do and copy them. Homogeneity has to be reached since the final goal is equality.

(Ikban, 15, Le Havre) Oui, par exemple, si les étrangers veulent venir en France, ils doivent obéir aux lois de la France, ils doivent s’adapter à ce qu’on fait ici. (Yes, for example, if foreigners want to come in France, they must obey the laws of France, they must adapt to what we do here).

(Hakim, 11, Bordeaux) Ça veut dire aussi qu’il faut obéir aux lois de la France, qu’il faut faire comme les autres sinon on a des problèmes. (It means that we must obey the French laws, that we must do like the others otherwise we have problems).

(John, 12; Youseph, 13, Le Havre, Group discussion) Ça veut dire qu’on doit faire comme tout le monde ... qu’on peut pas être vraiment différent. (It means that we must do like everybody else ... we can’t really be different).

(Zaïna, 12, Bordeaux) Ça veut dire, ‘rentrer dans un groupe’, apprendre à ce que font les autres et faire comme eux. (It means ‘entering in a group’, learn what other does and do like them).

(Jude, 14, Bordeaux) Oui, intégration, s’intégrer, ça veut dire être pareil que les autres. (Yes, integration, to be integrated, it means to be alike others).

For others, it referred to a search for acceptance and recognition from the others, to be part of a group and mix with people, to be with others and participate, to look for friendship, to find a place in the society that welcome them. Some interviewees made reference to personal accounts and experiences.

(Ikban, 15, Le Havre) Etre intégré c’est faire parti du groupe même si on est différent, c’est se mêler avec le plus gros groupe. (To be integrated it’s to be part of a group even if we are different, it’s to mix with the biggest group of all).

(Beyoncé, 12, Le Havre) Ça veut dire ‘se sentir part de’, faire partie de’. Ça veut aussi dire ‘être dans le groupe’, se mêler avec d’autres gens qui sont pas pareil que vous. (It means ‘to feel part of’, ‘to be part of’. It also means ‘to be in the group’, to mix with other people who are not the same than you).

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) Oui, intégration ça veut dire ‘être dans un groupe’, ‘se mettre dans un groupe’, ‘faire partie de’. Je me sens concernée parce que ça me touche, moi et ma famille. (Yes, integration means ‘to be in a group’, ‘to be part of’. I relate to that because it concerns me and my family).
(Hakim, 11, Bordeaux) Oui, ça veut dire 'qu'on est accepté', 'qu'on fait parti du groupe', 'qu'on veut se mélanger avec les autres'. (Yes, it means that 'one is accepted', 'one is part of the group', 'and one wants to mix with others').

(Ménet, 15, Bordeaux) Je sais ce que ça veut dire. Ça signifie 'participer', 'être accepté', 'se mélanger', 'faire partie du groupe'. Oui, dans un sens ça me concerne, parce que dans mon groupe ils m'acceptent comme je suis. Ils me disent, on aime bien ta personnalité, on aime bien comment tu es, ta religion on la respecte. J'ai beaucoup d'amis ... des amis un peu français, un peu musulmans, j'ai des amis portugais, chinois. Je me mélange avec tout le monde ... tant que tout le monde me respecte pour qui je suis. (I know what it refers to. It means 'to participate', 'to be accepted', 'to mix', 'to be part of the group'. Yes, in a way it does concern me, because in my group they accept me for who I am. They say to me, we like your personality, we like how you are, and we respect your religion. I have a lot of friends ... some French, some Muslim; I have Portuguese, Chinese friends. I mix with everyone ... as long as everyone respects me for who I am).

(Sarah, 14, Bordeaux) Enfin, oui ça veut dire 'trouver sa place', 's'adapter aux autres'. (Well, yes, it means 'to find your place', 'to adapt yourself to others').

A number of them defined integration as a two-sided process, where consideration and understanding should be demonstrated as much from the person who wants to be integrated as the host society, which welcomes him/her. Acceptance should be mutual and based on the acknowledgement of the values and cultural differences of each other.

(Kenza, 14, Le Havre) On se mélange avec le groupe mais ça ne veut pas aussi dire que l'on devient comme le groupe ... enfin ce que je veux dire, c'est que l'on doit garder ses origines, qui on est et ne pas les perdre parce que l'on s'intègre dans le groupe. (We mix with the group but it doesn't mean that we become like the group ... what I try to say is that we must keep our origins, who we are and not lose them because we integrate in a group).

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Par exemple, il y a la société européenne, on va dire, et la société musulmane, et la société musulmane et européenne se mélangent en essayant d'accepter les uns et les autres. (For example, there is the European society, let's say, and a Muslim one, and they mix together while trying to accept each other).

(Sefyu, 15, Le Havre, Group discussion) Ça veut dire qu'on doit faire partie du groupe, qu'on doit se mélanger sans pour autant perdre qui on est. (It means that we must be part of a group, that we must mix without losing who we are).
Integration c'est accepter la façon de vivre du pays où on est, même si c'est différent de la nôtre. (Integration it's to accept the way people live in the country where we are, even if it's different from ours).

Intégration, s'intégrer, ça veut aussi dire que les autres nous acceptent pour qui nous sommes et qui on est. Mais ce n'est pas toujours le cas. Par exemple, quand je suis avec ma tante qui porte le voile, quand on marche en ville ou dans une rue, je vois le regard que nous donne les autres. (Integration, to be integrated also means that others accept us for who we are and as we are.

But this is not always the case. For example, when I am with my aunt who wears the veil, when we walk in town or in a street, I see the look that others give us).

Ça veut dire 's'adapter', se faire accepter pour qui on est, faire partie du groupe le plus large. Ça veut dire aussi que le groupe doit accepter l'autre comme il est, qu'on ne s'intègre pas pour faire plaisir au groupe. (It means 'to adapt', to be accepted for who we are, to be part of the largest group. It also means that the group must accept the other as he/she is, that one does not integrate for the sake of the group).

If integration is understood as a two way system that should be based on equal terms such as mutual respect for cultural divergence from other party, it is also thought in negative terms, reporting it as a kind of invasion, or as a radical process of rejection. Others talk about it on a more private level, making reference to personal accounts.

Intégration comme si 'on envahissait la France' ... je l'ai entendu dans les informations ... comme quoi on est trop nombreux, qu'on vole le travail aux Français. On les a envahis. (Integration it's as if 'one invaded France' ... I heard that on the news ... saying there are too many of us, that we steal the work from the French. We invaded them).

Je parle à tout le monde, mais je ne sais pas si je suis déjà intégrée quelque part. (I talk to everyone, but I don't know if I am already integrated somewhere).

Intégration, s'intégrer, ça veut dire qu'il faut comprendre le nouveau système, qu'il faut se faire accepter. Si on se fait pas accepter, on nous rejette. (Integration, to be integrated it means that we have to understand the new system, that we must be accepted. If we are not accepted, we are rejected).

Pour moi, l'intégration c'est moyennement bien ... ce que je veux dire c'est que le fait d'être musulman a aussi une part de ... une sorte de non acceptance pour qui je suis. J'ai ressenti ça à partir du collège, à partir de la sixième. (For me, integration it's not quite so good ... what I mean is that the fact that I am a Muslim played also a part in it ... a sort of non-acceptance for what I am. I felt it like that from the moment I started senior school in from Y7).
In summary, the French model of integration does not promote multiculturalism but instead accentuates the individual rights of each citizen. The theory rests on the continuation of French institutions, language and cultural patterns, as they are the dominant and standard ones for all to conform to. The Republican model of integration requires immigrants to blend in through individual efforts, to understand and accept the rules of governance of the country. Failing to do so results in being marginalised. The effort of blending starts through schools and French pupils are not encouraged to develop a sense of recognition for the cultural differences of others, as their peers do in Britain. On the contrary, they are encouraged to suppress all potential differences and concentrate in seeing each other as equal individuals (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:83). However, reality shows that exclusionary practices exist within schools as a result of which inequalities are produced, that segregate ethnic minority pupils from their French-origin peers. This segregation can be said to be found in targeted urban areas where ethnic populations are concentrated and kept at the margins of society. By creating ethnic ghettos, it is correct to suggest that the schools situated in these areas are themselves marginalised and overloaded with issues symptomatic of the situation (e.g. disciplinary action and school failure) (Payet & Van Zantem, 1996:)

Acceptance and Belonging

In a report exploring the symptoms that affect community cohesion in urban areas with significant Muslim populations, Jayaweera and Choudhury show that certain aspects of British life are largely appraised such as ‘a high value on democracy, fairness, justice and security, followed by opportunities for education, a good standard of living and access to services’ (Jayaweera & Choudhury, 2008:126). For Muslim people there was no conflict in having a sense of belonging to both Britain and their country of origin. However, the sense of belonging in Britain was negatively affected by their perception of lack of acceptance in Britain. For instance, quantitative data (Question 23) showed that 29% of British Muslim participants feel that adults treat them unfairly or negatively because they are Muslims, against 12% of their French counterparts. It is this perception of being unwelcome rather than attachment to their country of origin that diminishes a sense of belonging in British society. In France,
Muslims feel that acceptance by society is increasingly premised on assimilation and the assumption that they should lose their Muslim identity.

All British interviewees expressed their feelings of being accepted and belonging to Britain, the country they were born in and are currently living in. They felt part of the society, and believed they were listened to and felt welcome.

*(Amisha, 12, London)* Yes. I see myself as a British, Muslim young girl. I was born in England and I spent my all life here. This is my home and I belong here.

*(Mohamed, 12, Surrey)* Yes, I feel I am accepted for being a British Muslim boy even if some people don’t like us.

*(Raxtar, 14, Surrey)* Yes. I feel I am accepted for being a British Muslim boy. I was born here and most of my family live in England ... so this is my home, despite what other people think.

All French interviewees were born in France and shared similar views to those in Britain. They were happy to identify with their ‘national’ origins but did not mention their religious beliefs. Instead, reference to ‘normality’ is clearly present.

*(Malik, 14, Le Havre)* Oui. Je me sens considéré comme quelqu’un normal, comme les autres. Je suis né en France mais je suis d’origine Algérienne, ce sont mes racines. *(Yes. I feel that I am considered as normal, like everybody else. I was born in France, but I am from Algerian origins, those are my roots).*

*(Sofian, 15, Le Havre)* Je suis né en France, je suis français et mes origines sont algériennes. Parfois je me sens vraiment faire partie du groupe, être dans la société française et parfois non. *(I was born in France. I am French and my origins are Algerians. Sometimes I really feel being part of the group, being part of the French society and sometimes no).*

*(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre)* Oui. Je suis née en France ; je suis Française comme une autre mais mes origines sont Algériennes. *(Yes. I was born in France. I am French like any other person but my origins are Algerians).*

*(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux)* Je suis né en France, donc je suis français mais mes origines sont Algériennes. *(Yes. I feel accepted for who I am. I was born in France, therefore I am French but my origins are Algerians).*

*(Jude, 14, Bordeaux)* Oui, je me fais accepter pour qui je suis, c’est-à-dire je suis moi, il n’y a pas de religion, ça ne compte pas. *(Yes. I make myself accepted for who I am, in other words I am myself, there is not religion, it doesn’t count).*
(Kalim, 15, Bordeaux) Oui, parce que après c’est moi qui fais mon choix ... c’est moi qui décide si je veux vivre comme un musulman ou non. Je suis né en France, je suis français mais mes origines sont Algériennes. (Yes, because after it’s me who choose ... it’s me who decides whether I want to live as a Muslim or not. I was born in France, I am French but my origins are Algerians).

All interviewees shared the view that being accepted and belonging to a society refers to a mutual mark of respect and trust that one receives.

(Bob, 13, Surrey) I feel I am accepted for being who I am by most of the people, whether as a British Muslim boy or a Muslim boy ... nobody has been mean to me here, they treat you with respect like anybody else.

(Beyonce, 14, Surrey) Yes. When I respect people I get the same respect back. I treat people how I would like to be treated.

(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux) Oui, je me sens accepté comme je suis. (Yes, I feel accepted for who I am).

In essence, British and French interviewees share a positive opinion about the sense of acceptance and belonging, which they clearly associate with their birth country. It can be argued that despite an increased acceptance of the Muslim community being an integral part of British society, a sentiment of being perceived as ‘other’ has emerged after 9/11 and the London bombings in 2005. Following these events an anti-Islam sentiment has been resurfacing, which has made British Muslims feel more vulnerable. In addition, international events such as the Rushdie affair or the Iraq war have stimulated underlying racial and cultural discrimination.

In France, there is a strong tendency since the 1980s to refer to French born children of North African origin as children of ‘second-generation immigrants’ or ‘youth of immigrant origin’ or ‘inner-city neighbourhood youth’, with a tendency to stress the foreign origins and status of young Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian and African rather than their French nationality (Franchi, 2004:46). It is correct to suggest that such labels, ‘whether they focus on ethnic origin (e.g. ‘youth of Maghrebin immigration’) or on the immigrant status (e.g. ‘second generation’) or on the religious background (e.g. ‘Muslims of France’ or ‘French of Muslim origin’), increase the legitimacy of a rightful claim to French citizenship and reinforce the idea that there is an irreconcilable difference between them and their peers’ (Franchi, 2004:47). In summary, the application of such descriptive language of discernment casts these
young people out by giving them a sense of holding a pretend national identity against those who are genuine nationals (Franchi, 2004:47).

Views on Muslim community

British multiculturalism places diversity at the centre of its definition, defining Britishness as a plurality. However, following the 2001 summer riots in the former northern mill towns of Oldham, Bradford and Burnley, multiculturalism has been criticised for generating segregated ethnic communities, which consider each other to be alien and threatening. In France, the state is constructed in such a way that it translates Republican principles into practice. Unfortunately, as far as integrating its population of foreign origin, discrepancies suggest unfair treatment of a population that is not accepted as equal citizens and for which cultural differences are underlined.

In order to gain an understanding of how participants shape their individual sense of acceptance and belonging, they were asked to provide a subjective view of how other members of their community feel living in Britain or France. The question elicited opinions on five proposed statements, asking the participant to choose between ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’, or ‘Strongly Disagree’. Table 8-2 shows the relative percentage of overall responses for combined answers ‘Strongly Agree/Agree’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you think that people of your religion:</th>
<th>Strongly agree/Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Point A Have been ignored or excluded because of their religious background</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point B Have been bullied or made fun because of their religious background</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point C Feel that other people do not see them as British/French</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point D Do not feel accepted by other people</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point E Feel that people behave in an unfair or negative way towards them because of their religious background</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants agreed that in general, the Muslim community in both countries is perceived in negative terms (Point C). Only 47% think that Muslim people have being ignored or excluded because of their religious background (Point A) and 47%
agree that members of their community do not feel accepted by other people (Point D).

![Combined answers Strongly Agree/Agree for each point](image)

*Fig. 8-2 Views on the community*

Figure 8-2 shows comparative national responses on each of the questions. Interestingly, British participants offered strong negative responses on all of the questions compared to their counterparts in France inspite of the fact that they indicated being more socially accepted in British society. This finding can be said to suggest a side-effect of multiculturalism – it segregates communities along ethnic lines, preventing second generation minorities from integrating fully into British society. For instance, the study ‘Ethnicity, religion and residential segregation in London: evidence from a computational typology of minority communities’ by Alan Brimicombe (2007) showed that London is becoming a patchwork of religious enclaves. In other words, a significant contrast exists between models of segregation by religion in comparison with ethnicity, pointing out the importance of religious self-identity.

The French participants had lower scores overall, reflecting a less negative perception. This could suggest that despite the acknowledged difficulties that the Muslim community encounters, a feeling of hopelessness, change and adjustments could be expected. For example, 36% agree with the idea that Muslim people do not feel accepted by others (Point D). This could reflect that ‘being Muslim’ in France has little bearing with the belief of belonging to the society.

Looking at the gender divide, Figure 8-3 indicates that it is mostly French boys who show a highest percentage on all five statements, with a particularly high peak on Point C (68%) think that other people do not see Muslim as French against 51% of British boys. Furthermore, 64% of French boys think that Muslim people have been
ignored or excluded because of their religious background (Point A) against 47% in Britain. The views of French participants support the findings of Mannitz and Schiffauer (2004), who observed that young French people of foreign origin frequently expressed a behaviour or sentiments of rejection of Republican values and political norms, legitimising instead the public expression of Muslim identity and belonging.

In summary, it is correct to suggest that the idea of Britain as a tolerant and pluralistic nation, whose aim is to eliminate any trace of racial or ethnic prejudice, clashes with problems of cultural differences and the so-called incapacity of members of ethnic communities to be sufficiently British. British multiculturalism places diversity at the centre of its definition, making Britishness defined as plural. The process of integration requires a total acknowledgement of cultural difference as something positive and respected. However, ambiguities appear as cultures and ethnic groups are pragmatically constructed. Mannitz and Schiffauer claim that ‘this pragmatic approach reflects the long-standing British tradition of indirect rule that implied the politics of classifying a variety of people in more or less fashion along pragmatic lines according to some similarity with reference to a particular problem’ (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:64).

In France, the British concept of multiculturalism is nonexistent. Instead, it is understood that the individual has to transcend his cultural or religious identity in order to contribute to the collective project, where equality and rationality are aimed at being achieved. Following such action, the state vouches ’the emancipation of the individuals from their particular groups, allowing them to participate in the great
project' (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:67). The problem in France is not so much the notion of *laicité* but rather the rhetoric behind its implementation and interpretation. In other words, the goal of *laicité* is to promote equity.

8.2 **Freedom, Democracy and Rights: French Law on the Ban of the Headscarf**

Following the 1989 affair of the headscarf and repeated problems in 1993 and 1994, France passed a law in 2004 regarding conspicuous religious symbols in primary and secondary schools, with the aim of banning students from wearing religious apparel and signs showing religious affiliation. These events raise the question of the status of the secular school system and the relationship between the secular State and religions. It can be argued that a total commitment to *laicité* could promote a potential withdrawal into intolerance for which feelings of resentment could create an unfavourable context towards the promotion of cultural diversity.

All interviewees were asked about their opinions regarding the recent French law. For this, a picture was used as a probe (see Annex I, Probe 4) showing a young Muslim woman wearing a headscarf and standing by a poster with the word *loi* written on a wall.

British interviewees believe that the law was wrong, intrusive and racist, forcing people to make a choice and telling them what to do. For them, the use of someone’s culture and religion to be the source upon which a law has to be formulated does not present legitimate grounds to exist. They express the view that such a law in Britain would never be introduced, highlighting instead the religious tolerance of the British system.

*(John, 12, London)* I think this is racist because they judging you by your religion. I don’t think the same thing could happen in England because I think the Government is fair, it lets the people be who they are.

*(Sania, 15, London, Group discussion)* It’s part of our religion to wear the scarf and school has no right to take that away from us.

*(Mariam, 14, London, Group discussion)* I think that they want to treat everybody equal but I am not sure that by looking at the religion they actually treat people equally. For Muslim people, there is a custom for the girls to wear the scarf, but by telling (i.e. the law deciding) what people’s religion they are, they want the people to fit in the society by not telling what religion people are. By not wearing the
headscarf, it does not mean that you are less a Muslim girl. Some people make the choice of not wearing it or to wear it ... you need to know to respect it.

(Sarah, 13, Surrey) I think that's wrong. I would mind actually if my school would not allow me to wear the headscarf. It would feel as one particular culture is telling me what I can do or not ... and I would feel very angry at that. It's like controlling you on something that is personal ... your faith is something private and it's wrong to put a law that tells people how they should conduct themselves.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) By stopping Muslim girls to wear the headscarf at school, it's the same as stopping people's free will. The law should not force them to choose; the law should think about others, the way they feel, what the law is going to do to people.

French interviewees believed the law to be deplorable and intrusive, and felt that it interfered with personal choice. For some, the law forbidding the wearing of the headscarf was morally wrong. For others, the law existed for the sole purpose to target Muslim women.

(Kenza, 14, Le Havre) La loi n'est pas bien parce que montrer sa religion ... qui il ou elle est, ne devrait pas être quelque chose de mal à faire. (The law is not so good because showing one's religion ... who he is or who she is, should not be something wrong to do).

(Sofian, 15, Le Havre) Je trouve que la loi c'est n'importe quoi. C'est vraiment pour les filles musulmanes qu'elle a été faite. C'est pas juste pour les filles qui veulent vraiment porter le voile ... parce qu'elles sont religieuses, parce qu'elles ont fait un choix personnel. C'est pas bien d'avoir fait une loi qui oblige les gens à faire un choix entre deux choses qui sont aussi importantes l'une que l'autre ... recevoir une éducation et être fidèle à sa religion. (I find the law rubbish. It's really for the Muslim girls that the law exists. It's not fair for the girls who really want to wear the veil ... because they are religious, because they made a personal choice. It's not good to have made a law that obliges people to make a choice between two things that are as important as each other ... to receive an education and to be faithful to her religion).

(Samy, 13, Bordeaux) La loi interdit les filles qui sont religieuses, qui ont fait un choix personnel de porter le foulard, de les forcer à faire un choix entre être fidèles à leur religion et recevoir une éducation. C'est pas juste quand même de forcer les gens comme ça. (The law forbids religious girls who make a personal choice to wear the veil, to force them to make a choice between being faithful to their religion and to receive an education. It's not fair to force people like that).

(Alexandre, 14, Bordeaux) Une fille religieuse qui veut être voilée parce qu'elle a fait un choix personnel, la loi n'est pas bien parce que cette loi elle fait comme
'oubliez un peu votre religion'. Pourquoi on serait le seul pays à dire 'nous, on veut pas de filles voilées à l'école' ... si on va dans un autre pays qui n'est pas musulman on va trouver ça. Il n'y a que la France apparemment qui aurait voté cette loi et je trouve ça un peu ridicule parce que ... ce n'est pas qu'on veut montrer les religions, mais c'est quelque chose qui appartiennent à la personne, qui est personnel et ce n'est pas bien de mettre une loi comme ça. (A religious girl who wants to wear the veil because she made a personal choice, the law is not good because it like saying 'forget a bit your religion'. Why should we be the only country to say 'we don't want any girls with the veil at school' ... if we go in another country that is not Muslim, we will find girls and women wearing the veil. France is the only place apparently which voted this law and I find this a bit ridiculous because ... it's not that we want to show the religions, but it's something that belongs to the person, it's personal and it's not good to put a law like that).

All interviewees agreed that everyone has the right of religion, of free speech and most of all the right of choice. The right to show one's cultural identity, without compromising the right to display it, are the basic tenets for respect, equality and freedom.

(Cary-Smith, 14, London) If France is a democratic country, that allows freedom of speech, that means you're allowed to represent yourself. Whatever the people wear, whatever they represent themselves, why should they be stopped from being treated unequally! People should be treated equally whatever they wear ... that's not an excuse in my opinion to do what they did. French Muslim girls must be feeling confused because they don't know which one to put first: education or religion. They try to put both at the same time ... and that's hard for them.

(Zamunda, 14, London) People think differently and do things differently. Everyone has their own opinion. No one should stop them from doing something they want to do. It's a free country; they can do whatever they want. But if they make rules like that, what's the point of having a mind if someone tells them what to do and all that. I think that's wrong. That's my opinion.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) I think that a person should be free to do what she thinks it is right to do ... you shouldn't interfere with that.

(Racim, 12, Le Havre) Je pense que les filles musulmanes devraient avoir le droit de porter le voile si elles ont fait ce choix. (I think that Muslim girls should have the right to wear the veil if they made this choice).

(Chaînez, 14, Bordeaux) Elle n'est pas bien cette loi parce que la loi ne laisse pas la liberté de choix ... on fait ce que l'on veut après tout .... on a des droits! Moi, ça ne me choquerait pas de voir des filles Musulmanes venir à l'école avec leur foulard. (The law is no good because it doesn't leave a free choice ... we do what
we want after all .... we have rights! It would not shock me to see Muslim girls coming to school with their veil).

(Cassie, 14, Le Havre) Si une fille Musulmane veut le mettre le voile, c'est son choix. On ne devrait pas lui dire si c'est bien ou pas, si elle, elle a fait un choix personnel, on devrait le respecter. (If a Muslim girl wants to put the veil, it's her choice. One should not say whether it's good or bad, if she did a personal choice, one should respect it).

(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux) En France, on ne doit pas porter le voile en cours à l'école, mais en dehors de l'école oui ... c'est l'endroit pour elle, et elle a tous les droits de porter quelque chose sur sa tête. (In France, it's forbidden to wear the veil in class at school, but outside school yes, she should wear it ... it's the place for her, and she has all the rights to wear something).

For some, the complex and ambiguous situation that committed Muslim girls are confronted with is understood with compassion and sympathy for their cause.

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) C'est une loi qui dérange celles qui sont profondément religieuses et qui portent le voile parce qu'elles sont fidèles à leur religion. Si elles vont à l'école, elles sont obligées de l'enlever, ce n'est pas marrant! (It's a law that disturbs those who are deeply religious and who wear the veil because they are faithful to their religion. If they go to school they are obliged to remove it. it's not fun!)

(Yassin, 13, Bordeaux) Pour les filles qui veulent porter le voile, je pense qu'elles doivent être malheureuses. Elles voient le mot 'loi', le mot 'strict', le mot 'faire ce que les autres nous disent', le mot 'liberté' ... elles les voient comme du noir. (For the girls who want to wear the veil, I think that they must be unhappy. They see the word 'law', the word 'strict', the word 'do what others tell us to do', the word 'liberty' ... they see them as disheartening).

(Kali, 15, Bordeaux) Si une fille veut porter le voile, c'est son choix ... mais les gens ont beaucoup de problème à accepter ça. (If a girl wants to wear the headscarf, it's her choice ... but the people have great difficulty in accepting that).

On the other hand, some British and French interviewees agree that the law aims to treat everyone equally with regards to education, an aspect easily acknowledged by French interviewees for whom the notion of equality governs school life despite religious diversity. For others, the respect of religion does not have to challenge or interfere with the principle of laïcité. Treating everybody equally is important but not at the expense of suppressing one's cultural identity. The right to get an education is
applicable to all regardless of the cultural background of the pupils: French education should care more about results than appearances.

(Benjamin, 15, London) If the law doesn’t allow anyone to wear something, then I think it’s OK because everybody is treated the same.

(Samina, 15, London) I think I could accept that because it’s a sign that their religion stops them from being educated. I think I understand that the French government tries to treat everybody the same. That can’t be a bad thing!

(Bob, 13, Surrey) At the same time, it’s not bad because everybody is treated the same whatever their religion, as an equal; you’re giving the same respect as you give to the other person.

(Mohamed, 12, Le Havre) La loi est là pour que tout le monde soit traité pareil, sans faire de différence. La loi interdit aux filles de mettre le voile ou aux chrétiens de porter une grosse croix parce que tout le monde doit être traité pareil. C’est une bonne chose. (The law is there for everyone to be treated the same, without any distinction. The law forbids girls to wear the veil or for Christians to wear a big cross because everyone must be treated the same. It’s a good thing).

(Youseph, 13 and Angélie 13, Le Havre, Group discussion) C’est une bonne chose parce que la loi dit que tout le monde doit être traité de la même manière. Sinon, tout le monde viendrait à l’école habiller avec ses trucs de sa culture. (It’s a good thing because the law says that everybody must be treated the same way. Otherwise, everyone would come to school dressed with the stuff of their culture).

(Sara, 12, Le Havre, Group discussion) C’est difficile. La loi est là pour dire que tout le monde doit être traité pareil, sans différence. (It’s difficult. The law is there to say that everyone must be treated the same, without difference).

(Zaïna, 12, Bordeaux) En général, je suis d’accord avec la loi parce qu’elle traite tout le monde avec des religions différentes d’une manière égale, sans donner des avantages aux uns plus qu’aux autres. (I usually agree with the law because it treats people with different religions in an equal manner, without giving any privilege to some more than to others).

(Jude, 14, Bordeaux) Je suis d’accord quand même avec ça parce qu’on est pareil. On est tous égaux; c’est pas parce qu’on a une religion différente, qu’on est pas pareil. (I agree with that because we are all the same. We are all equal; it’s not because we have a different religion that we are not the same).

(Karim, 15, Bordeaux, Group discussion) La loi interdit aux filles de venir à l’école avec leur foulard parce que la loi veut mettre tout le monde à égal ... tout le monde est traité de la même manière et c’est une bonne chose. (The law forbids
girls to come to school with their headscarf because the law wants to put everybody on the same footage ... everyone is treated the same way and it's a good thing).

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) The idea of everyone being the same, the boys and girls being treated the same way, that's good, but leaving their religion and their identity behind, that's not.

(Beyonce, 14, Surrey) It should not affect them from getting an education just because of the religion they are. The Muslim girls in France should have the right to get an education without having to disrespect their religion.

(Kayla, 11, Surrey) In France, the school should not be caring about what the people look, how they dress, they should be caring about if they're coming to school ... they should care about their education, not how they look.

British and French interviewees agree that the emphasis on 'difference' is precisely how Muslim people are portrayed and considered to be by others. For them, it is the 'zooming in' on the negative perception of Islam and Muslims at large that they reject. They refuse any given and imposed negative connotations or stigma already out there. Their claim is their legitimacy to be British or French citizens à part entière.

(Susan, 12, Surrey) I think it's better to keep your culture outside ... by wearing the headscarf, you identify yourself against all the other children as being a Muslim person.

(Kenza, 14, Le Havre) Je préfèrerais travailler dans une école publique parce qu'il n'y a pas de raison que je me sente à part des autres. (I would prefer to study in a state school because there is no reason why I should feel different from the others).

(Jude, 14, Bordeaux) Je préfèrerais être dans une école comme celle-là où on est tous pareil. Je trouve que c'est important de ne pas montrer sa religion. (I would prefer to be in a school like that one where everybody is the same. I think it's important not to show your religion).

The French Muslim population is claiming the right to be visibly different and in doing so, the deed appears as bold and daring as it challenges the Republic principle of laïcité. When Muslim girls and women wear headscarves, they purposely declare their intention to live their life as French Republican citizen while, at the same time, complying with their religion. This action can be seen as an open confrontation to the conditions of living within the collective project and belonging to the nation. In addition, the tension created prompted reflection about the quality of commitment and duty that are put into the Republican belief. As Bowen claims 'if the concept of
Republic is based on the possibilities of sharing a life together despite vast differences in appearance, history and religious ideas, then this type of Republic ought to give to their citizens the possibilities to explore their differences and not to conceal them' (Bowen, 2007:249).

In summary, the display of Islamic identity through the Affaire du Foulard reflects a peculiar situation where the Republican habits of viewing national identity, laïcité, and individual membership to religious or social group have been put under the spotlight (Thomas, 2006:239). From a secular perspective, the argument against wearing headscarves suggests that state schools are zones where no religious or ideological influences can be exercised. It is in this context that British and French participants share the view that laïcité can be perceived in direct opposition to human rights, suggesting an incompatibility between laïcité and the freedom of religious expression. In addition, they express a common view regarding the ban on headscarves, believing that a law should never impede on the basic tenet of one’s freedom of religious expression.

For Molokotos, the principle of laïcité raises some questions regarding the extent of its feasibility, particularly when laïcité is confronted with religion, cultural diversity and freedom of religious expression. In other words, some reservation can be expressed on the capacity for laïcité to operate consistently and impartially and not selectively to certain religious groups (Molokotos, 2000:373). For French interviewees, the ban on headscarves is understood as a law targeted at Muslim girls and women, infringing on their right of personal choice and their desire to differentiate among students.

From a religious perspective, the wearing of the headscarf suggests that it is symptomatic of a fundamental Islam, trying to gain access to French society and state education. This is further observed among the strict conservatism of Muslim families and the alleged inferiority of women to paternal or spousal authority. It is in that context that the wearing of headscarves is perceived as a menace to laïcité and particularly state schools which embody this principle (Molokotos, 2000:373).
8.3 Stereotypes and clichés of Muslim people

In a report to the Cabinet Office Equalities Review, Abrams and Houston demonstrated that the British Muslim community is described as essentially peaceful, hardworking and successful. However, by looking at how different groups are perceived in Britain, results suggest that Muslims are stereotyped as the unfriendliest group (Abrams & Houston, 2006:60). Often defined as one entity whose Islamic identity is largely stereotyped negatively, British Muslims endure the highest levels of prejudice, particularly British Bangladeshis and Pakistanis who have experienced increased discrimination post-9/11 and 7/7. In general, the report demonstrated that British Muslims are more likely to be disliked, as they are perceived as posing a potential threat to the rest of society (Abrams & Houston, 2006:64). In addition, they appear to be a group that is living under the scrutiny of the government, as they are regularly suspected of sympathising with movements characterised as anti-social, terrorist and anti-Western.

According to the OSI/EU report, French Muslims continue to experience discrimination, which has been contributed to by the media by associating Islam with immigration and terrorism, hence providing the context to justify exclusion and religious discrimination (OSI/EU, 2002:84). In general, French Muslims are often perceived with distrust and suspicion by the rest of the society (OSI/EU, 2002:71). This hostility is mainly directed towards Algerian and North Africans. For Zappi, the Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l’Homme (CNCDH) has acknowledged the existence of anti-Muslim discrimination in the country and has described the situation as intolerance towards Islam instead of Islamophobia. However, the violent riots in November 2005 have clearly demonstrated that there was an antagonistic and hostile reaction to debate regarding the place of Islam and the Muslim population in the French society. The CNCDH argued further that the amalgam between the terms ‘Arab’ and ‘Muslim’ translates an expression of intolerance often confused for anti-Maghrebin racism. However, it agreed that hostility towards Islam had received ‘little acknowledgement and has been feebly fought against’ (Zappi, 2003:1-3).

This study tried to assess the ways Muslims and non-Muslim participants perceive the descriptions and representations of Muslim people. The question was designed to assess their views on how ‘others’ represent or describe the people of their religion.
The participants were given a set of adjectives, half positive and half negative: clean, dirty, happy, sad, peaceful, aggressive, clever, stupid, hardworking, lazy, polite, rude, friendly, unfriendly, good and bad. Their task was to circle only the word(s) that they think did not apply. The findings could determine whether the representations that others have of Muslim people are positive or negative.

Table 8-3 shows the participants’ perception of how others see Muslim people. In general, participants choose negative adjectives as words that do not apply to represent Muslim people. Thus, a higher score for negative adjectives against a lower score for positive adjectives indicated that participants have a rather positive view on the way others represent Muslim people. Overall, the findings show that all participants expressed a positive perception.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Adjectives</th>
<th>Muslim (%)</th>
<th>Non-Muslims (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clever</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative adjectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stupid</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazy</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rude</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking at the positive adjectives scored by Muslim (Figure 8-4) and non-Muslim (Figure 8-5) participants in each country, the survey indicated that Muslim participants consider that the adjectives ‘Peaceful’, ‘Hardworking’ and ‘Friendly’ are not adequate adjectives that ‘others’ would use to describe Muslims. However, non-Muslim participants indicated that the adjectives ‘Clever’, ‘Polite’, ‘Friendly’ and ‘Good’ were not adequate to describe them. Furthermore, French non-Muslims have a tendency to score higher than their British counterparts for the adjectives ‘Polite’ and ‘Hardworking’. Non-Muslims from both countries scored same for attributes ‘Good’ and ‘Clever’.

Figure 8-6 shows a comparison of data across countries for Muslim participants. 25% of the British Muslim participants against just 10% of their counterparts consider the adjective ‘Friendly’ as inadequate. However, for ‘Peaceful’ and ‘Hardworking’
adjectives, British and French Muslim participants think alike, as shown below in Figures 8-7 and 8-8.

Figures 8-9 to 8-12 show the comparative percentages of British and French non-Muslim participants’ views on the adjectives ‘Clever’, ‘Polite’, ‘Friendly’ and ‘Good’. Overall, they share the same opinion that these attributes are inadequate for describing Muslim people.
In essence, this findings demonstrate that both Muslim and non-Muslim participants in the two countries share a similar view on the ways Muslim people are described by others and showing differences in the choice of positive adjectives. The choice of adjectives also indicates awareness and sensitivity regarding the issue of discrimination against Muslim people.

**How others see us**

It is correct to suggest that the presence of Islam and Muslims in Britain has produced some degree of social and political scrutiny. The aftermath of 9/11 and the London bombings in 2005 brought a sudden upsurge of negative behaviour towards Muslims in Britain. In general, discriminatory behaviour is often expressed against British Muslims and their divergence on morals, beliefs, values and attitudes.

The French media analysis of immigration and immigrants over the past ten years has clearly stigmatised people of North African origin as being the group most likely to proceed with violence, delinquency or drug-related behaviour, not to mention school drop-out and disciplinary action. In all, the negative stereotype and portrait of French Muslims contributes significantly to a feeling of accusation, segregation and exposure to discrimination (Franchi, 2004:47).

The fieldwork involved gathering qualitative data on participants’ views on the opinions that others have of them. The interviewees were shown a picture of two women, a Muslim with a niqab and a Westerner with her eyes blocked, and asked to
describe what was being portrayed (see Annex I, Probe 3). The following are some of the responses.

(George, 15, London) What strikes me is that the western woman can’t see the Muslim one ... she chose not to see her and that’s bad.

(Colly, 13, London) I see someone who thinks that the other person is a terrorist or something ... who thinks bad things about them. There are two different women with two different religions. The western girl says my eyes are blind.

(BG, 15, Surrey) If the blonde one covers her eyes it’s maybe because she made the choice not to see the person in front of her ... so she is not aware of the Muslim girl ... she only knows that the person is of a different culture and she doesn’t actually see what the person’s personality is; it might be a person that has things in common as herself but she judges her on her appearance.

(Isha, 15, Surrey) Maybe her eyes of the western girl are covered because she doesn’t have an open mind; she made the choice of not seeing the Muslim girl, that people can be different. The Muslim girl is covered but she can see .... and she sees someone who doesn’t want to know her.

(Ikban, 15, Le Havre) La voilée regarde la blonde mais elle montre qu’elle n’est pas intéressée à regarder la femme voilée parce qu’elle est musulmane. Elle est indifférente et lui montre qu’elle ne veut pas la connaître. (The girl with the headscarf looks at the blonde one who shows that she is not interested in looking at her because she is Muslim. She is indifferent and shows that she doesn’t want to know her).

(Cassie, 14, Le Havre) La fille blonde n’a pas envie de parler à celle qui est voilée. La fille Musulmane ne peut que la regarder parce qu’elle sait que la blonde ne veut pas la voir. Je n’aime pas beaucoup ce dessin parce qu’il montre que les Européens ne peuvent pas aller aux musulmans ... comme si ils ne pouvaient pas se parler. (The blonde girl doesn’t want to talk to the one with the veil. The Muslim girl can only look at her because she knows that the blonde girl doesn’t want to see her. I don’t like this drawing because it shows that Europeans can’t go towards the Muslims ... as if they couldn’t speak to each other).

(Samy, 13, Bordeaux) Je pense que le dessinateur a essayé de dire que porter le voile pour une femme c’est difficile parce que les gens sont racistes ... enfin ici la blonde est raciste ... qu’elle n’a pas envie de regarder la musulmane. Elles peuvent pas se connaître parce qu’une des deux femmes a décidé de ne pas regarder l’autre. (I think that the cartoonist tried to say that wearing the veil for a woman is difficult because people are racist ... in this case, the blonde is racist ... she doesn’t want to look at the Muslim girl. They cannot meet because one of the two women has decided not to look at the other).
(Sarah, 14, Bordeaux) Pour la blonde, la religion musulmane ne l’intéresse pas parce qu’elle montre qu’elle ne veut pas regarder la dame voilée. Elle a choisi de l’ignorer alors que la musulmane est prête à lui parler. C’est un dessin qui montre qu’il ne peut pas y avoir de communication entre deux personnes ; il montre l’indifférence. (For the blonde girl, the Muslim religion doesn’t interest her because she shows that she doesn’t want to look at the girl with the veil. She chose to ignore her whereas the Muslim girl is ready to talk with her. This drawing shows that there cannot be communication between two people; it shows the indifference).

The participants mostly saw that indifference, dislike and racism were projected towards Muslim people. Having shown a picture of a young Muslim school girl wearing the headscarf and hiding her face (see Annex I, probe 2), British and French interviewees shared the common view that Muslim people are being ignored, rejected and discriminated against. These feelings are usually charged with the pre-conceived ideas, discrimination and negativity that non-Muslims express towards Muslim people. In addition, a sense of shame and humiliation was perceived as a response to racism, resulting in the need to hide from the gaze of others.

(Samina, 15, London) It looks that the girl is ashamed ... she is maybe bullied ... made fun of. If she feels down or people make her feel like that, she finds hard to cope with it.

(Sasa, 12, London, Group discussion) She is sad because of her looks: she is Muslim and maybe she is bullied because she is Muslim, because she wears her headscarf and people are rough on her.

(Shaled, 14, London, Group discussion) She feels strong about her faith ... so she maybe feels lonely; people pick on her because for who she is.

(Kayla, 11, Surrey) She is upset because people have been racist to her, because of her skin colour, her religion maybe how she talks, her accent. I know someone who would do something like that because no matter what colour, what skin colour, we are seen as different.

(Harry, 13, Surrey) She looks troubled and upset. It could be because something happen to her ... like she must be bullied. It happened to me once or twice in my previous school (i.e. junior school) but then I solved the problem with the boys. They were pushing me on the side, start punching me, they call me with rude words and calling me like ‘paki’ and stuff ... I don’t like that. Now, it’s all done.

(Sandy, 12, Surrey, Group discussion) She is hiding her face and she looks sad.

(Scarface, 13, Surrey, Group discussion) The atmosphere, the people around ... I think they are being racists.
(Sara, 14, Surrey, Group discussion) She is maybe being bullied because she is Muslim, because she is different.

(John, 13, Le Havre) C'est une fille voilée et qui préfère cacher son visage. On dirait qu'elle est triste ... si elle était contente, elle montrerait son visage, elle aurait souri. Si elle est triste c'est parce que les gens ne la traitent pas comme les autres, ils la traitent par rapport à sa culture ... le fait qu'elle porte le voile, ils la traitent comme quelqu'un de différent. (It's a girl wearing the headscarf and she prefers to hide her face. It looks as if she is sad ... if she was happy she would show her face and would have smiled. If she is sad it's because people do not treat her like the others, they treat her in comparison with her culture ... the fact that she wears the veil, they treat her as somebody different).

(Chainez, 14, Bordeaux) C'est une fille qui cache son visage comme si elle était gênée. On dirait qu'elle est triste ... c'est peut-être parce qu'elle se sent différente des autres. Enfin, c'est les autres qui la font se sentir différente. Je pense que pour elle, elle doit se sentir à l'aise avec son voile. Les autres la regardent, la jugent peut-être. On dirait que ça devient de plus en plus dur de vouloir le porter ... en ce moment avec le gouvernement, tout ça. Peut-être qu'un jour je porterai le voile ! (It's a girl who hides her face as if she was embarrassed. She looks sad ... it's maybe because she feels different from the others. Well, it's the others that make her feel different. I think that for her, she must feel at ease with her veil. The others look at her, judge her maybe. It seems that it becomes more and more difficult to want to wear the headscarf ... at the moment with the government, and everything else. Maybe one day I will wear it!).

(Mohamed, 13, Bordeaux, Group discussion): Elle se cache parce que les autres se moquent d'elle, parce qu'elle porte le voile et ils la critiquent pour ça. (She hides because others mock her, because she wears the headscarf and they criticise her for that).

Wearing the headscarf can be proven to be an emotional and distressing experience, as the interviewees considered the lack of tolerance and acceptance by others and society difficult to bear. The participants consider that the opinions of others pass judgement on them as well as labelling them by the colour of their skin or other physical features. This observation highlights the sense of exposure and expectation that is automatically associated by looking or being different. The description of the opinion given by participants conveyed a sentiment of fear and suspicion by non-Muslim people. British and French interviewees shared similar views about being under pressure by other Muslim peers or for being rejected because of cultural differences.
(Rosie, 15, London) Some people have different opinions about us; they see us with different eyes ... like the way we dress ... it's just the people feel uncomfortable around this.

(Isha, 15, Surrey) Sometimes ... people don't say anything, they look. It's the way they look at me. They look at me not with surprise or as a 'religious person' but more like 'a Muslim girl'. It's not always a good look because it makes me feel strange and uncomfortable.

(Alexandre, 14, Bordeaux) Des fois je trouve que c'est difficile si on est pas comme les autres ... c'est comme si il n'y avait pas de place pour ça. (Sometimes I find it's difficult if we are not like others ... it's as if there was no room for that).

By describing their feeling of being seen differently, British and French interviewees bring to the front preconceptions and prejudices that non-Muslim people have of Muslim people - of being treated unequally. These statements reflect a situation observed in Britain where British Muslims are put under scrutiny for who they are as in a way that has previously been unseen. Bunting argues that 'insecurity, lacking self-confidence, haunted by failure and personal experiences of deprivation, racism and oppressive anti-terrorist measures and increasing Islamophobia are some of the elements which give compelling force to the common identity of British Muslims' (Bunting, 2004:2). It is correct to suggest that the Muslim population should be recognised as a faith community before identifying it in terms of racial definition. Their requirements and priorities are different from those of the majority population as they are closely related to religion. Over the last decade, the international political scene, the terrorist events and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have intensified the climate and relations between Muslims and Westerners. The outcome of this is a perception of the Muslim world as instable, intolerant, fanatical and violent. British Muslims express their discrimination by pointing a too simple but convincing argument that denounces their 'cultural incompatibility'.

French Muslims are most vulnerable to discrimination with regards to the inequalities in school, socio-economic integration and social mobility. It is correct to suggest that the labelling 'children of foreign origins' for French-born children of second and third generation stigmatises and excludes them from society. As Mannitz rightly claims 'despite holding French citizenship, they still stressed their being different in terms of culture, religion or ethnicity when describing their own position in France' (Mannitz, 2004:285). In essence, the discourse on immigration and immigrants operates as a
rhetoric of the ‘other’ that ‘legitimates and creates the exclusion and discrimination that French Muslims experience in their daily lives, at school, in their neighbourhoods, in public transport, in the streets, at the entrance of discotheques’ (Franchi, 2004:48).

**Influence of the media: prejudiced and racist**

According to Deltombe (2005), the French media has represented a distorted picture of the French Muslim population since the 1970s when the repatriation initiatives of Maghrebin families were addressed as a way out of the rising unemployment in the country. Issues about the loyalty of the French Muslim population, their compatibility with the French culture and their alleged connections with violent events abroad have become significant reasons for the media to represent French Muslims. In general, the manner that the French media reports events shows a clear tendency to say that Islam is a threat and Muslim people are incompatible and unable to assimilate to French culture.

A similar trend seems to appear in British media where the Muslim population and Islam are often depicted as hostile. By creating an imaginary climate of fear, British Muslims appear to be portrayed as a potential threat to traditional British values. Seldom is media coverage reporting a positive or balanced image of Islam. According to Poole ‘the media as an instrument of public ideology, demonises Islam, portraying it as a threat to Western interests, thus reproducing and sustaining the ideology necessary to subjugate Muslims both internationally and domestically’ (Poole, 2002:17).

In the interviews and group discussions, the participants were invited to offer their views on how the media portrays Muslim people. All interviewees shared the view that the media is prejudiced against Muslim people. Following the events of 9/11 and the London bombings in July 2005, the media has portrayed Muslim people as bad and dangerous. By creating a tension of suspicion, the media are viewed as quick on generalising, showing their level of ignorance in distinguishing diversity within the Muslim population. In addition, the media is seen as offensive and lacking respect for Islam. British and French participants share a general feeling that the Muslim community is ‘being picked on’ and treated differently from non-Muslims.
(Amisha, 12, London) I feel really bad ... the way the Muslims are treated. We're not treated the same as the non-Muslims. I think they make fun of us .... but they don't know Muslims ... the way the non-Muslims see us ... they always believe that the Muslims are bad or are doing something bad. It's like we were left out.

(Roxy, 15, London) I think that it's not fair because everyone let think that Muslim is a bad culture because ... they think negative about Muslim because with all the bombings that has been happening ... and they think that all the Muslims are the same. I don't like it when I hear the media and they all say bad things about the Muslims. They target the Muslim community with the way they talk.

(Katrina, 14, Surrey) The media say words like 'they're involved' ... but it doesn't mean everyone. The TV and newspapers always generalise the problem to the Muslim community and, if that was not enough, they make all of us look terrorists.

(Steven, 14, Le Havre) Je n'aime pas parce que ce n'est pas juste qu'ils parlent comme ça sur nous. On est né en France et on est français comme les autres. Parce qu'on a des origines différentes, on est aussi traités différemment ... on a droit au même respect que les autres ... que les Chinois, les Africains, les Vietnamiens. (I don't like it because it's not fair that they speak of us like that. We are born in France and we are French like the others. Because we have different origins, we are treated differently ... we have the right to respect like the others ... like the Chinese, the Africans, the Vietnamese).

(Kenza, 14, Le Havre) Je pense que c'est injuste parce que l'on est comme tout le monde, il n'y a pas de raison d'être mal traité. Quand ils parlent à la TV, quand ils disent 'des musulmans' ... c'est tout le monde, tous les musulmans. Ils ne sont pas juste dans la façon dont ils pensent ... ils pensent que l'on est tous pareil. (I think that it's unfair because we are like everyone else, there is no reason to be mistreated. When they talk on TV, when they say 'some Muslims' ... it's everyone, all the Muslims. They are not fair in the way they think ... they think that we are all the same).

(Angélie, 13, Le Havre, Group discussion) Je suis plutôt choquée parce qu'ils parlent de nous comme si on était des gens dangereux. (I am shocked because they talk about us as if we were dangerous people).

(Youseph, 13 and John, 12, Le Havre, Group discussion) Je n'aime pas quand ils parlent comme ça. Ils pensent que tous les musulmans sont des terroristes. On est tous des arabes et on est tous pareil. Ce n'est pas vrai. (I don't like when they talk like that. They think that all Muslims are terrorists. We are all Arabs and we are all the same. It's not true).

(Hakim, 11, Bordeaux) Moi, j'aime pas parce qu'ils sont toujours négatifs sur les musulmans. J'aime pas parce qu'ils critiquent notre religion sans vraiment la connaître. Ils parlent de nous comme si on était les pires ennemis. (I don't like
because they are always negative towards Muslims. I don’t like because they criticize our religion without really knowing it. They talk about us as if we were the worse enemies).

(Chaînez, 14, Bordeaux) Les medias essaient de montrer à la population que la religion musulmane c’est dangereux. Enfin moi j’ai le sentiment que c’est ressenti comme ça par le public. (Medias try to show to the population that Islam is a dangerous religion. Well that’s how I think the audience perceive it).

The media are seen to be targeting the Muslim community, who are largely blamed for the climate of terrorism that has emerged since 2001. Too often accused of being dangerous people or terrorists, Muslims from all backgrounds are now experiencing far higher levels of prejudice than in previous years.

(Zamunda, 14, London) The media people, I do not like them because of what happened in July, about the bombings and all that, because some religious Muslim did that, they still accuse all the Muslim of doing it, just because people have done they’re accusing the all of the Muslims, so I don’t think that’s fair.

(Sania, 15, London, Group discussion) Yes, lately there has been a tendency to accuse Muslims of being terrorists, arresting a lot of people in my area as well. Muslim people are being accused ... we’ve done nothing wrong and they make accusation.

(King, 14, Surrey) I hate them ... they just say stuff about Muslims .... As soon as something happens, it’s like ... say there is another bomb, the complaint will come straight on Muslim people, straight on us. After all the bombings and the terrorism, the Muslims are always targeted... it’s always our fault. It makes me angry to see how they talk about our religion; as if we were all terrorists, all extremists ... it shows how little they know about us.

(Steven, 14, Le Havre) Je n’aime pas parce que ce n’est pas juste qu’ils parlent comme ça sur nous. Ils ont vite fait de critiquer les arabes, les musulmans, comme si on était tous des gens dangereux, des terroristes. (I don’t like because it’s not fair that they speak about us like that. They quickly criticise the Arabs, the Muslims, as if we were all dangerous people, terrorists).

(Cassie, 14, Le Havre) Ils ne sont pas bien sur les Musulmans. C’est comme une humiliation et les gens pensent qu’on est tous pareils, des terroristes, des gens dangereux. Ils ne savent pas qui on est et ils nous critiquent et accusent tout le temps. Ils mettent tous les Musulmans dans le même sac et je n’aime pas ça. (They are not good on Muslims. It’s like a humiliation and people think that we are all the same, terrorists, dangerous people. They don’t know who we are and they criticize us and accuse us all the time. They put all the Muslims in the same bag and I don’t like that).
The influence and impact of the media on the general public at large is uncommensurable. The sharp escalation of discrimination against Muslims in Britain and France indicates that media thrives on creating an imaginative fear amongst the general public by denouncing Muslims for all wrong-doings. British and French participants both observe that a lot of the discrimination revolves around the idea that Muslims are somehow culturally ‘incompatible’ with the society in which they live. In its role of stoking the fires that fuel prejudice, the media accentuates many negative stereotypes of Islam and Muslims.

(Samina, 15, London) They’re looking to the problem except they don’t know how to look at the people. They put a particular image of Muslim people into the mind ... nobody seems to take notice.

(George, 15, London) For me, those who did the bombings and all that are not Muslims because the Koran doesn’t say or encourage violence towards other people. If you break the law, you are not a Muslim because you think you’re a Muslim but you aren’t because you disobey the Koran, the law.

(Imran, 12, Surrey) They blame it on us. The media, the newspapers ... it’s the way they say things ... they make other people believe that we’re bad people, that we’re all terrorists. I don’t like it and it makes me feel angry.

(Rosie, 15, Surrey) The newspapers that I read, the local ones, say the dumbest thing like for example ‘Asian ladies are producing more babies and the population overall is going to grow and apparently, they’re going to take over Britain’. That is really weird and to much negative ... it’s quite unbelievable! It’s creating a kind of fear and when people read that they think it’s true.

Some participants correctly suggest that the media not only demonstrates an incompatibility and ignorance in distinguishing Muslims in their diversity and cultures but also a refusal to learn about the culture. Unfortunately, it is in such contexts that they depict a homogeneous Muslim entity, amalgamating in the process...
the terms ‘Muslims’ and ‘Arabs’. The effect of such an amalgamation is experienced at a macro-level where bigotry, intolerance and racism seem to be the climate of daily life.

(Malik, 14, Le Havre) Quand ils parlent des arabes, c’est tout le temps, les musulmans sont des terroristes ... à l’école ils me traitent de terroriste, aussi bien des camarades de l’école mais aussi des gens de l’extérieur. Pour les gens être Musulman, ça veut dire être arabe, être terroriste. Il faut apprendre à vivre avec les autres personnes ... ça fait longtemps que j’ai l’habitude de me faire traiter de sale arabe, depuis que je suis tout petit. (When they talk about the Arabs, it’s all the time, the Muslims are terrorists ... at school, they treat me of being a terrorist, friends from school but also people from outside school. For people to be Muslim, it means to be an Arab, to be a terrorist. One must learn to live with other people ... I got used to be treated of dirty Arab, it’s been a long time, since I was a little boy).

(Mélissa, 15, Le Havre) C’est pas drôle. On est traité de sales arabes et on est toujours visé. Ça ne me plaît pas. Il faudrait d’abord que les gens connaissent qui on est, quelle est notre religion. Il parle toujours de l’Islam comme une religion dangereuse et mauvaise. Mais c’est faux. Il faudrait qu’ils sachent ce qu’est l’Islam, voir ce qu’est avant de critiquer. (It’s not fun. We are treated as dirty Arabs and we are always targeted. I don’t like it. People should know who we are first, what our religion is. They always talk about Islam as a dangerous and bad religion. But it’s false. They should know what Islam is all about; see what it is before criticising it).

(Mémet, 15, Bordeaux) Les gens se sont fait une image, une idée de l’Islam qui est manipulée par les médias depuis les attentats à New York et ceux après partout à Londres, au Maroc, en Espagne, en Algérie, enfin partout. Les gens pensent mal des musulmans ... ils mélangent tout et être musulman, c’est être arabe et ça veut dire que l’on est quelqu’un de ‘peut-être’ dangereux. Ça me blesse quand j’entends comment les musulmans sont considérés. J’en suis un. (People have an image, an idea of Islam that is manipulated by the media since the attempts in New York and those afterwards in London, Morocco, Spain, Algeria, everywhere. The people think badly about Muslims ... they amalgam everything and being Muslim is being Arab and it means that we are ‘maybe’ dangerous. I fell hurt when I hear how Muslims are considered. I am one of them).

(Jude, 14, Bordeaux) Ici, en France, les gens font vite des remarques et vous regardent différemment. Ils pensent que tous les arabes sont pareils ... qu’on est des gens dangereux. Mais ce n’est pas vrai. (Here, in France, the people are quick to make remarks and look at you differently. They think that all Arabs are the same ... that we are dangerous people. But it’s not true).
Despite the negative role that the media plays, the latter can sometimes appear to contribute to a positive and a constructive debate around societal issues: for example, the right to wear their headscarf or the issue around the cartoon portrayals of the Prophet that made such great controversy. In such a context, the media can be said to give encouragement if not enlightenment to some in their pursuit or rediscovering of Islam.

*(Beyonce, 14, Surrey)* I think that sometimes they’re saying the truth, for example, when they talk about Muslim girls, the right of wearing or not the scarf at school, or the right to pray at school, respect their religion. So, I agree when the media talk about these kinds of issues.

*(Mysha, 13, London, Group discussion)* The media has a lot of impact on a lot of people and they believe what they see or read. You know there was this thing about in the media about our Prophet, the cartoons, and everybody was talking about it, they wanted to find out about it so they read the Koran. That was a kind of good thing. But the bad thing was the cartoons.

In essence, it is correct to suggest that the negative image of Islam that the media constructs can produce feelings of insecurity among Muslim people and undoubtedly harm community relations. For the past few years, British and French media have portrayed Muslims as a potential threat on British and French soil in light of their involvement in terrorist activities or showing inclination to it. From this outcome, the Muslim population is generally treated with suspicion and perceived as clashing with British and French values, which put into question their capacity to integrate fully into the country. British and French media have represented Islam and Muslim people in a definite and global image of intolerance, anti-feminism, violence and fanaticism.

In France, the *Commission Nationale Consultative des Droits de l’Homme* has accused the media for the amalgam that they have made in order to explain Islamist terrorism. In doing so, the media have actually pointed the finger towards religion as the sole ideological cause. For Zappi ‘sensationalist images, headlines and commentary, demagogic and paranoiac in tone feed conspiracy fantasies that have multiplied in the media’ (Zappi, 2003:3). The media appears to manipulate and create the contrast between good, successful North African descendants (e.g. the actress Isabelle Adjani or footballer star Zidane) and bad, problematic North African Muslims living in popular suburban outskirts.
8.4 SUMMARY

When it comes to the concept of integration, the question to ask is how different cultural backgrounds can coexist in the social project of constructing a collective community. In essence, the principal feature of integration is not so much the fact that an ethnic minority is or is not culturally visible but more the fact that equitable and fair treatment should be allocated to all. As Mannitz argues, integration in Britain is faced with 'the problems of the dominant model of the multicultural society where segmentary boundary effects of the social mosaic is in interaction with the awareness of anti-discrimination that relies on individuals being perceived as group members' (Mannitz, 2004:297). This contrasts with the French Republic model of integration for which French citizenship raises above all ethnic and cultural particularities. However, 'Muslim people, despite having French citizenship, judge the egalitarian ideal as a theoretical construction that they do not experience as a feasible reality' (Mannitz, 2004:297).

In general, French pupils had a much stronger understanding of the concept of integration, articulating clear definitions and connotations of the term. They did not have a strong separate identity as a Muslim community. However, pupils from both countries had similar views on acceptance and belonging. They were self-aware of being Muslim in a non-Muslim country. They believed they should have the right to show their cultural diversity and follow their religion and cultural practices. They did not like being stereotyped or being bullied (this view seems to be universal). They strongly believed that the media played a major role in depicting the Muslim community as under attack, and experiencing prejudice.

It is correct to suggest that both British multiculturalism and Republican ideology have as their goal a social unity while including at the same time cultural diversity. However, if the identity of being British can be said to include ethnic, cultural and religious elements, the Republican identity of being French abandons all notions of ethnicity, culture and religion in the public sphere, hence ruling out all differences. As Mannitz and Schiffauer claim 'immigrant cultures are not expected to make any positive contributions; practically disregarded, their styles can best be described with indifference' (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:70).
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

9.1 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Over the past decade, there has been a greater amount of media attention on Muslim minorities following the events of September 11, 2001 in New York. Currently there are about five million Muslims in France and two million in Britain. One of the crucial challenges facing the two nations is that of incorporating the Muslim minority into a pre-existing and pre-defined host society. According to Baumann, nation-states are confronted with the problem of reinventing themselves by redefining national identity and reformulating what the nation really stands for (Baumann, 2004:1). Britain and France both have a colonial history and it appears that the task is particularly difficult as they never had to adapt or accept the cultural norms of the colonies being imperial masters.

The main goal of the study was to compare the education of Muslim pupils in state schools within Britain and France in terms of the ways cultural diversity is addressed. The research focus was on understanding how the British and French education systems in secondary schools addresses and responds to the cultural needs of Muslim pupils. In order to examine this question, a framework was drawn up in which the concepts of national identity, religious identity, and that of integration and the Muslim community were discussed. The national education system was used as the lens, viewing schools as the primary instrument in the process of social and cultural integration into a pre-defined national whole. As Baumann suggested

' schools take on two missions at once: to perpetuate a sense of nation-state continuity but also to integrate ethnic minorities into the democratic project of equalising chances and access for all. They are the quintessential mechanism by which nation turns children into citizens' (Baumann, 2004:1-2).

Education is crucial to integration and social cohesion. There are several reasons for this: firstly, the school system is the earliest mainstream social institution where young people come into sustained contact and the extent to which schools respect and accommodate diversity sends out strong signals about the value society places on
diversity. Secondly, education attainment levels are a key determinant of opportunities for finding employment and improving life chances. Finally, schools provide an opportunity to develop bonds and friendships across different ethnic and faith groups, and the curriculum itself is a mechanism by which pupils are able to develop an understanding of the different groups within their community.

The central tenet of this research is that one can gain valuable insight into the process of social cohesion by examining how secondary school children in Britain and France believe and feel about experiences and relationships with their school, immediate community and society. Thus, empirical work took place in British and French state funded secondary schools. The research focus was on a comparison between national schools: 1) in their approach to religious plurality and efforts to foster opportunities in developing acceptance and tolerance, and 2) on whether and how they respect and accommodate the needs of ethnic groups.

The research findings have been organised to shed light on the three areas of interest, namely Muslim children’s sense of self-identity in relation to national identity and religion, their relationship to school in terms of education whilst facing cultural diversity and their views on society in terms of integration.

**Self-identity and national identity**

The question of how British and French Muslims identify with their national state and how they perceive their integration has become more socio-politically significant. In western countries, Islam is perceived as inherently in opposition to western values such as freedom, tolerance and democracy. In addition, a fear in the rise of Islamophobia (in response to 9/11, the war in Iraq and the 7/7 bombings) and an observed tendency for a small minority of young British and French Muslim people to develop an interest in an Islamic radicalism has questioned the place of Muslim citizens in British and French society.

It cannot be ignored that ethnic identity plays an essential role in the construction of one’s self-identity. Best defined as ‘a shared and individual identity expressed as a notion of ‘our people, our origins’ which varies in the intensity with which it is felt and expressed’ (Fenton, 2003:114), ethnic identity is a complex process, made of different components. These enable individuals to recognise their ethnic group
membership and to identify with the role and importance of their own culture in their life. The attachment to one's own culture passes by emotions, values and beliefs, as well as other components.

While Britain recognises its four distinct nations - England, Wales, Scotland and North Ireland - as separate entities, France does not give such recognition to its various regions such as Brittany and Provence that have distinct cultures and languages.

Although there are different ways of being Muslim in Britain and France, they all engage with the realities of living as a minority in a non-Muslim country, to work out strategies and processes of negotiation with the wider society to ensure the existence of a Muslim identity and to transmit the cultural values and heritage to their children. No matter what the notion of Muslim identity involves, it will also relate to and embody a prevailing religious element. The research shows that for British and French participants religion plays a central role in their life.

The study's findings suggest that British participants are more inclined to define and associate the notion of self-identity in terms of religious dedication (i.e. the importance of being a 'proper' Muslim) where the commitment to Islam, as a system of belief, norms and codes, is quintessential to who they are. In contrast, French participants are more inclined to define and associate the notion of self-identity in terms of heritage, origins, and of a transmitted entity. Yet, no difference appears to exist as far as receiving a religious education (i.e. learning Arabic and reading the Koran), performing faith, observing Ramadan and celebrating Eid, which are significant events for both communities. They see themselves as Muslims and are proud and happy about it. However, British and French Muslims show divergence in the languages spoken with friends and families, as the British tend to use their mother-tongue much more. They also consider religion more important and attend a Mosque more often than their French counterparts.

Davie argues that the French *affaire des foulards* is less likely to occur in Britain due to greater religious tolerance: 'British schools are, by law, obliged to incorporate a number of religious elements, mostly in the form of daily worship' (Davie, 1999:207). This was supported by the findings which showed that a greater degree of tolerance...
into the wearing of headscarf in Britain contributed to the great emphasis on being a proper Muslim in Britain.

In regards to the wearing of the headscarf, the veil means different things to the participants in the two countries whether they wear it or not: to some it means religious devotion, a clear marker of traditions and culture and to others it means oppression. To some it implies sexism and to others it values women. To others it translates as an identity statement.

In general, Muslim participants were born in Britain or France and felt strongly associated to the place of birth as that to which they belong. However, they were self-aware of being Muslim in a non-Muslim country and believed they should have the right and freedom to display their religious identity and cultural practices.

The research revealed that British society, as a whole, is perceived as positive by Muslim participants. The British model of multiculturalism is the legacy of a political ideal of toleration with a commitment to freedom of conscience. Its principle is the respect for different ethnic, cultural and religious groups in society, with the state making a distinction between the roles of public citizens and their private beliefs, whilst maintaining a commitment to freedom of religion. British Muslims take their citizenship seriously whilst accepting British values and practices but derive their grounds and motivations from Islam.

Since the 1980s, multicultural policies have resulted in the emergence of a stronger Muslim identity in Britain. These implemented policies have emphasised differences at the expense of a shared national identity and has divided people along ethnic, religious and cultural lines. Successive governments failed to stop emphasising difference and engage with Muslims as citizens rather than through their religious identity. British participants show significant support for wearing the veil in public, for reinvigorating their faith and for following their parents’ cultural traditions. The research showed that young British Muslim people appear to have forged a stronger sense of national identity, expressing a clear pride of being British and considering their nationality of great importance. Describing themselves as foremost British, the participants show greater confidence of their national identity, having a sense that this is now their home and they are prepared to say what they don’t like about it, making
their opinions known, while at the same time asserting their distinctive character and creating a valid and recognised British-Muslim identity.

In contrast, the research has revealed that French society as a whole is recognised as being potentially fair but perceived as being disengaged with regards to its Muslim population. The French model of cultural blindness is based on the Republican principle of *laïcité*, which stands for the idea of the state is not being in the business of imposing, advancing or privileging any particular religion or religious belief. The emphasis is on the need for citizens to identify and engage with their French nationality above individual cultural origins. Within this framework, the Muslim community is absorbed into the idea of neutrality and homogeneity while at the same time they become the symbol of difference undermining the unity of citizens. For instance, Cesari found that due to isolation from natural modes of transmission there was a cultural gap between Muslim immigrant parents and their children. According to her, 'parents have lost crucial battles against dominant French educational, cultural, and social institutions in their struggle to inculcate the cultural values of their home countries. Most notable amongst their defeats has been the abandonment of Arabic language' (Cesari, 2002:40).

The principle of *laïcité* appears to present its own limits and contradictions. Following the failure of collective actions for civil rights and anti racist movements of the 1980’s, France was challenged by Muslim youth, who showed strong signs in vindicating their Muslim identity. They turn to Islam not only to validate and support a heritage but also to protest against undesirable social conditions that have been exacerbated by postcolonial discrimination. Young Muslim people are eager to express their cultural identity within schools despite the secular status that they embody. The social disadvantage endured is further compounded by racism and discrimination. The promises of the Republican contract appear to have never been delivered for their benefit; on the contrary, French policies and the lack of effective tools to identify and challenge rampant discrimination have meant that the liberty, fraternity and equality they were urged to aspire to remained unattainable. In all, stigmatisation and non-recognition of their cultural identity result in the denial of justice and dignity.
This research shows that French participants display a less religious practice of Islam than their British counterparts, showing instead a relaxed approach to the faith while retaining a sense of cultural tradition. They appear not to have forged a strong sense of national identity, lacking some pride and consideration in being French and considering their nationality not of great importance. Describing themselves as French foremost, these participants have eagerly embraced and accepted values such as liberty and democracy. At a minimum, some of them have experienced derogatory behaviour based upon their religious identity and ethnic identity, facing categorization as foreigners, despite having French nationality by birth. Davie argues that ‘each generation tries to come to terms with what it means to be a Muslim in a Western, historically Christian, society’ (Davie, 1999:200). In other words, young French Muslim people are more likely to present signs of ‘cultural inadequacy’ while displaying at the same time their wish to reassert their Muslim identity and heritage.

In summary, the research showed that British Muslim pupils have a greater and clearer sense of national identity, in tune with their cultural heritage and religious identity that embraces the idea of a social contract that binds people together. On the other hand, French Muslim pupils respond to their sense of national identity with little or no pride, considering it as an attribute challenged by their cultural heritage. They acknowledge their religious identity as a cultural legacy and entity, while favouring recognition for their ethnic origins.

Education system and Muslim pupils

Education is one of the main social integrative factors, as schools play a central role in the production and reproduction of culture. National education systems are seen as tools for building a nation, by moulding the moral and political opinions of citizens along the lines laid down by the nation’s ideology.

In all, education policies aim to ensure policies are sensitive to the needs of Muslim children and young people. Within schools, issues of dress and clothing have formed the symbols around which arguments over culture and religion are conducted. The British education system appears to have embraced ethnic and religious diversity with the general goal of promoting and fostering the idea of multicultural education. This particular approach to teaching is based upon respect and developing cultural pluralism. Within schools, this is clearly translated by encouraging and
accommodating the cultural needs of Muslim children. However, the British education system is confronted with increasing pressure to see Muslim children offered a higher standard of religious education. For Molokotos, 'the most publicly disputed situation is around the issue on state funding of Islamic schools' (Molokotos, 2000:368).

Franchi argues that, within the Republican tradition, the French schooling system symbolises tolerance and represents a progressive collectiveness able to defy racism thanks to the idealised project of a 'French melting pot'. Yet, it is by witnessing an heterogeneous school population and a growth of issues related to school failure and inequalities that the theme of ethnicity has been brought to light, after being dormant for so long (Franchi, 2004:45). State schools have been increasingly described as having a heterogeneous body of pupils from various ethnic and religious backgrounds. The co-existence between these various groups has encouraged discussions on different aspects of religious diversity in state schools. For Molokotos, the wish to demonstrate an Islamic identity at school has attracted great public attention. As a result, 'the most publicly disputed issue within the French education system is the wearing of the Islamic headscarf in school' (Molokotos, 2000:368). With the 2004 Law banning the wearing of the headscarf at school (or any other ostentatious signs), the French education system is challenged by its perceived neutral space in which there is no place for social, cultural or ethnic differences and where laïcité prevails. Schools implement the rule by showing little or no encouragement at accommodating the cultural needs of Muslim pupils.

The study showed that the school systems in the two countries differ in the way they deal with cultural differences, however both do this with the common goal of reaching social cohesion and equality. As a result, Muslim pupils in the two countries have very different experiences at school and of school.

This research shows that British 'multicultural education' tends to focus on teaching and learning based on acceptance and tolerance of ethnic and religious diversity, with the aim to change behaviour and attitudes for a better social unity. The British Muslim pupils appear to feel more comfortable at school and believe their teachers understand and respect them and their culture. In general, British schools provide and allocate the time, space and consideration required for their cultural needs (for example a prayer

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room, wash room and dietary requests). The point of departure in teaching differs as British education uses the support of history, for example, as one of heterogeneity where plurality is emphasised and is something that has been done all along. It appears that the British philosophy stands for pragmatic solutions, which respect the ‘culture-identity-community’ of each of the groups that creates Britain today.

In contrast, the research shows that French education institutions tend to always perceive themselves as a neutral space where there is no place for religious or ethnic differences. In contrast, the French Muslim pupils do not display the same level of affinity with their school, do not share a sense of well-being at school and consider their teachers as always right. Basically, the French schools demonstrate little or no effort regarding cultural needs. In France, the support of history could not be any more different, as the focus is on a process where rationality prevails. It implies a linear conception where two forces battle with each other: a progressive force aiming at more equality against a reactionary force seeking to establish inequality and domination. In the light of this, the British concept of ‘culture-identity-community’ is alien to the French conception of history which is culture-blind. French teachers embody secular values and tend to be usually in conflict with the idea of Muslim girls wearing headscarves. The fact that the wearing of the headscarf is forbidden at school has given them a legitimate position for which any debates are unlikely to be opened.

However, all British and French Muslim pupils share similar views as far as their preference to learn more about Muslim culture, since this would enhance their and other pupils’ understanding and acceptance of it. They all want to be accepted as equals and not be seen as different by other non-Muslim pupils. They generally express a preference for public schools over Islamic ones, as the latter are thought to be too strict and infringe on personal freedom.

Thus, the research shows that British Muslim pupils feel à part entière in their school, as they offer them the respect for their beliefs and values, as well as the opportunity to learn and explore other people’s values and experiences. Although pupils generally express a preference for public schools over Islamic ones, there is a pertinent issue on whether Muslims should be free to establish their own schools whenever and wherever they choose to do so, bringing forward the debate about the establishment of their own denominational voluntary-aided schools within the maintained system. Yet,
if the education process should give some recognition to the differences in lifestyle and religious background of ethnic minority children, the reference to embrace the need for the education of all pupils remains a challenge. French pupils, on the other hand, experience school as neutral spaces for whom their religious background and heritage are not acknowledged. With the ethnic question remaining invisible in French official data, ethnicity in schools is constructed through outside influences (for example social representations and stereotypes), so becomes salient and operant within the daily functioning of the school. Processes of separation involve an ethnic dimension whereby children of immigrants become the targets of significant public stigmatisation directed at their ethnic group. Strategies for dealing with ethno-cultural diversity becomes emblematic of the position that the school adopts in its interaction with minorities and this position is often characterised by a refusal of differences that diverse groups generate within the school.

British and French understanding of the concept of integration

Integration is central to social cohesion and in the report from the Commission for Integration and Cohesion (CIC), social cohesion is defined ‘principally as the process that must happen in all communities to ensure different groups of people get on well together; while integration is principally the process that ensures new residents and existing residents adapt to one another’ (CIC, 2007:9). Therefore an ‘integrated and cohesive community is based on four key principles: a sense of shared futures, models of responsibilities and rights, civility and mutual respect, and making social justice visible’ (CIC, 2007:c43). Social cohesion is used to explain a state of harmony through the application of institutional processes and practices. It is through their implementation that negotiations and compromises are reached and that a community life is constructed. Britain and France tends to implement these processes according to their national cultural history and philosophy.

In general, the research shows that all participants agreed about their sense of belonging by identifying their place of birth as their home. British and French Muslim pupils understand the notion of integration as a process by which people maintain their own culture while at the same time adapt to the British or French one. In other words, the notion of integration is best understood as that of assimilation with nuances in both countries. However, the qualitative analysis demonstrated that there was a
clear difference between British and French participants’ familiarity with the notion of integration. French participants were aware of and able to provide personal accounts of their understanding of integration. In contrast, British participants were unable to articulate what integration was or what it meant to them.

The research shows that British pupils perceive British society as a ‘multicultural society’ where cultural otherness could be problematic if it was used as an argument against them to produce unequal treatment or a distorted representation. The central aspect is not the visibility of religious and ethnic diversity but the lack of fairness towards ethnic minorities. In other words the multicultural model of society has produced divided boundaries while interacting against the discrimination of individuals defined as group members.

Kundnani defined multiculturalism

‘as a double-edged sword, blind to its own limits and contradictions. In the late sixties, it was an effective riposte to the anti-immigrant politics that challenged the myth of an ethnically pure society. It became later radicalised as those who were born and grew up in Britain wanted to remake society, and not just be tolerated within it’ (Kundnani, 2002:4).

The separate cultural development that was encouraged for decades turned into demands for community cohesion where ethnic minorities have to develop a greater acceptance of the principal national institutions. It is correct to suggest that the request for community cohesion caused concern for the British Muslim population, as it saw the emergence of contradictions around the relationship between ‘Islam’ and ‘Britishness’. In other words, by following the logic of multiculturalism, faith schools for example were to be encouraged. Yet from the perspective of community cohesion, Muslim schools are perceived as a potential danger for breeding grounds for separatism. On the one hand, the promotion of a Muslim identity in schools is seen as a likely way to produce responsible, respectable citizens. However, supporting the cultural and religious identity of minority groups (particularly Muslim identities) is seen now as potentially risky and an ineffective way of integrating communities into the whole social fabric of British society.

In contrast, the research showed that French pupils, despite having French citizenship which is meant to transcend all ethnic and religious particularities, judge the egalitarian ideal as a theoretical construction, which they do not experience as a
feasible reality. Instead of valuing the ethnically blind concept of Republican equality in France, participants' testimonies reveal the effects of exclusion that persists in spite of their formally belonging to the French Republic. In general, French Muslim participants displayed a much stronger understanding of the concept of integration, articulating clear definitions and connotations of the term than their British counterparts. This is a significant finding and it would be worth exploring further why the French Muslim participants appear to know so much about integration compared to British ones.

A possible reason could be the fact that in France there is a strong emphasis on speaking French. Indeed, proficiency in the French language is considered to be the fundamental requirement of French citizenship and the principal means of integration into French society. Giving attention to another tongue is not only counterproductive in terms of integration, it is also not Republican. Thus, children of ethnic minorities are made aware of the notion of integration from a very early age. The situation in Britain is very different. For instance, during the fieldwork in one of the British schools with a large majority of Bangladeshi pupils, I was informed by the headteacher that some of her pupils did not have a good command of the English language and recommended that I translate the questionnaire in Sylheti. Although the children are expected to speak English, there seems to be greater understanding and acceptance of other languages. In contrast, for the French schools the questionnaire was expected to be in French only.

Another reason is the reference to the concept of unity and homogeneity. The notion of a Republic one and indivisible means that in France ethnic minorities give up the cultural forms of their native lands and take on the behaviour and attitude of the dominant French mould. However, lying beneath the Republican model of integration is a key distinction between public and private spheres: while the practice of customs and religion in the private sphere is to be accepted, there is a total refusal to institutionalise ethnic or religious differences in the public sphere. The clear division between what is permitted at home and not at school is clearly understood (for example the headscarf, niqab or long dress), contributing to French participants' understanding of what integration refers to.
All Muslim participants in both countries shared similar views on the feeling of belonging to the country in which they live. They did not like feeling stereotyped or being bullied. They unanimously expressed their disapproval in the way the media depicts the Muslim community. For them, the Muslim community is always being under attack and prejudiced against. In general, Muslim participants are self-aware of being Muslim and British or French and believe they should have the right to show their cultural diversity and follow their religion and practices without constraints.

In summary, the research shows that British and French understanding of the notion of integration differs significantly. British Muslim pupils appear to have no cognitive notion and subjective experience of the process of integration. In contrast, French Muslim pupils appear to behold and endure first hand the effects of integration. Their testimonies reflected that the Republican concept is meant to ‘absorb all the differences and ensure a political and cultural unity of the nation’ (Kastoryano, 1992:59). In other words, ‘being French’ is a notion that is supposed to be as universal and embracing as that of ‘being British’. However, cultural diversity has no public space and differences are ruled out. As Mannitz and Schiffauer correctly claim ‘immigrant cultures are not expected to make any positive contributions but are meant to be described with indifference and to be disregarded’ (Mannitz & Schiffauer, 2004:70). Therein lays a main difference between the two nations – the acceptance and tolerance of difference.

9.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

This research fills in an apparent gap in comparative cross-national research between Britain and France on the issue of education and Muslim children. There have been numerous studies looking at single nations on issues regarding Muslim people such as the place of Islam, immigration, citizenship and headscarf within Britain (e.g. Joly, 1995; Mason, 1995; Ansari, 2002) or within France (e.g. Silverman, 1992; Hargreaves, 1995; Bowen, 2007). On the aspect of education and Muslim children, there have been studies within Britain (e.g. Swann, 1985; Judge, 2001; OSI/EU, 2005) and within France (e.g. Vallet and Caille, 1995; Limage, 2000; Felouzis et al., 2005). Comparative cross-national studies are few and tended to focus on citizenship (e.g., Brubaker, 1992; Bryant, 1997) or headscarves (e.g., Molokotos, 2000; Collet, 2004; Scott, 2007; Joppke, 2009) or religion (Mannitz, 2004). My research has focused on
comparing the education of young Muslim people in Britain and France and the ways cultural diversity is addressed. To establish the necessary background and context, it was central to explore the concepts surrounding the making of British and French civic society, the education system and that of integration. The issue of the headscarf and religion are addressed within the context of comparing views of Muslim children in the two countries.

This cross-national comparative study has produced some engaging insights into the way children see themselves and their environment. The mixed approach design allowed me to uncover a wide range of issues and concerns of Muslim children in Britain and France. The quantitative analysis provided baseline information on views and beliefs of Muslim and non-Muslim pupils in the two countries. The responses of non-Muslim participants in the two countries were similar. There were, however, some significant differences between British and French Muslims, particularly with regards to the importance of religion and national pride. Qualitative analysis provided a more detailed insight into the world of Muslim pupils in the two countries, showing a mosaic of views and opinions about the perception of themselves, the media and their experience at school.

Looking at two nations helps put things into a better perspective. For example, lack of awareness and knowledge of what integration means for British children would have been accepted as nothing special. However, when French children of the same age demonstrate a level of understanding of the concept, it prompts one to think why this is so and its social implications. Though within the borders of Britain, is it the case that British children feel they are living in a Muslim enclave that has its own rules and customs that supersede those of the host nation? For instance, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, told Radio 4's World at One (in 2008) that the adoption of certain aspects of Sharia law in Britain seemed unavoidable, claiming that Britain has to face up to the fact that some of its citizens do not relate to the British legal system. Dr Williams argued that adopting parts of Islamic Sharia law would help maintain social cohesion. Such a situation would be inconceivable in France.

Cross-national studies are, by nature, complex in both research design as well as conducting fieldwork. Besides the normal problems related to logistics, this study
was confronted by the French principle of *laïcité* which raised obstacles in finding necessary schools for data collection. Finding French schools required both perseverance and a very good understanding of French society and language. In essence, one gets a better qualitative data if the researcher is proficient in the language of the participants and the participants also feel more comfortable with the interviewer. In both nations, the children identified with me as an ‘outsider’ and opened up candidly. The advantage of being bilingual allowed me to approach pupils in Britain and France with ease, permitting them to talk openly and confidently, whilst assuring them of the confidentiality of their statements.

The data collected suggests that the schools are more than just a physical and geographical place where young people receive an education. It is the place where specific and defined governance is performed and conducive to particular ideology and belief. School environment is a platform that mirrors the plurality and cultural diversity found in society at large. This helps to appreciate the early dynamics of the dichotomy acceptance/refusal or belonging/rejecting that occurs among young people of ethnic minority. For example, British Muslim children show a clear preference for Muslim friends at and outside school while their French counterparts tend to be friends with everybody, regardless of their cultural background. Mixing with people of other cultures does help broaden one’s outlook on life.

Overall, the research approach proved to be appropriate and gratifying as all participants showed great enthusiasm and willingness to contribute. In terms of methodological tools used, the survey and interviews were both productive. The questionnaires were easily distributed and fully completed with some help for the youngest participants on some occasions. Participants enjoyed answering the questions and expressed an interest in the questionnaire. The one-to-one interviews were extremely productive, with participants happy to talk and express their views honestly. These sessions were very pleasant as well. However, the group discussions did not provide the quality and quantity of data commensurate with the effort put in. They required much more control and facilitation to ensure that each member of the group had an opportunity to express their views. With fewer time and financial constraints, I would have prepared the group discussion in a different way. Participants would have been presented with a short film or documentary, which
would be followed by discussion. Furthermore, the group discussion would have been video-recorded to ensure that I captured the group dynamics and had a record of both verbal and non-verbal utterances.

Overall, the current research design of interviews and group discussions was considered optimal for a single researcher study. However, reflecting on the qualitative data collected, interviews generated better output from the participants compared to the group discussions. Researching the field studies, one week was found to be most convenient by the schools. Anything longer would not have been acceptable. Indeed, my presence was considered by some staff as rather disruptive. Thus, there was a limit to the number of pupils that could be interviewed with the allocated time frame. Therefore the best way to get more participants is to conduct field studies in a larger number of schools rather than getting more participants from a single school.

From a personal point of view, this comparative cross-national research exposed me to better understand aspects of British and French society. The goals of both countries are similar, however they have adopted widely divergent approaches to achieving their goals. For example, a French headteacher emphasised the importance of a secular society and argued that equality can only be achieved by eliminating cultural differences. For a British member of staff, the French banning of the headscarf was the worst way to protect freedom of expression. Thus, it appears that in French society ‘being equal’ (égalité) is of prime importance, whereas in Britain it is ‘freedom’ (liberté). Ironically, there are aspects of school life for which the priorities of the two nations are reversed, for example, pupils do not wear school uniform in France suggesting primacy for liberté, whereas they do in Britain, thus favouring égalité.

In addition to learning about differing cultural values, it was also observed that culture traits are prevalent in schools in the two countries. British schools have daily assemblies51 where pupils are informed about topics such as bullying, global warming and current natural or societal events. France does not have anything similar. That

51 An assembly is when the school community, or a part of it, meets together to share aspects of life that are of worth. It acts as a medium for communicating matters of significance. In England, an act of collective worship is usually held as part of an assembly as it has been a legal requirement since the 1944 Education Act.
said, it was revealing to note that despite their different vocabularies, priorities and contexts, the British and French schooling system share the common goal to prepare young people for their adult life.

9.3 **British and French Position on ‘Plurality’**

Britain and France are similar in many respects, such as demography, economy and history. Both nations have a large immigrant population that emerged from the legacy of their colonial empires. They have, however, adopted different approaches in integrating the ethnic minorities into their respective societies. Britain has adopted its societal structures around multiculturalism and communitarianism, supporting the right to display religious symbols in the public sphere, hence showing acceptance of cultural differences. France, on the other hand, based its societal structure around the Republican principal and value of *laïcité*, rejecting a society based on communitarianism.

British and French schools have distinct approaches to cultural differences and their efforts to promote acceptance and tolerance vary considerably. Within the two British schools, the study revealed that ethnic and religious diversity is embraced and recognised, and that ethnic and religious identity of every individual is encouraged to exist. Participants express overtly their cultural heritage for which the schools provide and accommodate their needs. As a result, they develop a sense of well-being at school and feel generally secure in the society. This approach can be said to develop a greater level of acceptance and tolerance with the aim of enhancing a better sense of integration. However, in everyday life the difference is picked up, as pointed out by the following interviewee:

*(Zak, 13, London)* I am a Muslim because that’s what people want to know first; by the skin colour, people look at you by the skin colour firstly, your accent, what you look like ... they judge you how you look like, how your skin colour is, how you talk. I am a Muslim first and I live here ... ‘Where did you come from?’ and I would say ‘I was brought up here, my parents are from Africa’. When people judge you by what you look like, it’s bad because they put a label on you.

Within the two French schools, the study revealed that cultural plurality is not recognised, let alone encouraged. Participants are treated on a neutral stance with regards to religion. ‘Being different’ is not permitted because the general ethos is to
develop a sense of equality and fairness for all. As a result, ethnic and religious
identities are suppressed to the point of being denied. Schools show little effort to
provide for and accommodate the cultural needs of Muslim children. The French
system professes fairness and equality for all but in practice, ethnic and religious
identity is used to separate and distinguish *Français de souche* and French from
foreign origin. For example, the following was stated by one of the interviewees:

*(Chaînez, 14, Bordeaux)* Je pense qu’il y a des personnes qui ne peuvent pas
considérer d’autres comme des égaux. Pour moi, je suis née en France, je suis
française mais quelque part je ne pense pas que je suis acceptée pour qui je suis,
avec mes origines et ma religion. *(I think that there are people who cannot
consider others as equal. I was born in France; I am French but somewhere I think
that I am not accepted for who I am, with my origins and my religion).*

The French film ‘Entre les murs’ (The Class, 2008) features the experience of a
teacher who spent a year in a school in north-eastern Paris. The pupils are a disruptive
group of teenagers, aged between thirteen and fifteen, with varied cultural
backgrounds (Somalian, Chinese and North African). The film shows the struggles
the teacher faces with a combination of apathy from the students as well as a lack of
resources to give them the education they deserve. Loud and abrasive, offensive and
defensive, the pupils come from low-income families and do not necessarily have the
support or encouragement in their life to make them believe that they can achieve
more. A string of incidents is captured, both small but significant (a new student
reading his personal essay out aloud or a Chinese-French boy risking deportation
when his mother is arrested for being in the country illegally). These small moments
speak loudly to larger issues of integration and belonging, which are already the
central struggles of those adolescents. These pupils ask to be listened to with their
desire to be part of a society, which they feel does not desire them. The gap between
the lifestyle and cultural values of the white, middle-class French native teacher and
the North-African, African, Asian and native-born pupils from Paris deprived
neighbourhoods is a portrait of a country’s traditional sense of identity adapting to an
increasingly multicultural environment (French, 2009:14).

In many ways, I felt that the film reflected the feelings expressed by the French
Muslim participants, particularly their desire to be accepted for who they are and for
being part of a society they know they belong to but appears not to entirely embrace
them. I found that the film echoes the emotional and social malaise that the young French people have experienced.

For Joppke 'the dimension of Islam can be perceived as a challenge to liberalism: that which reconciles many ways of life (Britain) and that which is conducted rationally (France)' (Joppke, 2009:ix). In a way, the issue of the Islamic headscarf is a 'mirror of identity that forces the French and the British to see who they are and to rethink the kinds of societies and public institutions they want to have' (Joppke, 2009:x). With liberal and national themes always closely intertwined, the headscarf is perceived and understood as an affront to liberal values. Britain and France are democratic and liberal nations that accommodate cultural diversity but they are challenged at the same time by a faith that pushes further that liberal precept that identifies British toleration, and represses further the religious liberties as in the French banning of the headscarf (Joppke, 2009:xi).

In Britain, one can be British and Muslim, British and Welsh, British and Scottish; a sense of multiple identities, which does not require suppressing one for the advantage of the other. In France, one cannot be both Muslim and French and assimilation is the only way to become a full member of the society. More significantly, to be French is not 'defined ethnically or religiously but in terms of Republicanism, that is to say, there cannot be a competition between 'Muslim' (which is either ethnic or religious or both) and 'French' (which is always political)' (Joppke, 2009:122).

Both nations share the common goal of establishing a society where social cohesion should govern citizens' lives. They have established sets of policies and reforms based on their respective ideological ethos: Britain, with its multiculturalism promoting and acknowledging cultural diversity; France, abiding by the principle of laïcité promoting universalism through which one's cultural identity must be transcended in order to reach collective uniformity. I believe that diverse cultural communities are significant elements of a thriving liberal society for which Republicanism has to give greater attention and acceptance to group cultures that merit equal respect and equal presence.
REFERENCES


Bella R. N. et al. (1988) Habits of the heart: Middle America observed, Hutchinson Education, London.


References


References 254


References 258


Annex A – Introduction Letter

School of Human Sciences
(Headed paper)

Addressee

Date

Dear

Introducing Sylvie Patel, PhD student

I would like to introduce to you Sylvie Patel who is one of my PhD students in the Department of Sociology at the University of Surrey. Sylvie’s research project aims to compare how the British and French educational system address and answer the cultural needs of children from ethnic minority groups, and more particularly children from the Muslim community.

Considering the diversity of ethnic and religious identities in Britain and the need for mutual respect and understanding, Sylvie’s project falls within the Citizenship Education framework which aims to equip young people with the knowledge, understanding and skills to play an active part in society as informed and critical citizens. The effort put in this research will benefit students’ reflections and discussions upon social and cultural issues, problems and events, the confidence and conviction that they can act with others as well as learning about fairness, respect, democracy and diversity at school.

As part of her field study, Sylvie will be gathering data from a sample of children in the school, aged between 11 and 15. The research approach that has been chosen involves collecting data through self-completion questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and group discussion. The data will be collected from two secondary schools in Britain and two in France. The research will be conducted following the Surrey University ethical guidelines and the Social Research Association ethical practice and guidelines.

Within Britain, two areas have been selected on the basis of their significant Muslim community: Reading and Tower Hamlets. Within Reading, Bulmershe School has the relevant and appropriate characteristics for the study. I would be grateful if you would consider allowing Sylvie access to your school for her research. A summary of the project is joined to this letter showing at a glance the key lines of the research interests. She will be happy to contact you and explain in detail her research. Alternatively, you are very welcome to contact me if you wish. For reference, her contact details are: Tel.: (01252) 654812; email: sylvie_patel@ntlworld.com

Yours sincerely,

Martin Bulmer
Professor of Sociology

Annex A 260
SUMMARY OF PROJECT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON ISLAM AND ETHNICITY IN BRITAIN AND FRANCE

The general aim of the study is to investigate the ways in which the educational system in Britain and France address and answer the cultural needs of children from ethnic minority groups, and more particularly children from the Muslim community. Issues will explore the cultural constraints that can operate and the difficulties encountered to attain social cohesion. The study will look at the sector of Education, and more precisely how the British and French educational system in secondary schools (framed and regulated differently) address and answer the needs of children from ethnic minority groups, and more particularly children belonging to the Muslim community.

The research questions are:

• How do the participants understand themselves in terms of nationality and religion?
• How do they understand the broader society in which they live?
• To what extent has the rise in Islamophobia in British society, after the events of September 11th 2001 and July 7th 2005, affected the attitudes and identities of Muslim participants?
• How significant is the subjective importance of religious identity to Muslim participants?

The research will be conducted through questionnaires, face-to-face interviews and group discussion.
Chère Madame/Monsieur,

Présentation de Sylvie Patel, étudiante en Doctorat

Je voudrais vous présenter Sylvie Patel qui est une de mes étudiantes en Doctorat dans le Département de Sociologie, à l’Université du Surrey. Son projet de recherche a pour objectif de comparer la façon dont le système éducatif en Grande-Bretagne et en France adresse et répond aux besoins culturels des enfants appartenant à des groupes de minorités, et plus particulièrement les enfants appartenant à la communauté Musulmane.

Vu la diversité d’identités sociales, culturelles, religieuses et ethniques qui existent en France ainsi que le besoin mutuel de respect et de compréhension pour tous, le projet de Sylvie se fixe dans le cadre de l’éducation de la Citoyenneté qui a pour objectif de doter les jeunes gens de connaissances, de discernement et d’aptitudes afin de jouer un rôle actif dans la société en tant que citoyens avertis et critiques. L’effort placé dans cette recherche profitera à la réflexion et à la discussion des élèves sur les questions sociales et culturelles, faits et problèmes, tout en explorant les notions d’équité, de respect, de démocratie et de diversité à l’école.

En ce qui concerne les recherches sur le terrain, Sylvie recueillera les informations à l’école auprès d’enfants âgés de 11 à 15 ans. Les méthodes d’approche qui ont été choisies incluront entre autre un auto-questionnaire, des entretiens individuels en tête-à-tête et une discussion en groupe. Les données seront recueillies dans deux écoles secondaires en Grande-Bretagne et en France. L’étude sera accomplie et effectuée suivant les principes et les directives éthiques de l’Université du Surrey ainsi que de celles de ‘Social Research Association’.

Pour les recherches en France, deux villes ont été sélectionnées : celle du Havre et de Montreuil-sous-Bois. Le Collège Eugène Varlin présente les caractéristiques appropriées et adéquates pour cette étude. Je vous serais très reconnaissant si vous pouviez offrir la possibilité à Sylvie d’effectuer ses recherches dans votre établissement. Un résumé du projet est joint à cette lettre, montrant en un clin d’œil les principaux points d’intérêt de cette étude. Sylvie se tient à votre disposition pour tout contact si vous désirez de plus amples explications. Vous pouvez également me contacter si vous le souhaitez. Les coordonnées de Sylvie sont les suivantes : Tél. : +44(1252)654812; courrier électronique : sylvie_patel@ntlworld.com

Je vous remercie d’avance et vous prie de bien vouloir recevoir, Madame, l’expression de mes salutations distinguées.

Martin Bulmer
Professeur de Sociologie
RESUME DE PROJET

UNE ÉTUDE COMPARATIVE SUR L’ISLAM ET ETHNICITÉ
EN GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET EN FRANCE

L’objectif principal de cette étude est d’analyser la façon dont le système éducatif en Grande-Bretagne et la France adresse et répond aux besoins culturels des enfants appartenant à des groupes de minorités, et plus particulièrement les enfants appartenant à la communauté Musulmane. Les questions exploiteront les contraintes culturelles qui peuvent s’opérer et les difficultés rencontrées pour atteindre l’objectif. L’étude regardera au secteur de l’Education, et plus précisément la façon dont le système éducatif dans le secondaire en Grande-Bretagne et en France (système composé et réglé différemment) s’adresse et répond aux besoins des enfants appartenant à des groupes ethniques minoritaires, et plus particulièrement aux enfants appartenant à la communauté Musulmane.

Les questions de recherche sont :

• Comment les participants se perçoivent-ils et se reconnaissent-il en terme de nationalité et de religion ?
• Comment comprennent-ils et conçoivent-ils la société dans laquelle ils vivent?
• Dans quelle mesure l’augmentation de l’islamophobie dans la société Française (après les événements du 11 Septembre 2001 et de ceux du 7 Juillet 2005) a affecté l’attitude et l’identité des participants d’origine Musulmane ?
• A quel point l’importance subjective de l’identité religieuse est significative pour les participants d’origine Musulmane ?

Les recherches seront accomplies en utilisant les méthodes suivantes : un auto-questionnaire, des entretiens individuels en tête-à-tête et une discussion en groupe.
**ANNEX B – NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED**

The table below shows the actual interviews conducted at each of the schools. There was a group discussion conducted at each of the school. The figure in brackets shows the number of participants in the group discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Planned Interviews &amp; Group Discussions (GD)</th>
<th>Actual Interviews conducted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>GD (8)</td>
<td>GD (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>16 + GD (8)</td>
<td>15 + GD (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figure below shows the number of boys and girls interviewed at each school.

The figure below shows the gender breakdown in each group discussion.
### ANNEX C – SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN BRITAIN AND FRANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of schooling</th>
<th>British schooling system</th>
<th>French schooling system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child’s age</td>
<td>Class attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-School class</td>
<td>Pre-school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Year R&lt;sup&gt;(a)&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Year 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Year 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Year 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Year 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Year 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>12/13</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>13/14</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
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<td>11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14/15</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15/16</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) (Reception Year)
(b) Cours Préparatoire (Preparatory class)
(c) Cours Elémentaire 1<sup>ère</sup> année (1<sup>st</sup> year elementary class)
(d) Cours Elémentaire 2<sup>ème</sup> année (2<sup>nd</sup> year elementary class)
(e) Cours Moyen 1<sup>ère</sup> année (1<sup>st</sup> year middle class)
(f) Cours Moyen 2<sup>ème</sup> année (2<sup>nd</sup> year middle class)
Dear student,

The aim of this questionnaire is to find out how you think and feel about various things. This means it is your own ideas and thoughts that count. There are no right or wrong answers. If you do not know the answer to a particular question, please do not worry about it. Just write on the questionnaire that you don’t know the answer and move on to the next one. Please answer all the questions by putting either a tick or a circle to the answer that best applies. In some cases you are asked to write your answer. Please write clearly in the boxes provided.

Any information that you give will be kept in strict confidence. The results will be analysed and written up in such a way that no one who has completed the questionnaire will be identifiable.

The questionnaire should take about 15 minutes to complete.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION
### DETAILS ABOUT YOU

1. How old are you?  
   
2. Are you?  
   [ ] Boy  
   [ ] Girl  

3. What school year are you in?  
   [ ] Y7  
   [ ] Y8  
   [ ] Y9  
   [ ] Y10  

4. In which country were you born?  
   [ ] Britain  
   [ ] Another Country  
   (please specify)  

5. In which country was your mother born?  
   [ ] Britain  
   [ ] Don't know  
   (please specify)  

6. In which country was your father born?  
   [ ] Britain  
   [ ] Don't know  
   (please specify)  

7. Do you speak any other language besides English?  
   [ ] Yes  
   [ ] No (please go to Q12)  

8. What language other than English do you speak?  
   [ ] Punjabi  
   [ ] Bengali  
   [ ] Hindi  
   [ ] Gujarati  
   [ ] Arabic  
   [ ] Turkish  
   [ ] Urdu  
   [ ] Other (specify)  

9. At home, which language do you speak the most with your parents?  
   (Please specify)  

10. At school, which language do you speak the most with your friends?  
    (Please specify)  

11. Outside school, which language do you speak the most with your friends?  
    (Please specify)  

12. In terms of your religion, you describe yourself as a?  
   [ ] Christian Catholic  
   [ ] Jewish  
   [ ] Muslim  
   [ ] Christian Church of England  
   [ ] Christian other  
   [ ] Hindu  
   [ ] Sikh  
   [ ] Other  
   [ ] None  

### YOUR VIEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT WHO YOU ARE

13. There are various ways in which you could describe yourself to another person. Out of these four descriptions, which one would you choose to describe yourself because it is the most important to you?  
   Please tick only one box (1 being the less important and 4 being the most important)  
   
   - Age  
   - Being a boy/Girl  
   - British  
   - Religion  

14. How do you feel about being British?  
   [ ] very proud  
   [ ] proud  
   [ ] not proud  
   [ ] don't know  

Annex D 267
15 How important is it to you that you are British?

☐ very important  ☐ important  ☐ not important  ☐ don't know

16 Does religion play an important role in your life?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☐ Not sure/don't know

17 How often do you attend a place of religious worship?

☐ Daily  ☐ Weekly  ☐ Monthly  ☐ On special occasions  ☐ Never

18 How do you feel about being a [your religion]?

☐ very proud  ☐ relatively proud  ☐ proud  ☐ don't know

19 How important is it to you that you are [your religion]?

☐ very important  ☐ important  ☐ not important  ☐ not sure/don't know

20 As a [your religion], do you think that:

- you should keep your own culture and also adapt to the British one.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- you should not keep your own culture but adapt to the British one.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- it is not important to keep nor to adapt to the British one.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- you should keep your own culture and not adapt to the British one.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

(Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement by marking the box that best applies)

21 In your view, how do you think ‘others’ represent or describe the people of your religion?

(Please circle only the word(s) that do not apply)

22 In your view, do you think that people of your religion:

- have been ignored or excluded because of their religious background.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- have been bullied or made fun of because of their religious background.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- feel that other people do not see them as British.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- do not feel accepted by other people.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

- feel that people behave in an unfair or negative way towards them because of their religious background.  ☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree
23 Do you feel that other adults treat you unfairly/negatively because you are [your religion]? □ Yes □ No

24 At school, do you think that?
• your cultural needs are considered (e.g. halal food, room for prayers).
  Strongly Agree □ Agree □ Disagree □ Strongly Disagree □
• aspects of your cultural traditions should be taught at school.
  □ □ □ □
• school should be the place to talk openly about your culture (e.g. organised discussion groups).
  □ □ □ □
• being [your religion] does not affect your school life.
  □ □ □ □
• you feel that teachers should be more aware of your culture.
  □ □ □ □
• you would like to be accepted for who you are.
  □ □ □ □

25 Do you feel that other students from your class/school treat you unfairly/negatively because you are [your religion]? □ Yes □ No

26 How often do you spend free time in school with:
• friends who are [your religion] rarely □ sometimes □ often □ always
• other friends rarely □ sometimes □ often □ always

27 How often do you spend free time out of school with:
• friends who are [your religion] rarely □ sometimes □ often □ always
• other friends rarely □ sometimes □ often □ always

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR FILLING IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
ANNEX E – QUESTIONNAIRE (SYLHETI)

Dear Student,

This questionnaire is conducted by the University of Surrey, Guildford. The purpose is to understand the situation of the students. This is not a subjective or objective exam. It is to collect valuable information from you.

Please answer the questions honestly and accurately.

Thank you.

Best wishes,

[Signature]

Date: [Date]

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY
GUILDFORD

Annex E
| 20 | দূষণকম্পন পঞ্জিকায় তথ্য সরবরাহের 
    কার্যক্রমের অনুমোদন (দফতর নামকরণ) | মূল সংবলিত ভাষা ও তথ্য সরবরাহের কার্যক্রম | অন্যান্য ও তথ্য সরবরাহের কার্যক্রম |
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<td>- জনসংখ্যা ব্যাপকতা ও কোন প্রকারের জনসংখ্যা ব্যাপকতা করলে এর প্রতি অনুমোদন করা হবে।</td>
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<td>- জনসংখ্যা ব্যাপকতা ও কোন প্রকারের জনসংখ্যা ব্যাপকতা করলে এর প্রতি অনুমোদন করা হবে।</td>
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28. কিন্তু পুনরায় জানাতে পারেন না।

29. কিন্তু পুনরায় জানাতে পারেন না।

ন্যায় সংসদের মন্ত্রীদের তালিকায় অন্তর্ভুক্ত আছেন।

এই অভিপ্রেত থাকলে প্রতিবেদনে নথিবদ্ধ করুন।
QUESTIONNAIRE SUR LES VUES ET OPINIONS QUE LES JEUNES GENS ONT D'EUX-MÊMES

Cher(ère) élève,

Le but de ce questionnaire est de savoir ce que tu penses personnellement de certaines choses. Cela signifie que ce ne sont que tes propres idées et pensées qui comptent. Il n'y a pas de juste ou de fausse réponse. Répond à toutes les questions en mettant soit une croix ou un cercle à la réponse qui te semble correspondre le mieux. Dans certains cas, il te sera demandé d'écrire ta propre réponse. Écris clairement dans les cases proposées, s'il te plait.

Si tu ne sais pas la réponse à une question particulière, ne t'inquiète pas. Écris juste sur le questionnaire que tu ne sais pas la réponse et va à la question suivante.

Toute information donnée sera gardée et traitée dans la plus stricte confidence. Les résultats seront analysés et rédigés de telle façon que chaque personne ayant participée à ce questionnaire ne pourra être identifiée.

Le questionnaire devrait prendre environ 15 minutes.

MERCI BEAUCOUP DE TA PARTICIPATION
1 Quel âge as-tu? ________ ans

2 Tu es un(e)?

□ Garçon □ Fille

3 Tu es en quelle année scolaire?

□ 6ème □ 5ème □ 4ème □ 3ème

4 Tu es né dans quel pays?

□ France □ Un autre pays

Lequel? ______________

5 Dans quel pays est née ta mère?

□ France □ Je ne sais pas

Lequel? ______________

6 Dans quel pays est ton père?

□ France □ Je ne sais pas

Lequel? ______________

7 Parles tu une autre langue que le Français?

□ Oui □ Non (Aller à la Question 12)

8 Quelle autre langue parles tu?

□ Algérien □ Tunisien □ Marocain □ Turc

□ Autre (Laquelle ______________)

9 À la maison, dans quelle langue parles tu le plus avec tes parents?

(A spécifier)

10 À l’école, dans quelle langue parles tu le plus avec tes amis?

(A spécifier)

11 En dehors de l’école, dans quelle langue parles tu le plus avec tes amis?

(A spécifier)

12 Du point de vue de ta religion, tu te définies comme un(e)?

□ Catholique □ Juif(ve) □ Musulman(e)

□ Autre □ D’aucune religion

TES VUES ET OPINIONS SUR QUI TU ES

13 Il y a plusieurs façons de se décrire personnellement envers une autre personne. De ces quatre descriptions, laquelle choisirais-tu pour te décrire parce qu’elle te semble la plus importante pour toi?

Mettre une croix seulement dans la case qui correspond (1 étant le moins important et 4 étant le plus important)

□ Âge

1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □

□ Être un garçon/une fille

1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □

□ Être Français(e)

1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □

□ Religion

1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □

14 Qu’est ce que tu éprouves d’être de nationalité Française?

□ Très fier/ère □ Fier/ère

□ Pas fier/ère □ Je ne sais pas

15 Est-ce important pour toi d’être Français?

□ Très important □ Important

□ Pas important □ Je ne sais pas
16 Est-ce que la religion joue un rôle important dans ta vie ?

- [ ] Oui  - [ ] Non  - [ ] Pas sûr(e)/je ne sais pas

17 Vas-tu souvent dans un lieu consacré à ta religion ?

- [ ] Tous les jours  - [ ] Chaque semaine
- [ ] Chaque mois  - [ ] Pour des occasions spéciales  - [ ] Jamais

18 Qu'est ce que tu éprouves d'être [ta religion]?

- [ ] Très fier/ère  - [ ] Relativement fier/ère
- [ ] Fier/ère  - [ ] Je ne sais pas

19 Est-ce important pour toi d'être [ta religion]?

- [ ] Très important  - [ ] Important
- [ ] Pas important  - [ ] Pas sûr(e)/je ne sais pas

20 En tant que [ta religion], penses-tu que?

- tu devrais garder tes traditions culturelles et t'adapter à celles de la France.
- tu ne devrais pas garder tes traditions culturelles, mais t'adapter à celles de la France.
- ce n'est pas important de garder ni de s'adapter à celles de la France.
- tu devrais garder tes traditions culturelles et ne pas t'adapter à celles de la France.

(Mettre une croix dans la boîte qui te semble correspondre le mieux)

21 A ton avis, que penses-tu de l'image ou de l'impression que les 'autres' se font des personnes qui pratiquent la même religion que toi ?

(Entoure seulement les mots qui te semblent ne pas correspondre)

- propre
- sale
- content
- triste
- pacifique
- agressif
- intelligent
- stupide
- travailleur
- fainéant
- poli
- vulgaire
- amical
- hostile
- bon
- vaurien

22 A ton avis, penses-tu que les gens de la même religion que toi :

- ont été ignorés ou exclus à cause de leur religion.
- ont été humiliés ou fait l'objet de moqueries à cause de leur religion.
- ne se sentent pas considérés comme des Français par les autres.
- ne se sentent pas acceptés par les autres.
- pensent que les gens se comportent d'une façon injuste ou négative envers eux à cause de leur religion.

(Mettre une croix dans la boîte qui te semble correspondre le mieux)
23 Penses-tu que les adultes te traitent d’une manière injuste ou négative parce que tu es [ta religion]?

☐ Oui  ☐ Non

**TA VIE À L’ÉCOLE**

24 À l’école, penses-tu que?

- certains aspects de ta culture ont été pris en compte (par exemple, la nourriture halal, une salle pour prières).

- les traditions et coutumes de ta culture devraient être enseignées à l’école.

- l’école devrait être un endroit où parler ouvertement sur ta culture (par exemple, organiser des groupes de discussion).

- être [ta religion] n’affecte pas ta vie à l’école.

- les enseignants devraient être plus au courant de ta culture.

- tu voudrais être accepté(e) pour qui tu es.

25 Penses-tu que d’autres élèves de ta classe/école te traitent d’une manière injuste/négative parce que tu es [ta religion]?

☐ Oui  ☐ Non

26 À l’école, est-ce que tu passes ton temps de libre avec:

- des amis qui sont [ta religion]

- d’autres amis

27 En dehors de l’école, est-ce que tu passes ton temps de libre avec:

- des amis qui sont [ta religion]

- d’autres amis

**MERCI BEAUCOUP D’AVOIR REMPLI CE QUESTIONNAIRE**
## Annex G – Participants’ Pseudo-names

**The J. Austin School - London**

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</tbody>
</table>

* Christophe and Adêm were two boys who originated from Kosovo. They were registered in the so-called ‘Classe d’Acceuil’ (Welcoming class) whose objective is to welcome the pupils just arrived in France. The boys were usually much older for the school year they entered and follow initially the Y7 teaching program, with the target to progress as soon as possible. This transition takes approximatively two years. The class objective helps newcomers to integrate the French school program as soon as possible with the objective to integrate later into French society. Christophe arrived in France a year ago and Adêm, just a month ago. Both could speak fluent French.
ANNEX H – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

• How do you feel about being a Muslim?

• At school, how do you think other pupils perceive you? Do you feel that the fact that you are Muslim can make them see you differently? How and why?

• Do you miss school because of Muslim traditional festivities? Do you feel strongly about that?

• Do you think that your school provides and accommodates for the cultural needs of Muslim pupils (e.g. halal meal, prayer room, dress code)?

• Do you think that teachers are quite understanding of your cultural background? How?

• Do you think that aspects of Muslim history and culture should be taught at school? Do you think that other pupils would be interested by it and maybe help them understand Islam and what it means for Muslim people?

• How do you feel when people/TV/newspapers say or insinuate negative things about people who are Muslims?

• In France, there is a law that forbid pupils to wear at school the headscarf and/or any other symbols that show the religion they belong to? How do you feel about that?

• If you had the choice, would you prefer to study in a school appropriate to your religion (i.e. Islamic school)? Why?

• Can you tell me in your own words what you understand by the word ‘integration’? What does it mean to you? Do you feel that you relate to this? How and why? Can you think of any other words that you could replace it with?

• Do you go to the Mosque? How many times? Do you go to classes to learn Arabic? Do you manage school work and Koran studies?

• Do you think it’s important to wear the headscarf?

• In life in general, do you feel that you are accepted for who you are?
QUESTIONS D’ENTRETIEN

• Qu’est-ce que tu éprouves d’être Musulman(e)?

• A l’école, comment penses-tu que les autres élèves te considèrent ? Penses-tu que le fait d’être Musulman(e) fait qu’ils te perçoivent différemment? Comment et pourquoi?

• Manques-tu l’école à cause de célébrations/fêtes Musulmanes? Penses-tu que cela est très important?

• Penses-tu que ton école prend en compte et fait quelque chose pour accommoder certains aspects de ta culture (par exemple, la nourriture halal)?

• Penses-tu que les enseignants sont plutôt compréhensifs envers toi? Comment?

• Penses-tu que certains aspects de l’histoire et de la culture de l’Islam devraient être enseignés à l’école? Penses-tu que les autres élèves seraient intéressés par ça et peut-être cela les aiderait-ils à mieux comprendre ce que l’Islam signifie pour les Musulmans?

• Qu’éprouves-tu quand les gens en général/TV/journaux média parlent d’une manière négative ou insinuent des choses négatives sur les Musulmans?

• En France, il y a une loi depuis 2004 qui interdit les élèves (plutôt les filles) à porter le voile à l’école, et/ou tout autre symbole qui montre leur appartenance religieuse. Qu’en penses tu?

• Si tu avais le choix, préférerais-tu aller dans une école appropriée à ta religion (par exemple, une école islamique)? Pourquoi?

• Peux-tu me dire, avec tes mots à toi, ce que tu comprends par le mot "intégration" ? Que cela signifie-t-il pour toi? Te sens tu concerné(e) par ça? Comment et pourquoi? Connais tu d’autres mots avec lesquels tu pourrais le remplacer?

• Dans la vie en général, est-ce que tu te sens accepté(e) pour qui tu es? Comment? Et pourquoi non?
ANNEX I – PICTURE PROBES

PROBE 1 – Nouvel Observateur 02/06/2004
ANNEX J – INFORMATION SHEET TO PARTICIPANTS

UNIVERSITY OF SURREY

School of Human Sciences
Department of Sociology
Guildford, Surrey
GU2 7XH

Telephone
01483 686981
Facsimile
01483 689551

INFORMATION SHEET
TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARTICIPANT

More details of what the study would involve for you

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you agree to take part, it is important that you understand what it will involve. If you have any questions, or if anything is unclear, please do not hesitate to ask.

My name is Sylvie Patel. I am a PhD student at the University of Surrey, Guildford and my supervisor is Professor Martin Bulmer. This document tells you about my research. It is part of the initial research work that I will carry out at your school.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to compare how British and French secondary schools address and answer the cultural needs of children from ethnic minority groups, and more particularly children belonging to the Muslim community.

I am inviting you to take part because you are in the age group I want to study, and you have the appropriate cultural background I want to investigate.

What will I be asked to do if I take part?

If you agree to participate, you will be taking part to a face-to-face interview and/or a group discussion involving other children. A questionnaire will also be given to you, as to other members of your class, for you to fill in. The interview will last about half an hour, and I will ask you a number of questions about how you think and feel about...
various things. If there are any particular questions which you would prefer not to answer, you will not have to answer them. The interview and group discussion will be tape-recorded.

**Are there any risks and benefits?**

The nature of the research topic can be sensitive as it involves talking about Islam and the Muslim people in today’s society. Care and consideration will be taken during interviews so that you do not get distressed or upset if you do not feel comfortable answering. If it does happen, you will be able to talk to someone at school (such as a teacher, a counsellor/tutor). There are no direct benefits to you if you take part in the study.

**Do I have to take part?**

No, taking part is **voluntary**. It is up to you to decide whether or not you will take part. If you do decide, I will ask you to sign a **form** to say that you agree to participate. Your decision whether or not to take part will not affect your current or future relationship with your school. If you decide to take part, you will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, all information which is collected from you during the interview will be kept strictly **confidential**. It will only be seen by me, but I may also discuss with my supervisor (without any name being mentioned). The survey will ask only for gender and age, and will not include your name. **Your name will never appear in the writing-up. Anonymity** will be protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and an **alias name** will be suggested by you. The information gained will be used only for the purpose of the study. The research data will be kept private and securely saved for five years after the thesis is submitted.

**Who is organizing the research?**

I am the sole investigator and organiser for the study, based at the University of Surrey, School of Human Sciences, Department of Sociology, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH (www.soc.surrey.ac.uk).
What happens when the research study is finished?

The results will be written up as a thesis and then submitted to the University of Surrey for examination. You will not be identified in any report or publication.

What do I do now?

I thank you for considering taking part in this research. If you have any questions at any time about the study or the procedure, please do not hesitate to contact me at s.patel@surrey.ac.uk. Any complaint or concerns about any aspects of the way you have been dealt with during the course of the study will be addressed; please contact Professor Martin Bulmer, Principle Investigator on +44(0)1483 689456 or at m.bulmer@surrey.ac.uk.

If you agree to participate, please sign the attached ‘Assent Form’ and return it to the school.

With kind Regards,

Sylvie Patel
NOTE D’INFORMATION
A L’ATTENTION DU/DE LA PARTICIPANT(E)

Plus de détails sur ce que l'étude peut impliquer pour toi

Tu as été invité(e) à prendre part à une étude de recherche. Avant de décider si tu veux en faire partie, il est important que tu comprennes ce que cela comporte. Si tu as des questions à poser, n'hésite pas s'il te plaît à le faire.


Quel est le but de cette recherche ?

Le but de cette recherche est de comparer la façon dont les écoles secondaires en Grande-Bretagne et en France s'adressent et répondent aux besoins culturels des enfants appartenant à des groupes de minorités, et plus particulièrement aux enfants appartenant à la communauté Musulmane.

J’aimerais que tu prennes part à cette étude parce que tu es dans la tranche d'âge que je veux étudier et tu as les caractéristiques culturelles appropriées aux quelles je m'intéresse.

Que me demandera-t-on si je participe ?

Si tu acceptes de prendre part, tu participeras soit à un entretien en tête-en-tête et/ou à une discussion en groupe avec d'autres élèves. Un questionnaire à remplir te sera aussi donné ainsi qu'à d'autres membres de ta classe. L'entretien durera environ 30 minutes...
durant lequel un certain nombre de questions te seront posées sur ce que tu penses personnellement de certaines choses. Si il y a des questions auxquelles tu préférerais ne pas y répondre, tu n'auras pas à le faire. L'entretien ainsi que la discussion en groupe seront enregistrés.

Dois-je y participer?

Non, la participation est volontaire. Si ta décision est favorable, je te demanderai de bien vouloir signer le ‘Formulaire de Consentement’ confirmant ton accord à participer. Ta décision de prendre part ou non n'affectera pas ta relation avec ton école. Si tu acceptes de participer, tu seras libre de te retirer de l'étude à tout moment sans avoir à te justifier.

Ce que je dirai pendant l'entretien sera-t-il gardé confidentiellement ?

Oui. Toute information recueillie pendant l'entretien sera traitée de manière strictement confidentielle. Elle ne sera vue seulement par moi, cependant il se pourrait que j'en discute avec mon superviseur (sans qu'aucun nom ne soit mentionné). L'étude demandera seulement si tu es un garçon ou une fille et ton âge, sans révéler ton nom. L'anonymat sera garanti et protégé conformément à la Loi sur l'Informatique et les Libertés (1998); un 'prénom d'emprunt' sera suggéré par toi et utilisé à la place. Les informations recueillies ne seront utilisées que dans le but de l'étude. Elles seront gardées en toute sécurité et sûreté pendant cinq ans après présentation de la thèse.

Qui organise et finance ce projet de recherche ?

Je suis la seule chercheuse et organisatrice de cette étude, basée à l'Université du Surrey, École des Sciences Humaines, Département de Sociologie, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH, Royaume-Uni (www.soc.surrey.ac.uk).

Qu'arrivera-t-il aux résultats une fois l'étude de recherche finie ?

Les résultats seront rédigés pour une thèse qui sera ensuite présentée à l'Université du Surrey pour soutenance. Tu ne seras identifié(e) dans aucun rapport ou publication.
Que dois-je faire maintenant ?

Je te remercie d'avoir considéré ma demande à prendre part à cette recherche. Si tu as des questions au sujet de l'étude n'hésite pas, s'il te plaît, à me contacter à s.patel@surrey.ac.uk. Toute plainte ou inquiétude seront à adresser à Professeur Martin Bulmer, Investigateur Principle, au + 44(0)1483 689456 ou bien à m.bulmer@surrey.ac.uk.

Si tu acceptes de participer, signe s'il te plaît le 'Formulaire de Consentement' ci-joint et retourne le à l'école.

Très Cordialement,

Sylvie Patel
PARTICIPANT ASSENT FORM

➢ I agree to take part in the study conducted by Sylvie Patel and carried out at my school. □

➢ I have read and understood the ‘Information Sheet’ provided. □

➢ I have been given the chance to ask questions on all aspects of the Study and have understood the information given. □

➢ I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason. □

➢ I understand that all personal information relating to me will be held and handled in the strictest confidence and that my anonymity will be preserved. □

➢ I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participate in this study. □

Please enter your name and sign below.

Your Name (in BLOCK CAPITALS):

___________________________________________________________

School year: ____________________

Your signature: _______________________________ Date: ___________

In the presence of (name of witness in BLOCK CAPITALS): _______________________

Signed: _______________________________ Date: _________________
FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT
POUR LE/LA PARTICIPANT(E)

➢ J'accepte de prendre part au projet de recherche que Sylvie Patel va mener dans mon école.

➢ Ma participation est volontaire et je suis libre de me retirer à tout moment sans avoir besoin de me justifier.

Écris ton nom et signe ci-dessous, s'il te plaît.

Ton Nom (en LETTRES MAJUSCULES):

Ta Classe : __________________
Ta signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________

En la présence de (nom du témoin en LETTRES MAJUSCULES):

Signature : _____________________________
Date : ________________________________
PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

• I agree for my child to take part in the study conducted by Sylvie Patel and carried out at my child’s school.
• I have read and understood the ‘Information Sheet’ provided.
• I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the information given as a result.
• I understand that my son’s/daughter’s participation in this study is voluntary and that he/she will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason and without prejudice.
• I understand that all personal information relating to my child will be held and processed in the strictest confidence and that my child’s anonymity will be preserved.
• I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent my child to participating in this study.

Please enter your child's name and sign below.

Your child's Name: ________________________________

Your Name (block capitals): __________________________

Your Signature: ______________________ Date: __________

In the presence of (name of witness in BLOCK CAPITALS): __________________________

Signed: __________________________ Date: __________

Annex L 296
FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT
POUR LES PARENTS/TUTEURS

- J'accepte que mon enfant prenne part au projet de recherche que Sylvie Patel va mener dans son école.
- J'ai lu et approuvé la 'Note d'Information' qui m'a été donnée.
- J'accepte que la participation de mon fils/ma fille soit volontaire et qu'il/elle sera libre de se retirer à tout moment sans avoir besoin de se justifier et sans préjudice.
- J'accepte que toute information personnelle se rapportant à mon enfant sera tenue et traitée strictement dans la confidence et que l'anonymat de mon enfant sera préservé.

Écrivez le nom de votre enfant et signez ci-dessous, s'il vous plaît.

Nom de l'enfant: ______________________________________________________

Votre nom (en LETTRES MAJUSCULES): __________________________________

Votre Signature: ____________________________ Date: ________________

En la présence de (nom du témoin en LETTRES MAJUSCULES): __________________________

Signature: __________________________________________ Date: ________________________________
INFORMATION SHEET
TO THE ATTENTION OF THE PARENT(S) OR GUARDIAN
OF THE PARTICIPANT

More details of what the study would involve for your child

Your child has been invited to take part in a research study. Please take time to read the following information before you agree to allow your child to take part in this study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

My name is Sylvie Patel. I am a PhD student at the University of Surrey, Guildford and my supervisor is Professor Martin Bulmer. This document tells you about my research.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to investigate the ways in which Britain and France work on the issues surrounding the social integration of the Muslim community. The study will look at Education and more precisely how the British and French educational systems in secondary schools address and answer the needs of children from ethnic minority groups, and more particularly children belonging to the Muslim community.

I am asking that your child takes part because he/she is in the age group I want to study, and has the appropriate cultural background I want to investigate.
What will my child be asked to do if he/she takes part?

If you agree to allow your child to participate, he/she will be taking part in a face-to-face interview and/or a group discussion involving other children. A questionnaire will also be given to your child, as to other members of his/her class, for him/her to fill in. The interview will last about half an hour and I will ask him/her a number of questions about how he/she thinks and feels about various things. If there are any particular questions which your child would prefer not to answer, he/she will not have to answer them. The interview and group discussion will be tape-recorded.

Are there any risks and benefits?

The risk in this study may be the nature of the research topic, namely talking about Islam and the Muslim people in today's society and this can be a somewhat sensitive topic. I will take care during interviews so that your child does not get (distressed or) upset if he or she doesn't feel comfortable answering. If they do get upset, he/she will be able to talk to someone at school (such as a teacher, a counsellor/tutor). There are no direct benefits to you or your child if he or she takes part in the study.

Does my child have to take part?

No, taking part is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not your child will take part. If you do decide, I will ask you to sign a consent form and to keep a copy of this information sheet as well as the consent form. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to take part will not affect your current or future relationship with your child's school. If you decide to allow your child to take part, your child is free to not do the interview. Your child will be free to withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason.

Confidentiality

All information which is collected from your child during the course of the interview will be kept strictly confidential. It will only be seen by me, but I may also discuss with my supervisor (without any name being mentioned). The survey will ask only for gender and age, and will not include your child's name. Anonymity will be protected in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and an alias name will be used; it will not be possible to identify your child's answers. The information gained will be
used only for the purpose of the study. The research data will be kept private and securely saved for five years after the thesis is submitted and then destroyed.

**Who is organizing and sponsoring the research?**

I am the sole investigator and organiser for the study, based at the University of Surrey, School of Human Sciences, Department of Sociology, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH (www.soc.surrey.ac.uk).

**What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results will be written up as a thesis and then submitted to the University of Surrey for examination. Your child will not be identified in any report or publication.

**What do I do now?**

I thank you for considering your child to take part in this research. If you have any questions at any time about the study or the procedure, please do not hesitate to contact me at s.patel@surrey.ac.uk or my supervisor Professor Martin Bulmer at m.bulmer@surrey.ac.uk, tel.: +44(0)1483 689456.

If you agree for your child to participate, please sign the attached ‘Consent Form’ and return it to the school. Your child will also be given an ‘Information Sheet’ and an ‘Assent Form’ for him or her to sign.

With kind Regards,

Sylvie Patel
NOTE D’INFORMATION

A L’ATTENTION DES PARENTS/TUTEURS
DU/DE LA PARTICIPANT(E)

Plus de détails sur ce que l’étude peut impliquer pour votre enfant

Votre enfant a été invité(e) à prendre part à une étude de recherche. Prenez le temps s’il vous plaît de lire les informations suivantes avant de décider si votre enfant peut participer à cette étude. Si vous avez des questions à poser, n’hésitez pas s’il vous plaît à le faire.


Quel est le but de cette recherche ?

Le but de cette recherche est d’étudier la façon dont la Grande-Bretagne et la France s’adressent aux questions liées à l’intégration sociale de la communauté Musulmane. L’étude regardera au secteur de l’Education, et plus précisément à la façon dont le système éducatif dans le secondaire en Grande-Bretagne et en France adresse et répond aux besoins des enfants appartenant à des groupes ethniques minoritaires, et plus particulièrement aux enfants appartenant à la communauté Musulmane.

J’aimerais que votre enfant prenne part à cette étude parce qu’il est dans la tranche d’âge que je veux étudier et a les caractéristiques culturelles appropriées aux quelles je m’intéresse.
Que demandera-t'on à mon enfant de faire si il/elle prend part ?

Si vous acceptez que votre enfant participe à cette étude, il/elle participera soit à un entretien en tête-à-tête et/ou à une discussion en groupe avec d'autres élèves. Un questionnaire à remplir lui sera aussi donné ainsi qu'aux autres membres de sa classe. L'entretien durera environ 30 minutes durant lequel un certain nombre de questions lui seront posées sur ce qu'il/elle pense sur certaines choses. Si il y a des questions particulières auxquelles votre enfant préférerait ne pas répondre, il/elle n'aura pas à le faire. L'entretien ainsi que la discussion en groupe seront enregistrés.

Mon enfant doit-il participer ?

Non, la participation est volontaire. C'est à vous de décider si votre enfant participera ou non. Si vous êtes favorable à ce qu’il/elle participe, je vous demanderai de bien vouloir signier le 'Formulaire de Consentement'. Votre décision de permettre à votre enfant de participer ou non n'affectera pas votre relation avec son école. Votre enfant sera libre de se retirer de l'étude à tout moment sans avoir à se justifier.

Confidentialité

Toute information recueillie par votre enfant lors de son entretien sera traitée de manière strictement confidentielle. Elle ne sera vue uniquement que par moi, cependant il se pourrait que j'en discute avec mon superviseur (sans qu'aucun nom ne soit mentionné). L'étude demandera seulement le sexe et l'âge de votre enfant sans révéler son nom. L'anonymat sera garanti et protégé conformément à la Loi sur l'Informatique et les Libertés (1998) et un 'prénom d'emprunt' sera utilisé à la place; il ne sera pas possible d'identifier les réponses de votre enfant. Les informations recueillies ne seront utilisées que dans le but de ma recherche. Elles seront gardées en toute sécurité et sûreté pendant cinq ans après soutenance de ma thèse. Après quoi, elles seront détruites.

Qui organise et finance ce projet de recherche ?

Je suis la seule chercheuse et organisatrice de cette étude, basée à l'Université du Surrey, École des Sciences Humaines, Département de Sociologie, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH, Royaume-Uni (www.soc.surrey.ac.uk).
Que deviennent les résultats de l'étude de recherche ?

Les résultats seront rédigés pour une thèse qui sera ensuite présentée à l'Université du Surrey pour soutenance. Votre enfant ne sera identifié dans aucun rapport ou publication.

Que dois-je faire maintenant ?

Je vous remercie d'avoir considéré ma demande à ce que votre enfant prenne part à cette étude. Si vous avez des questions n'hésitez pas s'il vous plaît à me contacter à s.patel@surrey.ac.uk ou à contacter mon superviseur Professeur Martin Bulmer à m.bulmer@surrey.ac.uk, tel.: +44(0)1483 689456.

Si vous acceptez que votre enfant prenne part, veuillez signer s'il vous plaît le 'Formulaire de Consentement' ci-joint et le retourner à l'école. Votre enfant recevra aussi une 'Note d'Information' ainsi qu'un 'Formulaire de Consentement' pour signature.

Très Cordialement,

Sylvie Patel
ANNEX N – CHILD AND CARE LINES CONTACTS

PHONES AND WEBSITES FOR CHILD SUPPORT

IN THE UK

www.childline.org.uk
Childline: 0800 11 11 (free)
Careline: 020 85 14 11 77
Children’s legal centre, advice line: 020 7359 6251

www.parentscentre.co.uk

www.bullying.co.uk (e-mail: help@bullying.co.uk)

www.kidscape.org.uk

IN FRANCE

SOS help: 01 46 21 46 46
SOS Amitié-France: 01 40 09 15 22


SOS Amitié (helpline in Le Havre - 02 35 21 55 11) ou poste d’écoute à Rouen (02 35 03 20 20) (helpline in Paris East – 01 43 60 31 31)

www.jeunesse-gouv.fr
Service National d’Accueil téléphonique pour l’enfance maltraitée : 119 (free)

www.jeunesviolencesecoute.fr
Numéro Vert : 0800 20 22 23 (free)

Victimes de discriminations raciales: 114 (free)

Viols – viols femmes information : 0800 05 95 95

www.filsantejeune.com Tel. 0800 23 52 36