Keeping the faith: a study of Muslim schoolgirls' identity and participation in, school-based PE, and teachers' understanding of students' religious needs.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of my original research work and all the written work and investigations are entirely my own. Wherever contributions of others are involved, this is clearly acknowledged and referenced.

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted for another degree or qualification of any comparable award at this or any other university or other institution of learning.

Jane E McGee

July 2011

Abstract

This thesis is an ethnographic case study empirical investigation of a group of Muslim schoolgirls and their PE teachers at two schools in the West Midlands. It examines the issues surrounding their religious and ethnic identity and how this may conflict with participation in school-based PE . The issues raised in the introductory literature on ethnic identity, gender and cultural issues in PE give rise to the over-riding purposes and key aims of the present study. The four main aims are:-

1. *To investigate the identity of Muslim schoolgirls.*
2. *To investigate whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE*
3. *To investigate PE teachers' perception of the Muslim female identity and how they meet the needs of female Muslim pupils in PE and school sport*
4. *To investigate whether the PE teachers use inclusive practices in their lessons.*

Social Identity Theory underpinned the study focusing the research analysis and interpretation and aims to explicate the PE experiences by employing a qualitative methodology and in the process generate theory grounded in the data.

The empirical data were gathered over a period of twenty months, mainly by in-depth interviewing of the two sets of respondents, using semi-structured interview schedules. Through forms of triangulation, the research illuminates the same issues from two different perspectives: the pupils and their teachers.

The social categories of ethnicity and religion play a key part in shaping the identity of Muslims schoolgirls. The girls have supportive families whose values are moulded to a large extent by an Islamic ethos. However, the teachers, by-and-large, misunderstand various religious and cultural mores of these pupils' and their families.The girls perceive PE as a subject, which allows for freedoms not found elsewhere in the curriculum and they recognise the importance of physical activity. Nevertheless, the study confirms the findings of previous research, which found that issues of kit, fasting during Ramadan and extra-curricular activities posed problems for Muslim pupils;

these are features, which are especially compounded when teachers are not aware of the issues.

The findings exposed the inadequacies of teacher training and the exclusionary nature of traditional physical education settings. It was apparent that although teachers were committed to inclusive practice, in reality the experiences of pupils were more reliant upon the quality of individual teachers. Teachers are effective where they have been trained to teach in multi-ethnic schools and are, therefore, sensitive to the issues involved. Multi-cultural and racism-awareness courses appear to be indispensable for a better understanding of the pupils and making them available to all teachers, regardless of their hierarchical standing, can be advantageous.

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Abbreviations used in the text

BERA – British Educational Research Association

CSIE - Centre for Studies on Integration in Education

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

DfEE – Department for Education and Employment

DfES – Department for Education and Skills

EENET - Enabling Education Network

GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education

GNVQ General National Vocational Qualification

IEP – Individual Education Plan

INSET – Inservice Education and Training

ITE – Initial Teacher Education

ITT – Initial Teacher Training

HMSO – Her Majesty's Stationary Office

HOD –Head of Department

KARAMAH – Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights

LEA – Local Education Authority

LSA – Learning Support Assistant

NASPE – National Association for Sport and Physical Education

NCPE – National Curriculum Physical Education

NQT – Newly Qualified Teacher

QCA - Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Ofsted – Office for Standards in Education

PE – Physical Education

PETE – The Partnership Of Education Training And Employment

PGCE – Post Graduate Certificate in Education

PSHE – Personal Social and Health Education

SEALS – Self Evaluation Leadership Scheme

SEF – Self- Evaluation Form

SEN – Special Educational Needs

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Coordinator

UNCRC – United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

Glossary

Allah - Arabic name for God. Allah is the Maker of all creatures. He is not just the God of Muslims, but of all humankind.

Chapati (or Chapatti) – Flat, round, unleavened pancake-like bread

Eid – the two main Islamic festivals: Eid-al Fitr is celebrated at the end of thirty days of fasting in Ramadan; Eid-al-Adha on the day after Haj (pilgrimage).

Goth - a contemporary subculture. It originated in England during the early 1980s in the gothic rock scene, an offshoot of the Post-Punk genre. Styles of dress include dark attire make-up and hair.

Hadith (or ahadith) - Traditions relating to the Prophet Mohammed: his word and actions

Islam - This is the name given by Allah to the religion for humankind. The word means submission and obedience for Allah's commands to attain peace in this life

Ijtihād - in Islāmic law, the independent or original interpretation of problems not precisely covered by the Qu'rān, Hadith (traditions concerning the Prophet's life and utterances), and *ijmā* (scholarly consensus).

Hijab - A veil or head-covering that a Muslim woman would wear when meeting strangers or going out.

Jehovahs Witness - Jehovah's Witnesses are members of a Christian-based religious movement.

Mormon - Mormons believe their church is a restoration of the Church as conceived by Jesus and that the other Christian churches have gone astray.

Muhammad (pbuh) - The final Messenger of Allah to mankind. He was Muhammad bin 'Abdullah (pbuh).

Muslim - A person who believes in the Oneness of God, the Qur'an as the revealed word of God and Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the final messenger of God

Namaz – the five obligatory daily prayers and also any voluntary prayers.

Qur'an - The **Quran** also transliterated **Qur'an**, **Koran**, Qur'ān, Coran, Kuran, and al-Qur'ān, is the central religious text of Islam.

Ramadan - Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic Lunar calendar and the holiest of the four holy months. It begins with the sighting of the new moon after which all physically mature and healthy Muslims are obliged to abstain from all food, drink, gum chewing, any kind of tobacco use, and any kind of sexual contact between dawn and sunset. The month of Ramadan is a time for spiritual reflection, prayer, doing good deeds and spending time with family and friends. The fasting is intended to help teach Muslims self-discipline, self-restraint and generosity. It also reminds them of the suffering of the poor, who may rarely get to eat well

Shari'ah - Way, path, law, or code of conduct.

Umma - Derived from *umm* ("mother"), is a term used in Islam to denote the worldwide community of the faithful. In the twentieth century, the term was sometimes used by Arabs to mean "nation" in a political sense, both in global terms (the pan-Arab umma) and local terms (a specific nation).

<p style="text-align:center">**Chapter 1**</p>

<p style="text-align:center">**Introduction**</p>

1.1 Context

The norms and values of religion and culture are powerful forces in the lives of people, families and communities all over the world. Young Muslim women in England's education system are no exception. Britain has a history of immigrant and refugee settlement over a long period and the arrival of Asians is by no means a recent phenomenon, with emergence of a south Asian population in Britain tracing back to the colonial period (Visram, 1986). Small immigrant communities developed, especially in the east end of London and port cities such as Liverpool (Brah & Shaw, 1992). The first Islamic mosque was opened at Woking in 1889 (Fryer, 1984; Visram, 1986), thus signifying a tangible Muslim population in Britain. South Asian emergence in Britain prior to the Second World War was significant, albeit small. It was not until the early 1960s that Asians, initially men only, arrived in large numbers (Brah & Shaw, 1992). Over the years, European immigrants have, by and large, become integrated into mainstream British society due to cognate features such as skin colour and religion, with the possible exception of Jews who may still adhere to certain aspects of their religion and culture. Afro-Caribbeans and Asians, however, remain relatively conspicuous because of certain features such as skin colour, dress or attire. Some Jews change their names to facilitate integration, whereas Muslims invariably retain their original names since they have religious or cultural significance. According to Phinney and Rotherham (1987), these groups (Muslims) have a caste-like status based on appearance, which means that they can never be completely assimilated. For these reasons, British Muslims, even second or third generations, may be perceived as foreigners (Basit, 1998).

British Asian Muslims, like other ethnic minorities, are largely misunderstood by the majority population and many English people have stereotypical notions about them, based on assumptions about their religion, culture, lifestyle and aspirations, which are mainly a consequence of a lack of knowledge about ethnic minority groups. Even some teachers appear to hold such stereotypes (Lovell, 1990; Lewis, 1991; Basit, 1995). Teachers, social workers and youth workers, who encounter Asian children, often refer to the contradictions these children are thought to face by being trapped `between two

<p style="text-align:center">15</p>

cultures' (Watson, 1977). This vocabulary has become so widespread that some young British Asians have also adopted it, as people instantly sympathise with them when they ascribe a difficulty to cultural conflict (Ballard, 1994). Islamic culture refers to the lived experience of being a Muslim. 'The code of living is expressed through Islamic laws laid down in the Shari'ah. These codes imbue Islamic culture, giving meaning to the way in which Muslims make sense of their lives, behave, dress, eat and drink' (Benn, 1996, p. 6).

Whilst Afro-Caribbeans may share the language and religion of the indigenous individual, Asian immigrants have a different heritage and language, and practise a different religion depending on the part of Asia they originate from. Over the years, the descendents of many of the first generation immigrants of Asian origin have gradually assimilated into British society by adapting to various British customs and traditions, nevertheless, they may wish to retain certain cultural traditions; they may only adapt to a certain extent and may wish to preserve specific characteristics of their cultural heritage. Such retention of structural and cultural identity and participation in institutions such as education and employment is indicative of as 'pluralism' (Verma & Bagley, 1979; Anwar, 1985). The interest of this research lies in the potential conflict that Muslim students have between their religious identity and participation in school-based Physical Education (PE). The major defining aspect of this study was identifying ways in which Muslim schoolgirls perceived and negotiated their distinctive identities as Muslim, more specifically how religion, culture and gender might influence the PE participation of Muslim females.

1.2 Identity:

Tajfel (1981) has defined 'ethnic identity' as the ethnic component of social identity; it is

> 'that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge
> of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and
> emotional significance attached to that membership' (p.255).

Some commentators have considered self-identification the key aspect, whereas others have emphasised feelings of belonging and commitment (Singh, 1977; Ting-Toomey,

1981), the sense of shared values and attitudes (White & Burke, 1987) or attitudes to one's group (Parham & Helms, 1981). In contrast to the focus of these commentators on attitudes and feelings, some have emphasised the cultural aspects of ethnic identity, such as language, behaviour, values and knowledge of ethnic group history. The active role of the individual in shaping an ethnic identity is also suggested by several writers who see it as a dynamic product that is achieved rather than simply given (Rumbaut, 1994; Khan, 2002). Researchers, therefore, seem to share a broad general understanding of ethnic identity, but the specific aspects that they emphasise differ widely.

Much of the research on ethnic identity has been conducted within the framework of social identity theory. One of the earliest statements of the importance of social identity was made by Lewin (1948), who asserted that individuals need a firm sense of group identification to create a sense of well-being. This idea was developed by Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978), which asserts that simply being a member of a group provides individuals with a sense of belonging that contributes to a positive self-concept.

Ethnic groups present a special case of group identification (Tajfel, 1978). If the dominant group in society holds the traits or characteristics of an ethnic group in low esteem, then ethnic group members are faced with a negative self-identity. Tajfel (1978) argued that low status groups seek to improve their status in various ways. Individuals may seek to leave the group by 'passing' as members of the dominant group, but this solution has negative social consequences. Furthermore, this solution may not be available to individuals who are racially distinct and are categorized by others as ethnic minority group members. Alternative solutions are to develop pride in one's group, to reinterpret the characteristics deemed 'inferior' so that they do not appear inferior (Tajfel, 1978), and to stress the distinctiveness of one's own group (Christian, Gadfield, Giles & Taylor, 1976; Hutnik, 1985).

In relation to group distinctiveness, this research focuses on Muslim schoolgirls of Pakistani origin, whose biographical details are contained in Appendix 1. According to the 2001 Census, there were 1.6 million Muslims living in Britain and they form the largest religious group after Christians. Islam and Muslims are thus part of the mosaic

that comprises modern Britain, with half of the Muslim population being British born. There are over 400,000 Muslim pupils in school education, of whom approximately 96% are in the 'Maintained' sector. British Muslims group comprise 3 per cent of the total population and over half (52 %) of the non-Christian religious population. The faith commitments of Muslim pupils and their families encompass all aspects of everyday life and conduct, including daily life in school. It is important, therefore, that educators and schools have good understanding of how they can respond positively to meeting the needs of Muslim pupils.

1.3 Ethnic identity and PE issues

Social identity theory also addresses the issue of potential problems resulting from participation in two cultures. Both Lewin (1948) and Tajfel (1978) discussed the likelihood that identification with two different groups can be problematic for identity formation in ethnic group members because of the conflicts in attitudes and values (including cultural and religious) and behaviours between their own and the majority group. This present study focused attention on female Muslim pupils' participation within a subject area that had, traditionally, fought hard to maintain standardisation in dress and involvement. Schools debated the relevance of the 'standard' gym skirt and short-sleeved blouse for female pupils who were required by their religion not to expose their limbs in public. Observers, such as Henley (1982), had warned somewhat earlier that for a conservative Muslim woman to uncover her legs would be as shocking and humiliating as for a British woman to be required to walk around with her breasts exposed. Therefore, the parents of Muslim girls at school may regard school uniform, sports clothes and bathing costumes as offensive and conducive to immorality. When Ramadan occurred, schools were challenged by the fact that some Asian parents asked that their children could be excused strenuous physical activity. PE departments now faced serious multi-cultural/antiracist issues, which, probably for the first time, could not be ignored or side-stepped by the claim that PE was 'different' from other school subjects.

For the Muslim female, sporting participation in school may conflict with the Islamic requirement for modesty. Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) reported that the wearing of the sports uniform caused embarrassment for both male and female students and

feelings of guilt and shame were exacerbated when many of the activities were held in public places such as playgrounds and community parks. Communal showers caused severe problems even to the extent that some students absented themselves from school.

In considering how PE/ school sport participation is influenced by Islam, it should be stated that there is no general prohibition from participation in sport for females in Islam (Lindsay, McEwan & Knight, 1987). According to Benn (1996), Islam and PE share some common concerns, the central issue being control of the body, in time and space, in rituals, in cleanliness, in dress, in the control of diet and pursuit of a healthy body. Islamic scholars emphasize that health and fitness are equally important for both sexes and should be maintained by regular physical activity. Indeed, it is frequently acknowledged that the prophet Mohammed himself recommended horseback riding, swimming and archery. Nevertheless, the way in which school-based PE is organised in non-Islamic countries creates conflicts especially in the areas of kit and teacher understanding.

In England children have entitlement to PE within the National Curriculum. As indicated in recent research into Muslims in the West: 'PE and school-sport activities...are often the only type of sport parents allow their daughters to take part in' (De Knop, 1996, p.153) making this context particularly significant. Provision in English state schools is known to be uneven in relation to time, activities, facilities and quality, particularly at the primary level. Directions of bodies such as the Muslim Education Trust recommend that Muslim children do participate provided Islamic requirements are met: dress, (track suits are considered acceptable,) changing and showers, (privacy is paramount and communial nudity forbidden), single sex provision after puberty, (with appropriate staffing) and avoidance of contact activities between sexes. The dress conflict is particularly problematic for Muslim pupils in swimming. Where Islamic requirements are not met the recommendation is that Muslim children should be exempt from PE (Sarwar 1994, pp 11-14). This creates a direct dilemma between Islamic and State education requirements. Furthermore, the available secondary school research into the experiences of Muslim adolescent girls (Williams (1989) Scraton, 1992; Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993; Clyne, 1994; Dagkas & Benn 2006) identified PE kit and compulsory showers as significant factors that contributed

to some girls' negative perceptions and experiences of PE. Dance, in particular causes moral dilemmas. One version of the threat to Muslim values is articulated by Doi (1993) dance 'may so easily prove the first step towards greater evils such as adultery and fornication' (p.25). Additionally, Hiskett (1989) suggested that some *Ummas* would demand that music and dance 'should be banned in any school where Muslim pupils are on roll, for fear they might be influenced'. He believed such a view posed the 'most serious cultural impediment to the unreserved acceptance of Islamic education in Britain' raising an important question which is indicative of struggles both within and beyond Muslim communities in Britain:

> Is it acceptable that...a national government should maintain an education that deliberately cuts many of the nation's children off from activities central to the cultural life of that nation, of the European community of which they will become citizens? (p.15).

In relation to gender and PE/Sport, one area, worthy of investigation is the significance of control over the body. Women in Islam are controlled or control themselves in terms of religious requirements through bodily discipline concerning where, when and how the body must appear in public to 'embody' Islamic principles. Similarly. 'sports as embodied practices are one of the arenas within which the social struggle for control over the physical body occurs' (MacClancy, 1996, p.15). The struggle for Muslims in the arena of PE and sport then is related to conflicting tensions for control over acceptable ways of using the body. In England, due to issues of modesty, the traditional PE kit continues to be seen as problematic by many girls and young women. (Kamiyole 1993 and Benn 1998). Beyond this previous research, there has been little research dealing with the issues of teaching ethnic minority groups in PE (PE), in particular that, which takes perceptions of teachers and their pupils as the focal point to examine the issues and areas of potential conflict. Teacher philosophies and stereotyping cannot only be hurtful and degrading but have a negative impact on pupils' performance. However, Rattansi (1994) contends that not all teachers hold stereotypes; the stereotypes are often contradictory in their attribution of characteristics and are resisted by pupils through a varied repertoire of strategies. The image of Muslim females as oppressed appears to be deeply embedded in the minds of some teachers (Basit, 1997):

'... Teachers are constantly struggling to make sense of the social world of their ethnic minority pupils and are effective only when they understand the dynamics of ethnic minorities' religions and cultures and teach within that framework without exerting implicit pressure on the ethnic minority pupils to conform to the majority norm' (p.436).

Therefore, in order to avoid the perpetuation of stereotypes, more contact and dialogue between the ethnic majority and minority groups is crucial in order to foster inclusion within the PE context.

1.4 Inclusive PE

According to Williams and Bedward (2001) 'there is little evidence that cultural diversity was in any way influential in the making of the original National Curriculum for PE' (p.53), despite efforts of the Working Group, which advised the Minister for Education to include some reference to the needs of different groups. The early versions of the National Curriculum for Physical Education (NCPE) reflected a centrality of 'traditional' team games that privilege a curriculum, which has much greater relevance to boys than girls' (Williams and Bedward, 2001, p.54). The 2000 version, however, contained greater detail with respect to pupils from different cultures, thus, representing a welcome step towards a curriculum accessible to all pupils.

The introduction of a content-based National Curriculum has been criticised according to Benn (2000) 'as a symbol of the myth of mono-culturalism with the potential to further disadvantage minority groups who share different cultures' (p. 67). Not only have aspects such as the 'subject boundedness' and hierarchical nature of the National Curriculum been criticised, but also the narrowly white and English concept of 'National' in the National Curriculum.

In relation to PE, various researchers have highlighted the significance of teachers in constructing gender relations through their pedagogy (Evans *et al*., 1996; Wright, 1997; Brown, 1999; Brown & Rich, 2002). These and other studies have raised questions about the ways in which teachers' own identities are invested or involved in the social dynamics of the PE class. Similarly the work of MacDonald and Kirk (2001) has also alluded to the dilemmas of the struggles between PE teachers' own sense of

self and the stereotypical social expectations made of them. By further considering the strength of personal agendas that teachers bring with them to their teaching, will provide a useful insight into how teachers relate to Muslim students.

It is, therefore, helpful to focus on how the life history of the PE teacher influences how he/she socially positions the Muslim females in their class. Rich (2004) examined the influence of teachers' biographies of newly qualified teachers and how they construct the problem of girls' low participation in PE. PE teachers do not arrive for initial teacher training as a *tabula rasa,* rather they arrive with a particular disposition towards PE. In the present study, the views and experiences that are of interest are those of the Muslim schoolgirls and their experiences of school-based PE. There is a wealth of evidence about the macro impact of PE and sport (Hardman and Marshall, 2005). There is less research into the 'micro' perspectives, lived experience and shared realities of students in PE and sport, which further strengthens the need for this research.

The voices of young people are rarely heard in educational research, even though they are important to the educational process and directly affect it (Dyson, 1995; Brooker & Macdonald, 1999; Laws, Fisher, Hardy & Mawer 1999). A similar argument could be made in relation to the development of policy for youth sport. Recently, David *et al*., (2001) have debated the notion of research with children as subjects, stating that there has been a lack of literature in the UK discussing reflexive accounts of undertaking social research with children. Although they discuss the methodological issues they encountered in working with children and young people, they, nevertheless, illustrated how young people's involvement in social research can be valuable in informing policy and practice. The principles underpinning student voice centre upon facilitating the empowerment of those whose voices are often lost. Fielding (2004) recognises that the desire to encourage young people to articulate their opinions has the potential to offer an important contribution to the education of a civic society. Not only is the participation and voice of the child advocated within the many diagnostic processes in which children and young people are involved (Travell and Visser, 2006) but it is also embedded in the ideology that it enables participants to bring themselves, their

interests, energies, hopes and experiences (Lensmire, 1998) to their work and also to the research in question.

PE teachers may possess a nostalgic view of their own experiences where the desire to emulate their favourite PE teacher may lead to a self replication process where many teachers are committed to 'traditional' PE and the underpinning values. This emphasis on traditional PE values has important implications for the present research especially the issue of inclusion.

Leiberman *et al*. (2002) believe that PE teachers lack the expertise to ensure full inclusion. Goodwin's research (2007) supported this and found that although the majority of PE teachers she studied were generally positive towards inclusion, a feature that was a contrast to other findings of Ellins and Porter (2005), the teachers in her sample recognised their own limitations and were keen to improve and evolve their own practice, giving hope to pupils and educationalists alike. Goodwin found that rather than teachers' attitudes representing a barrier to inclusive practice, it was assessment, which was the most significant barrier. PE can be about achievement and competition and this may mitigate against inclusion of less able-bodied pupils. Furthermore, teachers and other pupils have different ideas about inclusivity in the social context of the school[1]. Previous studies of participants' experiences in PE have demonstrated, that it is a subject which has the potential to give rise to a number of varied and contextualised reactions. As such, it is necessary to further question the perceived character of a subject that seemingly provides the foreground for a number of educational experiences, which could be considered as unique (because of its unique focus on the body) in comparison with the majority of other subjects. The specificities of PE, in regards to its place within curricula in comparison with other subjects, are worthy of interrogation in relation to the affects upon the children and young people. These varied affects are considered as being dependent upon the situational characteristics of the learner in context. Further, such research is consequently relevant to the understanding of how school girl Muslims experience the various elements of PE.

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[1] Goodwin's work related to the inclusion of children with physical disabilities in PE

2. Overall Purpose of Study and Aims of the Study

The issues raised in the pertinent introductory literature on ethnic identity, gender and cultural issues in PE give rise to the over-riding purposes and key aims of the present study. This research focuses on the identities of Muslim female pupils in school year 11 and investigates how identity resources in forms of key life experiences discourses, embodied practice and dispositions influence the ways in which PE teachers interact with, and socially position, Muslim females. The *raison d'etre* for this research is to investigate whether the Muslim female identity militates against participation in school-based PE. The specific aims related to the overarching purposes are:

Aim 1: *To investigate the identity of Muslims schoolgirls.*

At the heart of this study is the notion of identity, 'a highly complex concept, which is difficult to elucidate' (Jacobson, 1998, p.152). Tajfel's (1978) conceptualisation of 'social identity' provides a useful starting point for the analysis of study sample participants' ethnic, religious and national identities. Tajfel's (1981) theory encourages a dynamic approach to identity on account of its emphasis upon the 'complex dialectical relationship between social identity and social settings' (Jacobson, 1998, p.283). This notion of social identity as dynamic is central to this study both because at a collective level, there appears to be inter-generational changes taking place in perceptions of nationality and ethnicity and religion within the Pakistani community, and also at the individual level, participants have 'identity options', a term used by Rex and Josephides (1987, cited in Rex *et al.*, 1987) when referring to the situation of second generation British Asians. Certainly, because of their status as an adolescent female and of their particular circumstances, the children of immigrants, they may be more likely to feel that identity is an ambiguous and slippery concept. Where helpful, other theoretical perspectives were called upon to increase understanding of emergent issues for example the notion of 'embodiment' and 'physical captial' in relation to the significance of symbolic dress forms some of the Muslim females adopted (Bourdieu, in Shilling, 1993, p.21).

At the outset of the fieldwork, it was necessary to make in-depth interviewing the central element, because 'identity', the primary concept under investigation exists as an abstract concept not only to the social scientist but also to the social actor.

Furthermore, as it is through social action that an identity takes shape and is manifest – for example, a 'religious identity' may manifest itself, in large part in religious practice – it was vital as well as enquiring about attitudes and values that questions should ask about patterns of behaviour.

It was necessary to increase my knowledge of Islam and Islamic practices required of Muslim followers. Since Islam offers a guidance on a whole way of life it was anticipated that some tensions might emerge between NCPE requirements and those of Islam. Sample indicators of potential and real tensions were publications offering advice to teachers within the state education system (Parker-Jenkins, 1995; Muslim Council of Britain 2007). A small. but growing, literature on British Muslims is helping to share lived experiences with a wider audience (Lewis 1994; Benn, 1998), and research such as that by Basit (1997) on teenage Muslims helps to broaden understanding of the dynamics of cultural practice and interpretation. Understanding Islamic cultural practice by examining guidelines for Muslim women about: gender relations, pertaining to participation in physical exercise, was important for interpreting the experiences of the teenage Muslims in this study. As this study is concerned with teenage Muslims it was necessary to comprehend the period of adolescence and in order to understand the identities of the teenage Muslims in the sample, and, therefore, place the Muslim schoolgirls in the wider context of adolescence. Furthermore, since identity formation is an important part of the teenage years, the development of identity was examined during this period.

Aim 2: *To investigate whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE*

Previous studies of participants' experiences in PE have demonstrated that it is a subject which has the potential to give rise to a number of varied and contextualised reactions. As such, it is necessary to further question the perceived character of a subject that seemingly provides the foreground for a number of educational experiences, which could be considered as unique in comparison with the majority of other subjects. The specificities of PE, in regards to its place within curricula in comparison to other subjects, are worthy of interrogation in relation to the affects upon the children and young people. These varied affects are considered as being dependent

upon the situational characteristics of the learner in context. Further, such research is consequently relevant to the understanding of how Muslim females experience the various elements of PE.

One issue to be considered is whether the experiences of Muslim females differ significantly from the well researched gender inequalities, which have been found to exist within school-based PE (Hargreaves, 1984, 1986; Lenskyj, 1990; Scraton 1992; Talbot, 1993). For Muslim schoolgirls, it is not participating in PE *per se* that is the issue but the question of how they can protect their religious identity by retaining commitment to the 'hijab' whilst participating. Kit requirement, changing facilities and 'Ramadan' are all to be considered.

This research is an interpretivist exploration that will give awareness and further the understanding of the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE. It was not an aim of this study to establish the ways in which PE was taught to the participants. Instead the emphasis is, therefore, upon providing an understanding of the views and experiences that participants attach to the complexities that are involved in their participation in PE. It could be postulated that the ways in which they experience NCPE, and in particular the way in which such a population 'voice' these experiences, would differ from those of a generic cohort of students. The traits that are inferred through this label result in a group of case study participants who differ from any other study of PE experience. They are pupils who, without assuming any element of heterogeneity amongst them, tend to have different needs within the PE context.

Aim 3 *To investigate PE teachers' perception of the Muslim female identity and how they meet the needs of female Muslim pupils in PE and school sport.*

Muslim girls do not live in a vacuum; there are various outside influences, which are thought to be instrumental in shaping their PE experiences. The literature suggests that teachers frequently struggle to make sense of the social world of their ethnic minority pupils and are effective when they understand the dynamics of the ethnic minorities' religion and culture and teach within that framework without exerting pressure for the ethnic minority pupils to conform to the majority norm' (Basit, 1995, p.80). Through interviews with teachers, it was intended to find out if they were aware of the needs of

their Muslim pupils and were sensitive to religious and cultural issues. It was, therefore, necessary to conduct a research design, which takes into account the perceptions of not only the girls but those of their teachers. This will illuminate the teachers' awareness of the needs of their Muslim pupils. This design will serve to illustrate the same issue from a different perspective and is a valuable way to verify the views of teacher and pupil.

Aim 4: *To investigate whether the PE teachers use inclusive practices in their lessons.*

The investigation of inclusive practices is facilitated through examination of whether and how the school and PE department ethos contribute towards inclusive practices, in particular, and determine whether PE teachers use inclusive (multi-cultural) practices within the PE curriculum. Inclusive practice is defined by Ainscow (1999) as: 'ways of working that will facilitate the learning of all pupils; minimize the need for exclusions; and support a schools efforts to widen its capacity for responding to diversity' (p. 147).

An examination of PE policy documentation for the two schools was a helpful starting point. The interview questions were also necessary to examine the teachers' intention to behave in an inclusive manner and their ability to put policy into practice. Observations were also essential to give an understanding of the lived world of the PE lesson.

3. Methodology

> 'Studies do build on other studies, not in the sense that they take up where others leave off, but in the sense that, better informed and better conceptualized, they Plunge more deeply into the same things... A study is an advance if it is more incisive - whatever that may mean - than those that preceded it; but it less stands on their shoulders than, challenged and challenging, runs by their side' (Geertz, 1973, p.25).

At the outset of the research a preliminary literature search and review were undertaken to assist in formulating the overall purpose and associated aims of the study. The review considered various aspects of identity and how religion, culture and gender might influence the sporting participation of Muslim females. A secondary literature review was necessary to identify key primary and secondary data sources prior to empirical data collection. In order to achieve the aims of the present study,

qualitative methodological procedures were used in an ethnographic case study of Muslim schoolgirls and their teachers. Ethnographic research lends itself well to topics, which are not easily quantified (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990).

The overall purpose and aims of exploring the ethnic, national and religious identities of Muslim schoolgirls necessitate the use of qualitative methods. These methods are more appropriate where a researcher intends to acquire insights into the subtle and complex meanings held by social actors. Qualitative methods also tend to be associated with the kind of open-ended or 'theory building' approach to the data collection that I wished to undertake: that is, I planned to develop analytic categories on the basis of whatever empirical material was collected rather than impose pre-formulated concepts on that material. A qualitative study can be presented in the form of selective quotations to the reader.

Embracing the interpretive paradigm clearly recognises the role of the researcher in the social world and the meanings that people attribute to every day life (Silk *et al.*, 2005, p.11). As Blaikie (1993) observes, the cultural background of the researcher is part of this evidence, in so far that he/she places him/herself in the same critical plane as the subject matter. Within this design, 'the human instrument builds upon his or her tacit knowledge, as much as if not more than upon propositional knowledge' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p.187). Layder (2006) alludes to the 'unique childhood experiences (as well as later ones) which constitute a well of attitudes and behavioural dispositions built up over time' (p.145). There are relevant aspects of my own personal background worthy of mention, which help to explain any biases or ideologies from which this research emanates (Curtner-Smith, 2002).

This interpretative methodology is congruent with the fundamental epistemological and methodological characteristic that social organisations are constructed on purposeful actions of individuals as they negotiate their social roles and define status within a group. The rubric of such an approach is to aim for an understanding of another person's world through appreciating how others construct meanings of their world. Increasing trust and familiarity enabled my interview method to slip easily into conversations. Silverman (1993) quotes exponents such as Denzin (1970) and Burgess (1980) amongst others, as favouring open-ended 'conversational' interviews as a way

of gaining more depth in the research situation, allowing respondents to define their own world and raise issues significant to them.

4. Structure of thesis

Chapter 2 provides a review of the key literature in this field, in particular issues of identity and in particular the identities of minority groups and Muslim schoolgirls. In Chapter 3 PE issues pertaining to Muslim females, and the concept of modesty are examined. Chapter 4 provides details of the fundamental methodological approach, which guides the application of data collection principles. It discusses the epistemological framework of this thesis, referring to the core principles of social constructionism. In addition, it provides details on the way in which the methods, which were used to facilitate the application of these principles. It addresses the ways in which these methods were developed and justified through periods of piloting and familiarisation; it further provides information on the sampling, ethics, and analysis of data.

A number of noteworthy issues relevant to the overall purpose and aims of the study arose which were discussed in the interviews from which identified core themes are set against the backdrop of the aims of the study. These core themes form the basis of discussion in the context of the literature review in relation to the study's overall purpose and aims. Chapter 5 presents the findings of the empirically generated data, which generated a number of significant issues discussed during interviews and from which some core themes emerged. These core themes form the basis of discussion in Chapter 6. The final chapter concludes on the outcomes of this study, its implications for this field of research and recommendations for future research.

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Chapter 2

Literature Review

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Theoretical background

Social Identity theory: implications for inter-group relations and minority groups

At the heart of this thesis is the notion of 'identity', a complex concept, which has been considered from a variety of perspectives within the social sciences. The idea that groups have social values and that one acquires certain values through group membership has influenced research in social psychology since its early days and is supported by evidence from a range of studies. Social identity theory has extended this idea to the inter-group level, in order to propose that individuals are motivated to belong to positively evaluated groups (Luhtanen & Crocker 1992). In social identity theory the knowledge that one belongs to certain groups and the value attached to group membership, in positive and negative terms, represent the individual's social identity. The two essential features of the concept are primarily that group membership is viewed from the subjective perception of the individual, and second, that the value-laden nature of group membership is highlighted and given importance. 'We need to postulate that, at least in our kinds of societies, an individual strives to achieve a satisfactory concept or image of himself' (Tajfel, 1981). Tajfel was influenced by the writings of Festinger who was concerned with the comparison individuals made of themselves with others, or inter-individual comparisons. Tajfel (1981) argued that Festinger (1954) had neglected an important contributing aspect of an individual's self-definition, the fact that s/he is a member of numerous social groups and this group membership may contribute positively or negatively to that image s/he has of her/himself.

Tajfel's theory of social identity provides the basis for a systematic investigation of the relationship between individuals' self-definitions and their perceptions of the social categories to which they and others around them belong. Tajfel (1978) suggests that there are three components to group membership: first the knowledge that one belongs to a group; second, the evaluative (assumptions about the positive or negative connotations of group membership); and third, the emotional (emotions towards one's group and others who stand in particular relations to it). He recognises that the

individual's view of identity is in part influenced by the membership of certain groups or categories. The theory assumes that individuals are motivated to achieve a positive 'social identity'. This desire will prompt individuals to make social comparisons between the in-group and out-groups, with the ultimate aim to achieve both a positive and distinct position for the in-group. Primarily, individuals will remain members of a group if the group contributes positively to their social identity. Secondly, if the group does not contribute positively the individual will leave unless leaving the group is impossible, as for example, when it might conflict with his/her self image. Finally, no group lives alone, a social comparison with other groups takes place. The only 'reality' tests that matter with regard to group characteristics are tests of social reality. The characteristics of one's group as a whole (such as its status, its richness or poverty, its skin colour, or its ability to reach its aims) achieve most of their significance in relation to perceived differences from other groups and the value connotation of these differences (Tajfel, 1978).

The desire for a positive social identity is thus regarded as the psychological motor behind the individual's actions in the inter-group context; the social comparison process is seen as the means through which the individual obtains an assessment of his or her group's social position and status. Tajfel (1981) and his associates have assumed that it is through the social comparison process that individuals achieve an understanding of the relative status and value of their own group and hence, the status and value they acquire through membership of their group. Consequently, social comparisons at the intergroup level play an important role in shaping the actions of individuals.

Figure 1 provides a diagrammatic summary of the social categorization process:

Individuals strive to belong to groups that have positive and distinct identities

↓

Intergroup social comparisons determine whether individual derives an:

↓

Adequate social identity Attempt to maintain comparative superiority Attempt to extend comparative superiority	**Inadequate social identity**

↓

Seek change

↓

CHANGE SEEKING STRATEGIES
Individualistic or group strategies, depending on whether cognitive alternatives to intergroup situation are perceived

↓

Cognitive alternative to intergroup situation perceived instability illegitimacy Absorption Redefine characteristics Creativity Direct challenge	Cognitive alternative to intergroup situation not perceived stability legitimacy Social mobility Intergroup comparison

Figure 1: Schematic representation of social identity theory (adapted from Tajfel, 1978)

The theory begins with categorization, a basic cognitive tool, which allows individuals to structure their social environment and define their place in it.

Through inter-group comparisons, individuals will come to view their group as psychologically distinct and, in relation to relevant comparison groups, they will try to make the in-group more favourable. This attempt to maintain a superior position for the in-group is the key factor leading to discriminatory inter-group behaviour (Taylor & Moghaddam, 1994). Change will thus be desired by individuals whose group

membership provides them with inadequate social identity. Taylor and Moghaddam (1994) define 'inadequate', in this context, as either a negative social identity or a social identity that is not as positive as one with which the individual is satisfied. Members of disadvantaged or minority groups will fall into this category. Conversely, members of the dominant or majority group will want to maintain or extend their comparatively superior position. This has implications for multi-culturalism and assimiliationist thinking. The members of the disadvantaged groups (sometimes referred to as minority groups) will wish to achieve some change and so their social identity can be comparatively improved. However, as Brown (1998) argues, it is possible that people are proud of their ethnic identity in one situation while they are ashamed of it in others.

Identification with a group can serve other functions than positive self esteem. Particularly for ethnic and racial minority groups, identification can provide, for example, a buffer against the effects of stigma (Branscombe *et al*.,1999), a source of bonding with other minority members and their experience (Cross & Strauss 1998) and a condition for effective political action (Reicher & Hopkins 2001). A sense of belonging can (partly) compensate for negative stereotypes and discrimination but can also lead to inner conflicts. Saeed *et al.,* (1999) found in their research in Scotland with young people of Pakistani origin, that a Muslim identity was chosen as opposed to a Pakistani one many respondents claimed that this was because they found the Muslim identity empowering in an environment where they themselves were part of a maligned minority. By identifying with global Islam, they were able to see themselves as part of a potentially powerful community or *umma.* This provided them with a sense of stability rooted in historical continuity stretching back over centuries. They were able to transcend the negative particularistic ethnic attributions heaped upon them by the majority by positively reasserting a universal heritage, while at the same time it giving them a sense of belonging to an ethnic group.   Atasoy's (2006) research on the meaning of veiling for Muslim women suggests that 'by veiling, women register their role as central to the public expression of Muslim cultural difference' (p.205).

Tajfel (1981) stresses that social identity is connected to, and derives from, membership of emotionally significant social categories of groups. Social meanings are internalized and most people develop a more or less elaborate and coherent sense

of ethnic identity. Verkuyten (2005) argues that this does not mean that this identity 'constantly frames the behaviour or that one thinks and feels the same about this identity in every situation and in any period of life' (p.71). Kunneman (1996) makes a metaphorical distinction between the post-modern 'walkman-ego' and the traditional 'tea cosy' culture. The former, post-modern walkman-ego is characterised by ambiguity, plasticity and choice. Identities are linked to the globalising mass culture where images dominate and which you are what you consume today. Identities change with each new tape played on one's walkman (Michael, 1996). In contrast, the identities in the 'tea cosy culture' are rooted in kinship and community networks and linked to a tradition with a clear moral order. A situation such as this provides stability, predictability and emotional solidarity, but is also limiting and oppressive. Obligation and duty provide the basis for self definition. Hence, the social identity, which is central is that of the local community to which they belong.

In the modern, globalizing world, attention is given to the individual as a reflexive and critical agent engaged in defining his or her social location (Verkuyten, 2005). Khan's (2004) research into the Muslim female identity in a diaspora also argues that Muslim identity is fluid and has room for negotiation, interpretation and transformation. 'Muslim identity is not the final destination of these immigrants, but a point of entry from which they construct their reality' (p.5).

Not every social identity is the same. Ethnic, national and racial identities provide many vital horizons of meaning. For example, young people from minority groups can strongly identify with their own ethnic group and at the same time orient themselves towards (parts) of British society and culture: '...Taking over and appropriating styles, images and ideas does not have to involve a feeling of oneness or a kind of emotional mergence' (Verkuyten, 2005, p.14). With identification, however, the characteristics and concerns of others become personal issues. Hannerz (1992) refers to a 'creolisation of cultural styles' and others use terms such as 'syncretism' and 'hybridization'. An example of this can be seen in the cultural expressions of black culture in the USA, which have been adapted by many different young people in the West. Indeed, parts of American mass culture are appropriated by youth in Islamic countries, although there is no identification with American or Americans. Thus a socio-cultural orientation implies that ideas, trends and styles are examples for one's own behaviour, but this

does not have to involve the same emotional involvement as identification. Consequently, the orientation can be superficial and serve only one's own ends. Young British Muslims lives are being shaped by the local geography, state institutions, class dynamics and racism. The end result is that there now seems to be a greater propensity to associate with the culture of the indigenous white majority and adopt many of its traits. Young Muslims have come to feel that while the religious element of their identities remains relatively stable, the ethnic boundaries are malleable and permeable, and have the potential for intermingling and change. This trend was apparent in Jacobsen's (1997) study of British Pakistani's in which the majority of respondents whilst regarding Pakistan as 'an exciting and interesting place to go on holiday and somewhere they have close ties [nevertheless] at the same time Britain was the country they were most comfortable with' (p.247). They were able to converse in Urdu or Punjabi with their parents, but almost invariably in English with members of their peer groups. Lewis (1994) also found in his study of South Asian Muslims in Bradford an emerging Muslim youth culture expressed in musically hybrid fusions of South Asian and British forms.

The psychological criterion for referring to certain social groups as minorities is defined by Wagley and Harris (1958) as 'self-conscious units of people who have in common certain similarities and certain social disadvantages' (p.310). Instead, Morris (1968) defined an ethnic group as a 'distinct category of the population in larger society whose culture is different from our own' (p.168). Moreover, members of ethnic groups are also bound together by common ties of race, nationality or culture group. Guillaumin (1972) highlighted the dichotomy between social majorities and minorities:

> '...A majority is a form of response to minority groups; its existence can only be conceived through the absence of clear-cut, limiting criteria as distinct from groups which are explicitly categorized and narrowly defined. Or, in other words, the membership of a majority is based on the latitude to deny that one belongs to a minority. It is conceived as a freedom in the definition of oneself, a freedom which is never granted to members of minorities and which they are not in a position to give themselves' (p.317).

Guillaumin (1972) makes an important point about the social psychological aspect of the minority in that minorities are often defined on the basis of criteria originating from, and developed, by majorities. Tajfel (1978, 1981) has written about the social

psychology of ethnic minorities, and he sees the central issue for understanding minority identity as their unfavourable social position in relation to the majority. His main focus is largely on the status and power differential between the majority and minority and on the threat to social identity that a minority position implies. Tajfel sees an unfavourable social position as a defining principle of the ethnic minority group and a core issue for the understanding of minority identity.

British Muslims conform to Tajfel's (1978) criterion for a numerical minority within the United Kingdom in that there are 1.6 million Muslims living in Britain according to current estimates. His other criterion was of a psychological minority: a group bounded together by common traits which are held in low regard. The latter criterion also applies to British Muslims as Ansari (2004) writes that 'over the centuries the Christian/secular West has effectively constructed and stigmatised Islam and Muslims. Muslims have been portrayed as a powerful and dangerous force - irrational, violent, fanatical' (p.390). More recent events such New York 11 September 2001 attacks and London July 7 2005 bombings have combined to confirm an antipathy in the western popular mind towards Islam and Muslims. Also the mainstream media continue to represent some British Muslims as fanatics which, 'has resulted in increasing polarization of Muslims, Islam and the West' and incidents of violence and vilification of Muslims', (Richardson, 2004, quoted in Dagkas and Benn p.184). In order to counter these negative portrayals a Muslim group *('Muslims for Britain')* took out a full-page newspaper advertisement, which condemns the attempted attacks in London and Glasgow in June 2007. The advertisement appeared on July 6, 2007 in *The Metro*, and *The Guardian* it stated;

> 'Islam forbids the killing of innocent people. We reject such heinous attempts to link such abhorrent acts to the teaching of Islam….."Whoever kills an innocent soul, it is as if he killed the whole of mankind, and whoever saves one, it is as if he saved the whole of mankind" [The Holy Qur'an, 5:2].

A spokesperson for the group said that this was the first step in a campaign to address negative perceptions of Islam and British Muslims.

A further central tenet of Tajfel's (1981) early work on ethnic identity was the power differential between the majority and the minority and in particular the psychological effect of minority group membership and the threat to social identity that a minority position implies. He describes how depending on the perceived legitimacy and stability of the social system, minorities can alter the valuation of their group through creativity or social competition. Following Tajfel's earlier conceptualizations, social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) and systems justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994) further extended the notion of social competition. Social dominance theory argues that the major forms of intergroup conflict, such as racism and patriarchy, are all derived from the basic human predisposition to form and maintain hierarchical and group-based systems of social organization. In essence, social dominance theory presumes that, beneath major and sometimes profound differences between different human societies, there is also a basic grammar of social power shared by all societies in common. Most theories in social and political psychology stress self-interest, inter-group conflict, ethnocentrism, in-group bias, out-group antipathy, dominance, and resistance. System justification theory is influenced by these perspectives - including social identity and social dominance theories - but it departs from them in several respects. Advocates of system justification theory argue initially that there is a general ideological motive to justify the existing social order and secondly this motive is at least partially responsible for the internalization of inferiority among members of disadvantaged groups. Third, it is observed most readily at an implicit, non-conscious level of awareness and finally, paradoxically, it is sometimes strongest among those who are most harmed by the *status quo*.

Social Identity theory is essentially a theory of group differentiation. It was developed for analysing group behaviours when a comparison out-group is salient. Also, the majority group is implicitly assumed to be the only really significant other when a range of possible comparisons can be made. Rothgerber and Worchel (1997) have found that comparisons can be made to several out-groups. Hagendoorn (1995) also found that there are a variety of groups in which people locate themselves. Ethnic identity is furthermore shaped by interactions with members of the ethnic in-group or co-ethnics. Ethnic minority group members may feel pressure from co-ethnics to adhere to certain norms of behaviour and discourses about ethnic authenticity. Ethier and Deux (1994) found that Hispanic male students who located themselves clearly

within their ethnic identity become involved in cultural activities, which further strengthen their identification. Those with a weaker ethnic identity perceive more threat within a new environment. Ethnic minority members may also compare themselves with other in-group members. Social psychologists are now emphasising the importance of historical narratives and temporal comparisons in the conceptualization of ethnic minority identity (Tse, 1998; Florio-Ruane & DeTar 2001; Guimond & Dambrun, 2002 Walseth, 2006).

Many social psychological conceptualizations of ethnic minority identity use a dualist or dichotomous model with a single advantaged majority and a disadvantaged minority. Existing theories also see attempts made by minorities to define an identity as a response to status differentials and as a response to negative stereotypes, discrimination and racism. Social Identity theory offers a valuable framework for examining the issue of ethnic minority identity; however, there are also limits to a perspective which focuses exclusively on social positions. Tajfel (1981) describes how, depending on the perceived legitimacy and stability of the social system, individuals can either accept or reject a negative social identity; furthermore the minority group may alter the valuation of their group through creativity or social competition (Hirschman, 1970; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Ethnic identity, however, is composed of more than a minority status (Verkuyten, 2005). In focusing on the 'minority' aspect, ethnic minority groups are treated the same as any low-status and powerless group to which the same psychological process is applied. A consequence of this is a restriction of the possible comparisons, which can be made in defining one's ethnic identity. Furthermore, a dichotomy between domination (the majority) and subordination (minority) is of limited value for interpreting and analysing many local situations. Recent research indicates that it is necessary to have a more detailed understanding of how people define and negotiate themselves and their everyday life. Using this common dichotomy of majority-minority, it is difficult to make contact with the experiences of people who are in the process of arguing about belonging, exclusion and self-definition and in doing so are making all kinds of comparisons and distinctions. Power relations of subordination and resistance are actively reproduced in relation to shifting identity definitions and alliances. In particular, younger people are in the process of negotiating forms of

identity and belonging and this process is marked by a plurality of differences, cultural syncretism and appropriateness of social representations (Conquergood, 1994; Back, 1996; Marshall *et al.,* 1999). Modood *et al.,* (1994) concluded from their work in the UK

> '... Our research challenges those who think in terms of simplistic oppositions of British-alien or black-white. A significant proportion on the ground is living in ways that refute these dualisms. It is time for social analysts and policy makers to catch up' (p.860).

Local situations are affected by many social representations and group relations in society. A further consequence of a dualist model is the tendency to place ethnic minority group members as helpless victims (Shelton 2000). However, narrative studies have shown that many participants claim an active and constructive role (Verkuyten 2004; Walseth 2006). These studies illustrate that their ethnic identity is not derived from the majority group doing the defining. Rather than passive victims, they are seen as agents who have their own responsibilities and can draw on a rich culture and tradition. Lewis (1997) concluded from research in Bradford with Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims that they were acting and engaging upon British civic life at many points including local politics, education and business. There is an active, reflexive part to self definitions. However, this is not to say that the issues of dominance and inequality should be ignored and these issues play a central role in ethnic self definitions. Ethnic minority members do not have to interpret discrimination from a victim perspective but can take up different ideological positions.

Tajfel (1978, 1981) recognises a long history of social and cultural differences between the minority and other groups in society. There is also a focus on the relations, social and political, between minority and majority groups as they vary continuously as a function of social conditions changing with time. There are also three systems of belief, which are important in the categorization of minority groups. The first is that the pervasive categorization of the minority as 'separate' from others means that it is impossible or at least difficult to move out individually from the group and to become a member of the majority, that is, individual social mobility, for example, the attainment of a professional occupational role will not affect the identification of that individual as a member of a minority group. Secondly, another belief is that the

assignment of the individual to a group is independent of individual differences between group members so long as they share the defining characteristics of the minority such as skin colour and descendent language. A genuine group must consist of people 'recruited on clear principles who are bound to one another by formal, institutional rules and characteristic informal behaviour' (Morris 1968, p.168). However, these clear cut distinctions assume that a minority group is homogenous. Ansari (2004) argues that traditional mainstream social psychologies oversimplify ethnic minority identity and secondly the relations between different categories can take different forms. As a result of their diversity, British Muslims at the start of the 21st century are neither ethnically nor ideologically homogenous. Thus any presumption of Muslim homogeneity and coherence, which claims to override the differences between rural and urban, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, does not necessarily correspond to social reality (Ansari 2004). A similar problem was articulated in research by Williams and Bedward (2001) where the stereotypical assumptions about Muslim females represented an oversimplification and diversity within ethnic groups. As Fleming (1995) illustrated in his research with Asian male youths in London, 'when we do research on minorities we have to look at groups within groups' (p.12). His work warned against the dangers of false universalism. The same is true of Muslim females, where Atasoy (2006) also argues against reducing Muslim women to a uniform category.

The third set of beliefs concerns the minorities' own views about separateness from others. A minority can enter what Tajfel (1981) refers to as a spiral of psychological separateness 'in which the 'outside' social categorisations are associated with their 'inside' acceptance by the group in a mutually reinforcing convergence' (p.124). A minority may have a tradition of separateness created by social, religious, cultural and historical differences and identity can be simultaneously determined by the socially prevailing view of the majority and the psychological effects of their own cultural and social organization. The continuous and daily interactions with the outside world and the consequent participation of the group in the system of values and network of stereotypes of the society at large create a degree of acceptance of the minority of its deleterious image. Milner (1975) illustrated how this may work when he compared the negative self images of West Indian and Asian children. Some of his earlier conclusions, based on his work in the 1970s may well have to be revised today, but this

does not detract from their importance for the present research. His description of the differences in the cultural background and the corresponding attitudes to the host society was as follows:

> '... It seemed likely that the British component of the West Indians' culture, and their 'white bias' in their racial ordering of West Indian society, would enhance their children's orientation and positive feelings towards 'whites' in this country. In addition, the West Indians' original aspirations to integrate ensured more contact with the white community - and its hostility - than was experienced by the Asian community. Not only did the Asians' detached stance vis-à-vis the host community insulate them to some extent, they also had entirely separate cultural traditions which provided a strong sense of identity' (Milner, 1975 in Tajfel, 1981 p.329).

The comparisons in Milner's (1975) work highlight two important themes: i) the pressures to integrate for some minority groups are met with more resistance; and ii) the complexity of the identity of minorities in that some minorities are more accepted by the host community than others. Ansari (2004) writing on the complexity of the Muslim identity contends that 'many in the West continue to demonise Islam and Muslims in particular, visible boundaries have been consciously erected to create a sense of religious exclusivity' (p.9). He contends further that the Muslim identity in Britain is being constructed very much against negative perceptions about what and who Muslims are. The important comment he makes in relation to the acceptance of Muslims as a minority group in Britain is '...The Muslim identity, is evolving as an identity of 'unbelonging' in a 'culture of resistance' and in contrast with hegemonic British identity ' (p.9). Zine (2001) also found that negative social pressures experienced by Muslims who were living in Canada, contributed to the need to maintain a distinct religious identity:

> 'religious identification and the coalescence of Muslim students within schools served to anchor their sense of identity and provided a framework for resisting social pressures that threatened to rupture their distinct lifestyle' (p.420).

In comparison, many British Muslims, especially the youth, who according to Ansari (2004) are made to feel different and excluded, found a valuable resource and alternative forms of identity in 'religion' especially. There was a conscious attempt to

move away from ethnic and national identification towards being defined first and foremost as Muslims.

Ethnic Boundaries

Weber's (1968) statement that '... The whole concept of ethnic groups is so complex and vague that it might be good to abandon it altogether' (p.385) highlights the complexity and elusivity of ethnic identity. Weber did not abandon the concept but did give a definition, which has been adopted by other scholars:

> 'Ethnic groups are human groups (other than kinship groups) which cherish a belief in their common origins of such a kind that it provides a basis for the creation of a community…we shall call 'ethnic groups' those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of custom or both, or because of memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely it does matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists. Ethnic membership does not constitute a group; it only facilitates group formation of any kind particularly in the political sphere. On the other hand it is primarily the political community, no matter how artificially organised that inspires belief in common ethnicity' (p.30).

There are important elements in Weber's (1968) definition, primarily the subjective belief in their common descent. Whether the common descent is fabricated or truthful is less important than whether people regard it as plausible. The belief in a common descent is always subject to re-interpretations and adjustments and in this sense ethnicity is dynamic and socially constructed. Additionally the definition underscores that the importance of physical similarities, cultural characteristics, language, religion, historical events and myths can all contribute to the definition of a common descent. History can be constantly re-interpreted in light of current circumstances and interests and in this sense the present shapes the past but the past also shapes the present in that it is not enough to invent traditions that are independent of historical facts. Ethnic identity should resonate with everyday experience to provide an understanding of the present situation and future events (Eriksen, 1993) In defining where one has come from 'provides a particular historical and social location within the complex world' (Verkuyten, 2005, p.75). Weber's (1968) definition also states that ethnicity does not imply ethnic group formation.However, in most research on ethnicity, the emphasis is

mainly on the process of group formation. Anthropological studies have focused particularly on interactions, ideologies and group boundaries (Barth, 1969).

Barth's iconoclastic work (1969) viewed ethnicity as a dynamic, constantly evolving property of both individual identity and group organization. Barth agreed with Weber that the belief in descent and origin was important but treated ethnic groups as social groups that are the result of self-definition and definition by others. Barth tried to show that ethnic groups are socially constructed and the content of the group (in terms of both 'culture' and personnel) has no *a priori* existence or stability in that it is not so much the group, which endures but the idea of the group. Also, he claimed the physical and ideological contents of the group should not be viewed in isolation as this would give a misleading impression and tend to confirm notions of stability and internal, bounded coherence; instead attention should be focused on the boundaries. Barth's (1969) contribution was to urge a shift away from discussions of the content of ethnic identity through ethnic markers such as dress and food towards a consideration of the boundaries, which mark the limits of such contents. Two salient points are made regarding boundaries: first, boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them, and second, and as a corollary to the first, such groups cannot exist in isolation but only in contrast to other groups. Thus ethnic identity is an issue of the way in which ethnic boundaries are defined and maintained. The boundary does not mark 'something off from nothingness, rather it distinguishes between two or more somethings' (Barth, 1969, p.15). This relates to what the Greeks recognized as 'that from which something begins its presencing' (Heidegger, 1971, p.154). The focus is on the process of differentiation between 'us' and 'them', therefore, boundary processes rather than the cultural context of ethnic identity was important: 'the critical focus of investigation becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses' (Barth 1969, p.15).

Barth's (1969) interest was in the social definition of identities and his emphasis on the interpersonal transactions has led to criticisms that the broader societal and psychological levels of analysis are ignored. In her article, Walseth (2006) argues 'that dismissing the role of culture as a source of identification and control seems naïve because culture and tradition play an important role in children's socialization' (p.77). Also this individual focus would neglect power and the role of predominant discourses

or discursive regimes, including ideologies of descent. Hence, the study of ethnicity should also involve the study of ideology and psychological processes. Cohen (1994) refers to this as 'boundaries of consciousness and consciousness of boundaries' (p.78). Barth (1994) does recognize this in his later work and suggests that ethnicity should be studied on three inter-related levels of micro, meso and macro analysis. For Barth (1994) ethnicity is a super-ordinate identity, one which transcends or is at least equivalent to all other identities based on gender and status 'the constraints on a person's behaviour which stems from his ethnic identity tend to be absolute' (p.104). This position is, therefore, closer to that known as primordialism – ethnicity as a permanent and essential condition.

The primordialist position has been criticised for presenting an overly static view of ethnicity. Within any given ethnic community, perceptions of the origins, culture, significance and parameters of ethnicity are liable to change enormously over time and even more so when a group constitutes itself as a minority after a process of migration. According to Jacobson (1998):

> 'The primordialist perspective thus appears to offer little to an investigation of second-generation Pakistanis' understanding of their own ethnicity, although as shall be demonstrated…one aspect of their commitment to Islam seems to be their conviction that its teachings have a real historical continuity and indeed a relevance for all eras' (p.12).

Jacobson (1998) found Barth's concept of ethnic boundaries as a useful heuristic device because her respondents' religious, ethnic and national identities emerged and were shaped by the meeting and mixing of various cultures. Indeed, identity is established through various processes of learning, reinforcing and challenging several modes of differentiation between themselves and the people around them. Therefore, it is clear that an investigation of boundaries, which delineate the young people's social identities, is vital to an understanding of the identities themselves. Consequently, it is important to consider the construction and maintenance of boundaries that delineate sources of social identity. The understanding of boundaries clearly pre-supposes that the social and cultural contents of the identities in question are manifest in the process of boundary construction and maintenance. Furthermore, there are important dimensions to these boundaries. First, the conceptual dimension, which refers to the

tendency to categorise or perceive themselves as members of the Pakistani/Asian minority in Britain; second the social dimension encompasses the pattern of interpersonal relations which reinforces their belonging to the minority; and, the third dimension referred to as the cultural dimension, that reflects their behaviour and activities, which relate to various aspects of the culture, traditions, language of their families' place of origin.

Edwards (1983) points out that language and identity are closely intermeshed. Whilst immigrants learn (if they do not already know it) the language spoken in their adoptive country, they also use the language of their country of birth in various situations and, indeed, many teach it to their children. Retaining the language spoken in the country of origin is one of the ways in which immigrants create a positive social identity for themselves. Still, ethnic minorities have powerful reasons for adhering to their own language. Edwards (1986) discussing the symbolic significance of language choice in the African-Caribbean context, argues that *Patois*, the most common community term for Caribbean language varieties, has a dual function in Britain. First, it is used to mark ethnic solidarity: on the one hand, it can serve to show the speaker's desire to identify with Caribbean culture and values; on the other, its use can indicate that the person being addressed is felt to be a member of the group. Secondly, it can be used to indicate rejection by the speaker of the accepted norms for interaction by excluding outsiders. Similar observations have been made by Milroy (1980) in her work on working class communities in Belfast. She notes that social networks, or informal and formal relationships, which make up all human societies are distinguished by their own language use. Her approach stresses social solidarity and the normative influence of the group on the language of its members. Similar models of group solidarity were discernible amongst the sample families in the present research and this is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Verkuyten (2005) argues that the emphasis placed on group relations and boundaries draws attention away from the role of cultural patterns. 'Culture is reduced to a means of self definition an instrument in battles for identity, recognition and interests' (p.79). Furthermore, language, traditions and religion are not only (arbitrary) means for marking ethnic distinction but also meaningful cultural aspects. 'Thus, ethnic relations

cannot always be fully understood by ways of analysis of competition or domination, but may also be regarded as encounters between cultures' (Eriksen, 1993, p.136).

Verkuyten (2005) argues that Barth does not really examine ethnicity in that his work focuses on the differences between ethnic groups and ignores the question of similarity or commonality. Ethnic identity involves having something in common and without commonality there can be no collectivity (Jenkins 1996). The aspect of commonality, which is typically emphasized in ethnic studies, is culture. Culture derives from the Latin verb *colere,* to cultivate and the term is used today with two main meanings. The first and more ancient of these was taken up at the beginning of the 17th century by Francis Bacon and refers to the body of knowledge and manners acquired by an individual; the second describes the shared customs, values and beliefs, which characterise a given social group, and which are passed down from generation to generation. Many scholars in the social anthropological and psychological fields have striven to explain the concept of culture, the classical anthropological definition of which was provided by Tylor (1871), who describes it as 'that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (p.61). According to a more recent definition by Vermeulen (2001):

> 'Culture is tacit, lived and physically felt rather than realized and verbalized. It is the unreflexive part of mundane practices. It is what we carry with us, even when we want to get rid of it. And what we lose even when we want to preserve it' (p.14).

This definition exemplifies culture as either a lifestyle, which involves the creation of images, symbols and artifacts to distinguish ourselves from others. Culture is also a tool used in interaction for asserting and constructing difference and identity. Identity and culture are two of the basic building blocks of ethnicity. Through the construction of identity and culture, individuals and groups attempt to address the problematic nature of ethnic boundaries and meaning. Ethnicity is best understood as a dynamic, constantly evolving property of both individual identity and group organization. The construction of ethnic identity and culture is the result of both structure and agency, a dialectic played out by ethnic groups and the larger society. Ethnicity is the product of actions undertaken by ethnic groups as they shape and reshape their self-definition and

culture; however, ethnicity is also constructed by external social, economic, and political processes and actors as they shape and reshape ethnic categories and definitions.

Studies have shown that a limited number of cultural characteristics are typically put forward as representing the cultural integrity and authenticity of the group. Furthermore, departures of cultural practices are typically defined as a loss or abandonment of one's own culture and a betrayal of one's own people or group (Liang 2004). Cultural features such as language, traditions and religion can mark ethnic distinction but also serve as meaningful cultural aspects or boundary markers, for example, the veiling of Muslim women signals a distinct cultural experience embedded in an indigenous Islamic culture. According to Atasoy (2006) '...By veiling, women register their role as central in the public expression of Muslim cultural difference' (p.205).

Nagle (2004) examined several ways, by which ethnic identity and culture are created and recreated in modern societies. Particular attention is paid to processes of ethnic identity formation and transformation, and to the purposes served by the production of culture; namely, the creation of collective meaning, the construction of community through mythology and history, and the creation of symbolic bases for ethnic mobilization. The 'myth of return' (Anwar, 1979) for many economic Muslims migrants has until quite recently sustained a degree of uncertainty about where they belonged, and for refugees and political exiles from Africa and the Middle East emotional attachments to their homelands have been even stronger. With time, the emotional attachments have receded somewhat but continuing links with their homelands still sustain past affiliations (Anwar, 1979).

The concept of ethnicity also emphasises the historical and continuous dimension of social life. Ethnicity typically involves a sense of endurance over space and in time across generations. Ethnic categories are conceived as ontologically continuous, stretching back in time and across generations. This subjective understanding will have consequences for the sorts of behaviour people engage in when they act out their ethnic identity.

'Once a social category is subjectively understood as being composed of successive generations of social actors, it then becomes possible for social identity to be experienced not only as a sense of co-evalness (of synchronic co-existence with other in-group members) but also in terms of serial connectedness with other in-group members' (Tajfel, 1986, p.203).

In other words, the nation of where we came from and how we have become provides an enduring identity that involves a sense of continuity and connectedness. Additionally, it involves a sense of obligation and commitment to former and future generations, such as wanting to maintain and protect the symbolic and cultural heritage. Moreover, the group narrative or story about the group's history and the presumed genealogical dimension provides a particular understanding of ethnicity. Sarbin (1983) explored how people construct a sense of locatedness through a symbolic process of emplotment, a form of self-creation whereby person-place relations are turned into a credible self narrative. In focusing on the narrative devices by which individuals locate themselves Sarbin's work resonates with recent developments in Social Psychology, which have increasingly attended to the role of language in constituting social reality (Tololyan 1986; Kelman 2001; Walseth 2006). To accept this story is to know oneself as a group or community (Margalit 2002). Furthermore, each ethnic group has its own story, which helps to explain why under the same circumstances members of different ethnic groups act differently. It also helps to explain inter-group relations. Those from ethnic minority groups have a cultural background that differs from that of the indigenous inhabitants. These immigrants cannot simply choose to do away with their childhood and everything they have learned culturally. Cultural differences are often difficult to verbalize but instead they are often deduced from subtle and unspoken signals that are communicated in interactions: 'often people are quite sure of the existence of cultural differences, even though it is difficult to indicate exactly what these differences are' (Verkuyten 2005, p.79).

Different social groups use means of social distinction in order to differentiate themselves from groups below and to adapt themselves to groups above. Immigrants can be regarded as social groups with specific patterns of capital and with the related specific taste. Ethnic and national group narratives often include what Eidelson & Eidelson (2003) call dangerous ideas consisting of core beliefs (5 belief domains:

superiority, injustice, vulnerability, distrust, and helplessness) and collective world views of groups, which propel them to conflict. The narrative approaches to ethnic identity according to Ashmore *et al*., (2004) will be a fruitful area for further research especially for ethnic and national groups in which (mythical) accounts of the groups' history and origins are central.

A focus on actual practices and interactions of groups allows the examination of how individuals and groups creatively define and locate themselves, without ignoring the fact that they are bounded by wider social and material circumstances, cultural meanings, and historical conditions. Verkuyten's findings from his (1997) study on second generation Turkish immigrants living in the Netherlands revealed a more complicated means of self definition than the majority-minority dualist model of minorities assumed and his findings have important implications for culture and ethnic identity. He found major distinctions were made *within* the Turkish community, which did not involvethe Dutch directly. These distinctions related to the differences between first and second generation Turkish immigrants. The first generation were more likely to see Turkey was an important point of reference. Verkuyten's participants also drew a distinction between moderate and segregated Turks: the latter group of Turks who were traditional and rigid and opposed the Dutch culture; and, in contrast, the moderate Turks defined and positioned themselves as adapting to the Dutch culture and adopting a more moderate position in it. Further distinctions were made with other ethnic minority groups and with the Dutch.

Turks ('we')   Foreigners ('we')

| Turks in Turkey | Segregated Turks | | Moroccans |
| 1st generation | 2nd generation 'we' | | Surinamese (blacks) |

Dutch

Dutch

Definition of difference and opposition
Definition of difference and continuity
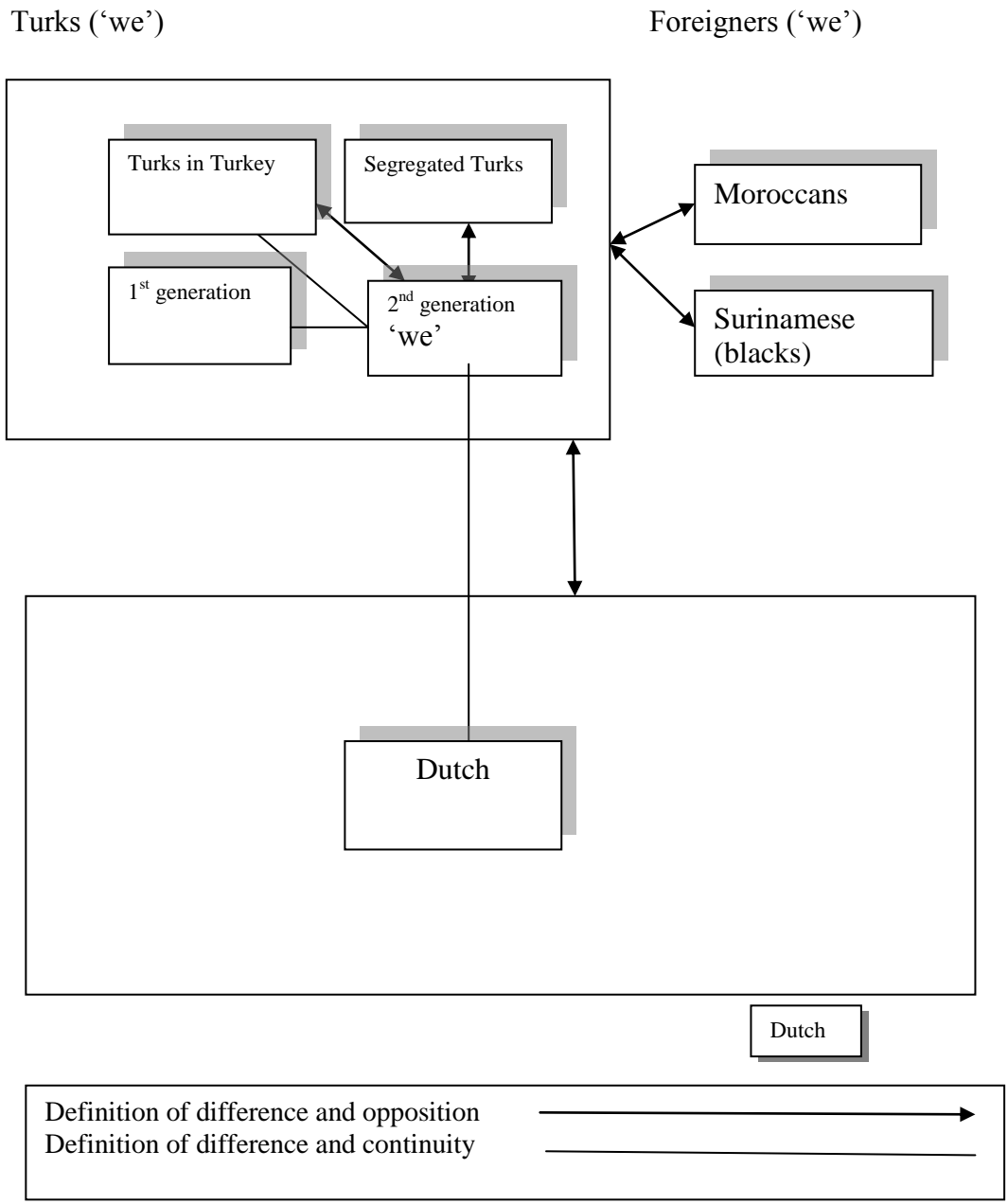
Figure 2. Self-definitions and social comparisons of Turkish participants. (Source Verkuyten, 2005).

As figure 2 indicates, the participants tried to define, carve out and account for a distinctive Turkish identity in relation to other Turks and to other ethic minority groups, and to the Dutch. The participants construct and cross the borders of various categories in order to define themselves. There was also a level of indeterminacy in the dimensions and features of comparison for self definition especially evident in the use of the term 'we'. Sometimes they defined themselves as 'we' second generation Turks, 'we' Turks, in relation to other minority groups and sometimes 'we' foreigners in

relation to the Dutch. These comparisons act together in defining categories and in giving an account of the positions. Social psychological theories such as self-categorization theory (Turner *et al.*, 1987) stress that comparisons are always made against the background of a common identity:

> 'Categorization and comparison depend upon each other because things can only be compared only in so far as they have already been categorized as identical, alike or equivalent at some higher level of abstraction, which in turn pre-supposed *a priori* process of comparison' (p.46).

This statement is problematic in light of Verkuyten's (1997) research findings because it highlights that the dimensions and framework for comparison are open to debate and can be examined as discursive constructions. The participants in their discussions did not use fixed categories, which self categorization theory suggests. This variability shows the difficulty in defining ethnic groups in terms of fixed sets of attributes or stereotypical traits. Additionally, the participants made a distinction between first and second generation immigrants.

> 'Hence, in their discussions, the participants did not use fixed categories with a clear hierarchy of abstractions, in which for example, the self-category of foreigners contains the category of 'Turks'. Different comparisons were made, indicating that categories are a matter of interpretation and definition' (Verkuyten, 1997, p.107).

The second generation Turks in Verkuyten's (1997) study differentiated themselves from the first generation Turks in the Netherlands and Turks in Turkey but they did not define themselves in opposition. There are continuities with the other Turkish people that have relevance to self definition such as history and culture. Furthermore they presented themselves as culturally different but not opposed to Dutch people and they rejected the idea of becoming Dutch.

From Verkuyten's research, a dichotomy between domination (ethnic Dutch) and subordination (ethnic minorities) is of limited value for interpreting and analysing many local situations. This study has shown that it is necessary to have a more detailed understanding of how people define and negotiate themselves and their everyday life. Similarly, Atasoy (2006) in her study of veiling practices in Canada demonstrated that the veil was viewed as a symbol of cultural belonging. All of the participants expressed

the desire to be connected with other Muslims in their schools, thereby separating themselves from Canadian youth and talked about veiling close-knit peer group relations. Thus the veil offered cultural membership and religious strength. However, she concluded that the narratives of the women suggest that the

'experiences of Muslim women do not necessarily converge on a certain embodied behaviour of dominant Islamic norms. Although there is no divergence in their understanding of virtuous action, women's varied veiling practices problematize whether or not the veil solidifies into a unified Islamist position' (Atasoy, 2006, p.219).

The studies by Verkuyten (1997) and Atasoy (2006) both illustrate the problems of viewing culture as a unified non-conflictual force. Abu-Lughod's (1986) work on Bedouin women in Egypt shows the complexity of the process through which women embrace the moral ideals of a culture, yet their actions are not necessarily reflective of a political consciousness aimed at maintaining it.

Social psychological approaches are not well equipped for the difficult task of describing and understanding complex identities. In cultural and globalization theories and post-structural approaches, terms such as hyphenated, dual identities, hybridity, mongrelization and creolization have become fashionable. The terms serve to draw attention to cases where various meanings and identities converge or are blended. Anzaldua (1987) described this as a 'mestizaje consciousness' (p.9) and contends:

'... The new *mestiza* (person of mixed ancestry) copes by developing a tolerance for contradiction, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be Indian in Mexican culture; to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode: nothing is thrust out, the good, the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned; not only does she survive contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else' (p.9).

Anzaldua is, therefore, describing a plural personality. Social identities have traditionally been studied as unitary categories with clear-cut boundaries such as male-female, black-white, majority-minority. Perceived homogeneity and forms of in-group favouritism are studied in terms of social identity processes. In social identity theory, the emphasis is on consistency in identity definitions. There is no inconsistency in question because the identities in question are not mixed, neither are they mutually exclusive but contextually and alternately salient. However, as Horenczyk and

Munayer, (2003) ask what should social scientists make of self definitions such as 'Neder-Turk', or understand the social identity of a Palestinian Christian Arab with Israeli citizenship?

The term hybridity is used in two main ways (Young, 1995; Werbner, 1997). First, it involves fusion in which new forms are created that are partly made up of the old ones; this analytic understanding of 'liberal hybridity' (Ang, 2001) is helpful with relation to the prior assumption of existing and old differences (ethnic, national or racial) categories. The second way in which the term is used is as a process of intervention and subversion in which through dialogical means, a space of discontinuities is constructed; hence no stable form is produced but a third space.

> '... For me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges; rather hybridity to me is the third space which enables other positions to emerge. The third space displaces the histories that constitute it and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom' (Bhaba, 1990, p.210)

It is from this space of in-betweeness that it is possible to interrupt, to interrogate, to challenge, to unsettle and to intervene tactically in the dominant discourses and categorical constructions. Critical hybridity (Ang, 2001) is used here to transcend dualism and binary thinking. It refers to trans-ethnic and trans-racial cultural syncretism. Khan's (2002) work on the Muslim female identity in the diaspora draws heavily on Bhaba's (1990) concept of the 'third space', where she explores women's translations and negotiations of the third space in minority diasporic communities in the First World, where grounding as a Muslim is significantly different from, and more fragile than in, the women's 'home countries'. Where the shock of arrival forces us to new knowledge what the immigrant must work with is what she must invent in order to live. Race, ethnicity and the fluid truths of gender are all cast afresh (Alexander, 1996).

Literature on the identity of ethnic minorities refers to these multiple identities in a variety of ways. Verma and Asworth (1986) regard them as multiple ethnic affinities, though they see them as a consequence of inter-marriage. Others view them as multiple subjectivities or multiple strategies and consider them to be multifaceted and contextualised (Parmar, 1989; Knott & Khokher; 1993; Bhachu, 1993). Bhachu (1993)

argues that identities negotiated and generated by British Asians have their specificities. They are multi-faceted, contextualised and are not stable, despite a common core of key fundamental, religious and cultural values that constitute their cultural roots. They shift according to the forces that operate on them.

In an empirically based study, Jacobson (1998) examined the issues of religion and identity among British Pakistani youth. She discovered a sense of ambivalence among her participants as they not only attempted to negotiate a sense of religious identity, but also to contend with cultural hybridity. Jacobson (1998) argues that it is precisely within the complex and mutable social arrangements of identity formation that religious identity flourishes. She found that the contradiction of adherence to a 'clearly defined set of absolute universal values' (Jacobson, 1998, p.104) and at the same time, varying degrees of ambivalence over their identity engendered by their social conditions and minoritized status, actually helped these youth anchor their sense of religious identity.

Berns McGown (1999) makes a similar contention in a study of Somali Muslims in Toronto and London also describing religion as an anchor that provided certainty during the tumultuous experience of displacement and integration to a new society:

> '... It [Islam] provided an oasis of tranquillity amid the dislocation of refugee straits and the turmoil of adjusting to a new culture, trying to learn a new language, and attempting to find jobs…What was valuable about it was the very ritual of stepping outside the daily struggle, five times over the course of the day, to concentrate on the prayers that never alter, in rhythmic language that linked them to a community of believers that were theirs no matter where in the world they were' (p.98).

Both studies point to the saliency of religious identification in diasporic setting as a means to mediate the dissonance and challenge of living in environments that were laced with conflicting cultural values and practices.

Habitus

Van Krieken (1998) suggests that the concept of 'habit' or 'habitus' refers to:

> '... The durable and generalized disposition that suffuses a person's action throughout an entire domain of life or, in the extreme instance, throughout all of life – in which case the term comes to mean the whole manner, turn, cast or mold of the personality' (p.48).

It is a feature of habitus that it forms and develops as an aspect of social interdependencies which vary as the structure of society varies. It is noteworthy, however, that for Elias (1991) habitus might change at a slower rate than the surrounding social relations. It is also worth reiterating that whilst habitus is substantially formed during early life, it remains open to development as the interdependent networks people are involved in become more and more complex and more or less compelling. A useful framework for an understanding of culture is Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) concept of 'habitus'. Habitus can sometimes be understood as those aspects of culture that are anchored in the body or daily practices of individuals, groups, societies, and nations. It includes the totality of learned habits, bodily skills, styles, tastes, and other non-discursive knowledge that might be said to 'go without saying'. Bourdieu adopts the concept and considerably expands its meaning. Bourdieu extended the scope of the term to include a person's beliefs and dispositions. Mennell (1994) cites an interesting dictum to explain group identity and difference (Kluckhohn and Murray 1948), acknowledging the now sexist phraseology:

Every man is in certain respects:
a) Like other men
b) Like some other men
c) Like no other man.

Mennell (1994) uses the concept of 'habitus' (Elias 1939, 1978; Bourdieu 1984) to explain what he regards as the most interesting of these three statements 'like some other men'. According to Mellor and Shilling (1997):

> '... Habitus' refers to those pre-cognitive, embodied dispositions which promote particular forms of human orientation to the world, organise each generation's senses and sensualities into particular hierarchies and

predispose people towards specific ways of knowing and acting' (pp.19-20).

The concept of habitus is foundational to Bourdieu's theory of social research, but as a concept it dates back to Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. Bourdieu emphasised habitus in terms of 'taste' or people's conscious preferences for day to day 'lifestyle phenomenon' such as food, dress, reading material, T.V programmes and arts participation. This relates to Smith's (1986) view of an ethnic group whose members will 'share a common set of understandings, values and attitudes that reflect their common culture and community.those axioms that provide the common foundations of collective thought and morals' (p.193).

Elias (1991) refers to:

> 'individual habitus and social habitus and describes the latter as self image and social make-up emphasising the learned accomplishment of using the body in socially acquired preferred ways, body techniques, internalising an individual make-up that is shared with certain others and 'grows out of the social script' (p.182).

Both Elias and Bourdieu's perspectives acknowledge the significance of historical and generational influences on habitus. Bourdieu's and Elias's usage of habitus are not contradictory 'tastes' and 'lifestyle preferences' being essential to embodied learning. Elias's usage indicates internalisation via different levels of consciousness. A perspective developed by Mennell (1994) and related to identity. Mennell suggests that the notions of identity and habitus are closely linked, the former being at a more conscious level, the latter residing more in the subconscious. He describes the multi-layered habitus as 'more inclusive layers of identity, suggesting development is related to 'changing balances between different layers of habitus and identity' (p.179). The complexity of the modern world where people belong to more than one group, results in multiplicity of identities and habitus, affected by circumstances of time and place, what he calls the 'filo pastry of identity ... The trend-line in the development of human society has been towards larger and larger networks of interdependent people organized in more and more interlocking layers' (pp.177-178).

Elias's (1991) notion of differentially important layers of habitus is also significant, as is his link between habitus and society:

> '... It depends on the number of interlocking planes in his (or her) society how many layers are interwoven in the social habitus of a person. Among them, a particular layer usually has special prominence. It is this layer characteristic of membership of a particular survival group' (p.183).

Elias's reference to 'survival' in this context relates to maintaining a group identity which is threatened rather than physical security. Multi-layered habitus must be evident in Muslim females raised in a predominantly white and secular society, who form the subjects of this research, although the 'layer of special prominence' might be more difficult to identify and might differ between individuals. An example of the complex multi-layered identities of the Muslim females in this study can be seen in their diverse use of 'we' to refer to Muslim females, their family, their community, their peer group, fellow Muslims and so on. In simpler existencies, people depended for survival on immediate groups such as family or tribe. In terms of personality structure Elias described individuals as developing 'we-identities' in more complex, modern societies where ties with immediate groups have been distanced.

Mennell (1994) went on to explore Elias's 'established-outsider' model in which processes of meaning and power can be developed to foster and sustain particular belief systems between groups. Behaviour to demonstrate adherence to the norms of one group can lead to the creation of distorting myths about another. Competing discources of 'group charisma' and 'group distance' grow and are more likely to be vehemently sustained where a group feels particularlty threatened or insecure. Retaliation depends on relative power positions. Where the power balance shifts in the direction of the oppressed group, positions are challenged Elias and Scotson, 1994). Established outsider theory has been applied in a variety of spheres to offer explanations of gender inequality and racial inequality together with explanation of inequalities for homosexuals.

Group relations form the nexus of established-outsider theory and suggests that the more uneven the balance of power, the less realistic the established groups' image of the outsiders is likely to be. Group charisma, group disgrace operation is probable in the conscience and we-images of outsiders, but as Mennell (1992) writes:

> '... Where balance of power is becoming more equal, expect to find symptoms of rebellion, resistance, emancipation among the outsiders..after an intervening period of heightened tension and conflict, the more nearly

equal is the balance of power, the more favourable are the conditions for more mutual perceptions and the more likely a high degree of mutual identification' (p.138).

The established outsider theory grew out of Elias's work on the tensions of the long trend towards social integration. The notion of 'outsiders' seems to link with Rutherford's (1990) description of 'otherness'. 'In the hierarchical language of the West, what is alien represents otherness, the site of difference and the respository of our fears and anxieties' (p.10.)

As 'outsiders', migratory groups often find it difficult to feel comfortable in a host country because, 'their social habitus creates a special kind of distance between them and members of the host country' (Elias, 1991, p.236). Elias explains that the means by which they escape the difficulties are by settling near members of their own group, people with the same social habitus. Whilst first generation people serve to safeguard their habitus, conflict often arises with second or third generations who are in an in-between situation because:

> '... The readiness and even the capacity of the established members of the
> host country to accept them is limited-of the host country one must add, that
> is now the native country of the second and third immigrant generations'
> (Elias, 1991, p.237).

Attempts to retain individual and group identity meet dominant pressure for state integration. Elias suggests one means through which this pressure is realised is through public education: '... In all nation states the institutions of public education are dedicated to an extreme degree to deepening and consolidating a we-feeling based exclusively on national tradition' (p.210). Using examples from the world around him Elias explained three options for migrant groups:

1. preserve identity as a kind of unreal museum piece
2. renouncing part of the identity and social habitus of the group
3. the encapsulation of groups within a society powerful enough to allow this to occur

The latter option is rare and Elias uses the examples of the German Hutterer in Canada and the American Mafia to illustrate the necessary life-long permanence of human relationships in such groups and the essential 'we-balance' identity requiring

unconditional subordination of I to we of individual to group. The degree of intergration or resistance depends on the social habitus of the individuals and greater resistance is found where there are long generational chains and deep rooted habitus. Furthermore, according to Elias (1991), survival of a group identity is related to history.

> '... It is the feeling that the fading or disappearance of a tribe or state as an autonomous entity would render meaningless everything which past generations had achieved and suffered...a kind of collective dying (in which) the identity of the we image is threatened' (p.223).

Survival of a group identity, according to Elias (1991) is about 'surviving in the memory of the chains of generations' (p.223), maintaining the continuity of language, history and cultural values a collective memory which retains meaning. Consequently, the process of integration, changes in the individual habitus brought about by past and present influences lead to conflicts of loyalty and conscience. Habitus develops out of socialization and conditions of life; it signifies the totality of dispositions, thoughts, perceptions and actions and produces cultural practices. Therefore, habitus and taste, which are connected to it, are typical for each social class or group. The body plays a central role in this concept because cultural practices and gender order are both engraved in the body. The body is part of cultural capital in that it has an important symbolic function, it expresses group and gender specific values and forms the basis for social distinctions. On the other hand, the body habitus, the socially structures system of traits and dispositions, determines people's attitudes towards the way they deal with the body. In everyday life as well as in sport, ethnic-cultural body ideals are realized. They mirror and they produce gender differences. Bourdieu's (1998) considerations regarding cultural capital, habitus, taste and processes of social distinction and integration can contribute to our understanding of the challenges and difficulties of participating in sport for people of different ethnic origins. Minorities can use body and movement culture for purposes of identification with the ethnic group and for social distinction. According to Pfister (2000), Turkish sport clubs offer this opportunity for males, indeed, in the context of upward social mobility among Turkish immigrants, body ideals and practices can also be used as a means of adapting to the mainstream society or as cultural capital for social advancement. However, for females in Turkey, sport is still a contested domain (Pfister, 2000).

In relation to Turkish immigrants living in Germany, Pfister (2000) observes that they can assume the traditional patterns of social relations within the family alongside western influence. However, traditional norms and ideals and their appropriation by individual girls and women can lead to a situation where sport and femininity are incompatible from a cultural perspective. Lorber's (1995) research focuses on the conflicts of identity, which are frequently reported in the literature and considers the possibility of constructing and presenting different patterns of identity. Many young German Turks develop and present neither Turkish nor German forms of habits, they embody a cultural blending of Turkish and German. Therefore, the search for an identity, which is neither Turkish nor German is often described as hybridity or syncretism. These terms draw attention to cases where various meanings or identities converge or are blended, thereby forming new ways of challenging conceptions. Much of the literature in the social sciences claims that globalization has led to the fragmentation and hybridization of identities. Theories of hybridity emphasize the mixing and fusion of meanings and reject the notion of homogenous, uniformly defined identities. Increasingly, notions of heterogeneity and multiple identities are being advanced (Ang, 2001; Nederveen Pieterse, 1995; Werbner and Modood, 1997). Hybridity is, therefore, seen as an argument against homogeneity, essentialism and absolutism and one which entails empirical, theoretical and normative claims (Nederveen Pieterse, 2001).

The concept of identity has interested sociologists as modernity, post-modernity and globalization processes have raised new questions:

> '... Just now everybody wants to talk about identity...identity only becomes an issue when it is in crisis, when something assumed to be fixed, coherent and stable is displaced by the experience of doubt and uncertainty' (Mercer, 1990, p. 45).

Featherstone (1995) suggests that whilst there is 'greater acknowledgement that people can live happily with multiple identities' (p.9), 'trends of mixing of codes, pastiche, fragmentation, incoherence, disjunction and syncretism' (p.118) have ensured a lack of passivity from migrants to absorb the dominant culture, which in turn has led, in some cases to 'a retreat into the culture of origin, or a retreat into...religions from the home country' (p.119). The rise of increased political action has emerged from post-modern

'motifs' alongside 'identity' such as difference, fragmentation, decentering and disenchantment (Mercer, 1990, p.49). Such trends lead to conflicts not only between but within groups, and within individuals. A contributing factor to such trends lies in the fact that:

> '... Identities are not neutral. Behind the quest for identity are different, and often conflicting, values. By saying who we are, we are also striving to express what we are, what we believe and what we desire. The problem is that these beliefs, needs and desires are often partly in conflict, not only between communities but between individuals themselves' (Weeks, 1990, p.89).

An example used to explain the difficult dilemmas of diversity was in the conflict of absolutes rooted in the author, Salman Rushdie, affair between freedom of speech and the rights of sanctity in religious belief. This raised difficult questions of '...the freedom and constraint limits of pluralism in a complex society' (Weeks, 1990, p.93).

Globalization, in one sense has opened up the world as networks of human interdependence have spread around the globe. Simultaneously the human drive to construct meaningful, coherent identities has lead to re-negotiation, 'a dialogical space in which we can expect a good deal of disagreement, clashing of perspectives and conflict, not just working together and consensus' (Weeks, 1990, p.102). 'In-group' 'out-group' conflicts heighten the sense of boundaries between, and attempts to draw, these boundaries; and 'culturally defined groups may even be strengthened by the competitive forces released by modernisation' (Yinger, 1986, p.39).

A common area of agreement for interactionist and process theorists is that 'identity is never a static location, it contains traces of its past and what it is to become' (Rutherford, 1990, p.24). Calhoun (1995) describes the process as a 'project' requiring a struggle for negotiation and renegotiation in networks of social relations in the pursuit of distinctiveness, difference from others and sameness with some. There are many similarities in this 'identity language' with that of Mennell and Elias. Hall (1990) also regards identity as a process that is dependent on different ways individuals and groups are positioned and position themselves in relation to the past and present. He refers to the African-Caribbean and Asian blacks as the 'diasporas of the West – the new post-colonial subjects' (p.222) and suggests that culturally defined distinctiveness

and identity necessarily live '...With and through...difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference (p.235). Furthermore, The contrasting elements of a diasporic condition of being 'outsiders', of having a shared history, of being displaced from an original location come together in the following way:

> '... The diasporic community experiences a real or believed feeling of not being accepted in the host community. It cherishes a myth of the original homeland which is seen as a place of return and is committed to the restoration of this homeland. This commitment and continuing relationship with the homeland is essential to group solidarity and identity within the diasporic community' (Westin,1998, p.74).

Concepts such as hybridity and diaspora might help to explain how the identities of the Muslim females in this research are positioned by their past and present situations in particular, the apparent search, of some, to renew understanding of Islam and to find more significant meaning in their lives by embodying Islam more completely.

The concept of diaspora encourages a reconsideration of certain key aspects of ethnicity, as it throws doubt on the common assumption that territoriality is the essential and determining condition for ethnicity; thus, it is widely held that common traits, culture, language and religious beliefs are derived from a common origin and this in turn is connected to a given territory. Yet as Rex (1994, p.210) points out, 'ethnic communities are often concerned precisely with their detachment from a territory'. Therefore, the notion of diaspora allows researchers to explore the way in which displacement and also return is maintained in the 'collective memory' of an ethnic community and helps us to define certain ethnic groups. Brah (1996) reminds us that:

> '[although] the word diaspora often invokes the imagery of traumas of separation and dislocation…diasporas are also potentially sites of hopes and new beginnings. They are contested cultural and political terrains, where individual and collective memories collide,reassemble and reconfigure' (p.193).

Khan's (2002) work of Canadian Muslim women supports Brah's suggestions. She comments that

'as diasporic people peoples come and settle or sojourn in North America, displaced narratives of postcolonial peoples (immigrants, refugees and permit holders, as well as those silent and uncounted who have no legal status such as migrant workers and illegal aliens) increasingly demand a social and political presence' (p.127).

Thus, ethnic minority communities are no longer as dependent as they once were on the conditions in the country where they have settled. Not only is it much easier for diasporic communities to constitute transnational communities with common identities, cultural characteristics and lifestyles but they can much more easily form transnational economic networks thanks to the developments in communications such as economical air fares, satellite TV, the internet, electronic data exchange and email.

Walseth (2006) found that young Muslim females are challenging the boundaries of their ethnic identity and see Islam as a religion 'open to interpretation'. They use a modern interpretation of Islam as a source and point of departure in their struggle for Muslim women's rights. This view on gender equality corresponds to that of the Muslim feminist Mernissi (1995), who reported that some of her research participants are in conflict with their parents over issues of femininity. They also construct their identities differently from that of their parents; however, rather than being viewed as a form of cultural disembedding, their identification is still viewed by the women as operating within a framework. If the females cross the boundaries of what it means to be a female, she will acquire a bad reputation within her own ethnic group.

It is important to recognise that not all ethnic minority groups are perceived, positioned and treated in the same way and there are important within-group differences. Studies in various countries have discovered that different minority groups enjoy varying levels of social acceptability (Hagendoorn, 1995). Masson *et al.,* (1995) carried out a survey among ethnic majority and minority youth in the city of Rotterdam. The results indicated that each ethnic group preferred the in-group, secondly there was consensus on an ethnic hierarchy within ethnic groups, and finally ethnic groups largely agreed on the ethnic rank order. Among the Dutch respondents, the ethnic hierarchy was found to be related to real cultural differences. The scheme of ethnic preferences corresponded inversely to the rank ordering of the ethnic groups in terms of

collectivism. Among ethnic minority youth, the rank ordering did not correspond to cultural differences but to existing socio-economic status differences.

Such ethnic hierarchies indicate that groups are located differently within the ethnic landscape and that minority groups are also in the process of distancing themselves from lower-status positions and this can result in inter-ethnic tensions between these groups. Additionally, attention to between groups' differences should not lead to overlooking within-group heterogeneity. Celious and Oyserman, (2001) argued that ethnic identity is not a simple concept, and it is not a single category. Racial identity theories, however, typically handle race as a simple Black-White dichotomy that overlooks within-group heterogeneity, substituting a sub-group (young, low socio-economic status, darker skinned men) for all African Americans. The centrality of this subgroup image reifies what it means to be Black but excludes African Americans who are women, middle class, and so on. The researchers highlight within-group diversity in everyday experiences related to gender, socio-economic status, and physical attributes, including skin tone. Understanding the implications of race from an insider's perspective requires that it is viewed as a heterogeneous category. Thus, as Brah (1996) notes it is the 'intersectionality' of 'race' with other axes of social identity which requires flexible 'creolised' theoretical frameworks that can map these multiple forms of differentiation.

Islam and Gender

'Identity is one of the key issues for Muslims in Britain' (Ansari, 2004, p.4). Gender functions as a reference marker in the construction of ethnic identity, especially when there is a high status attached to 'rules relating to sexuality, marriage and the family, and where a true member will perform these roles properly' (Anthias, 1993, p.113). As Anthias also notes:

> '... Women are often central in ethnic and national reproduction and transformation, not only as biological producers of the members of the group, or central in the transmission of its cuiltural artefacts, but also as markers of the boundaries of collectivities' (pp. 9-10).

Differences in identity sources for males and females are neglected in social identity theory (Skevington & Baker, 1989). However, in defence of social identity theory, males and females are but one example, albeit perhaps the most important example, of majority and minority groups respectively. Thus, social identity theory does include males and females as examples of majority and minority groups but it does not consider relations between the sexes to be any different in principle than any other intergroup relationship. Gender is associated with deeply entrenched power and status differentials and for this reason there have been parallels drawn between sexism and racism: women have been viewed as occupying a disadvantaged position compared with that of minority racial groups (Reid, 1988). Social identity theory provides a general framework for describing the dynamics of group membership and behaviour. Many applications of social identity theory have failed to capture both the affective and ideological contours of sex-category membership. The issues surrounding a female who is a member of an ethnic minority group raises issues more complex than social identity research has acknowledged in that a Muslim female may represent a double minority (Cameron & Lalonde, 2001).

Anthias's (1993) work, together with that of Yuval-Davis (1997) is important as it attempts to systematically integrate questions of gender, race, ethnicity and class in ways which avoid perfunctory explanations. These complex and fluid relationships certainly disrupt many of the theoretical frameworks, which fail to acknowledge 'gender dynamics' and that remain tied to treating a 'race' merely as an imposed category of domination. This present research adds weight to the argument that social identity processes will not necessarily be exhibited by all group members or even by all groups (Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Brown *et al.,* 1992). Muslim female identity can be viewed in a similar way and Khan (2002) argues against the static and singular notions of identity. She does not treat the category of Muslim female as given and argues that Islam is what Islam means to Muslims and not to what we perceive or wish them to be. Khan also criticizes attitudes of Islamic conservatives who deny female Muslims' individuality and instead present them to the world as a homogeneous mass. For Muslim immigrants, fluid identity is more relevant during the earlier stages of their settlement in the diaspora. While many immigrants maintain such identities for a long time, many grow out of them as they become more integrated into their adopted homeland. This was shown in a study by Abu-Ali (1999), who examined societal

influences on gender identity, and beliefs about behaviours and characteristics appropriate for males and females among 96 Muslim adolescent girls (aged 13-18 yrs) living in the US and attending an Islamic high school. Over 75% of the sample characterized themselves as Middle-Eastern or Arab-American. Participants completed a survey in English or Arabic containing background questions, the Bem Sex Role Inventory, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, and a religiosity scale. Results showed that participants had comparable femininity scores, but higher masculinity scores than normative female samples. Results also indicated that those participants who had lived in the US for longer periods reported more masculine attributes. Greater sense of belonging to one's ethnic group and greater religiosity were associated with greater femininity. Thus, identification with one's own culture, adherence to religious practices, and exposure to foreign cultural values were related to gender role identity. Yuval-Davis (1997) highlights the importance of female minority group members' behaviour in a multi-cultural society:

> 'Women often come to symbolise the national collectivity, its roots, its spirit, its national project …Forced veiling, or insistence on particular styles of dress and behaviour are milder forms of the same construction of women. Women's distinctive ways of behaving very often, especially in minority situations come to symbolise the group's identity and its boundaries' (p.627).

Many social psychologists also ignore the role of gender within their comparisons in that male members of ethnic minority groups and females may have different means of comparison. Hence, it seems necessary to study ethnic minority in terms of the diversity of comparisons being made and their relation to each other. Jacobson (1998) found that the transgression of the minority community's boundaries by females was perceived by the older generation as a much greater threat to the survival of the group and its values, or the individual family within the group than is male transgression. A family *izzat,* or 'respect' is seen as highly important within Pakistani and other south Asian communities and is to a large extent dependent upon the perceived chasitity of the females within the family. Many of her respondents, including some of the young men, spoke explicitly about the fact that their parents are a great deal stricter with their daughters than they are with their sons. She even found that sons can be even 'more stringent than parents in imposing restrictions upon their sisters…they are able to have

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girlfriends and generally do whatever they like and yet are regarded as good Muslims - all the guilt is passed onto their sisters' (Jacobson, 1998, p.63).

Rozario (2006) found Bangladeshi women are subjected to patriarchal norms that are legitimated by both the cultural and the religious values of the country. In recent years these patriarchal norms have been challenged by women's increased physical mobility, a consequence of modernity and globalisation. There has, however, been a backlash against women's new roles. At the same time, a significant proportion of the newly mobile women, including university students, is adopting the burqa, a practice associated with modern Islamist movements and previously almost non-existent in Bangladesh. Santi (2006) discovered that some women have recently begun to adopt the burqa and a more Islamic identity.

Western scholarship and the popular imagination have long been fascinated with the status of women in Islam. Early nineteenth-century Orientalist travel literature portrayed Muslim women as sexually exotic others in 'harems' at the height of colonial exploits and sex tourism. More recently, scholarly and popular mass-mediated Western images of the Muslim woman include distorted stereotypes of oppressed, muted, veiled or even shrouded women living in what is often described as a misogynist and violent religious culture. Islam as a religion and Muslim culture remain grossly misunderstood by the West. As Mawdudi (1989) observed:

> '... Islam is not a religion in the western understanding of the word. It is at once a faith and a way of life, a religion and a social order, a doctrine and a code of conduct, a set of values and principles and a social movement to realize them in history' (p.12).

Muslim females share a global religion. Mawdudi (1989) describes the all encompassing nature of Islam. Islamic culture refers to the lived experience of being a Muslim. 'The code of living is expressed through Islamic laws laid down by the Shari'ah. These codes imbue Islamic culture, giving meaning to the way in which Muslims make sense of their lives, behave, dress, eat and drink (Benn, 1996). More recent research, which examines the Muslim female identity, reveals that Muslim females are not a homogeneous group (Khan, 2004; Dagkas & Benn, 2006, Walseth, 2006), in that there are differences in how they locate themselves within their religious

and cultural identity culminating in whether they choose to adopt the hiijab and other forms of Islamic dress. A more extensive consideration of the embodiement of faith is provided in Chapter 6.

Ahmed's (1992) critical perspective of gender and Islam offered one insight into apparent contradictions in the treatment of women within Islamic traditions. She suggested the tension was rooted in the contrast between 'ideological Islam' and 'established Islam'. Whilst she recognised the undoubted ideological ethnic and spiritual messages of equality between the sexes within the Qur'an and the Hadith, the conflict was with the dominant 'established Islam', the political/legal Islam in which women's position was 'fixed as subordinate'. Alongside the relatively egalitarian gender ideology of early Islam men's legal rights exceeded those of women and included polygyny, child-marriage, sex with slave women outside marriage, divorce at will and male proprietary rights to female sexuality (Ahmed, 1992 p.45).

Activist scholars write of the two main problems faced by Muslim females: Orientalism (of which colonialism, Western exploitation, media misrepresentations, Western feminism, and universalizing human rights discourse are a part); and 'Patriarchy' (both within and outside of Islam). Muslim women thus find themselves in a dilemma in having to defend Islam to a world that includes well-intentioned but often patronizing Western feminists, that reduces their faith and culture to misogyny, while simultaneously confronting sexism from within the larger Islamic community. The two main problems are exemplified in work by Webb (2000) and Khan (2002).

Webb (2000) presents the perspectives and work of ten scholar-activists who creatively and strategically combat both Orientalism and patriarchy by uncovering Islam's egalitarian spirit. Khan (2002) presents a phenomenological approach to Islam and does not treat it as a given and allows for an interpretative appropriation of this religion by her fourteen female subjects in Canada who have internalized Orientalist and patriarchal views of Islam, causing many to feel conflicted and to reject identification as Muslims. Both Webb and Khan attempt to challenge contemporary discourse that categorizes 'Muslim' and 'progressive' as mutually exclusive. Yet they do this in different and even opposing ways: Webb calls for women's equal rights from within religion, by appealing to Islamic sacred texts that state that women and men are equal

before God; in contrast, Khan attempts to move outside of religion to show that 'Muslim' is a larger category of identity that should not be confined to belief and practice of the Islamic faith.

Webb (2000) provides a welcome and sorely needed perspective in Islamic, feminist, legal, and post-colonial studies. She strategically and creatively contests both Orientalism and patriarchy by practising *ijtihad*, or the Islamic tradition of ongoing interpretation of the sacred texts. This is an important move because Islam is a religion based on its holy text, the Qur'an. Webb argues that an informed understanding of the Islamic texts is necessary for women to ascertain their equal rights. Islam, she argues, is based on equality of all believers before God, regardless of social distinctions such as race, class, or gender. Alternative interpretations and approaches to the Qur'an are provided and some of the *ahadith*, or sayings of the Prophet, that highlight Islam's protection of women's equality. She argues that text and tradition have been misinterpreted for centuries by male jurists who did not have women's interests in mind. Al-Faruqi (2000) contends 'uncovering the spirit of equality in Islam is not a feminist project, but the correct Islamic one' (p.100). The problem of women's status in Muslim communities is not in Islam itself, but in Islamic interpretations', which al-Faruqi claims are misinterpretations and the applications of Islamic laws, going on to argue that the goal of Muslims is to properly understand divine guidance, and that this includes redressing incorrect understandings of the Qur'an that have been used to oppress women.

The results of this type of Qur'anic analysis are quite different from interpretations that allow abuses of women in the name of Islam, as is currently happening with the rape laws of Pakistan. In fact, if Islamic law were properly followed, it is those men who accuse rape victims of adultery who would be punished. As Quraishi (2000) concedes, there is still much work ahead in post-colonial Muslim nations in changing not only the laws, but also the cultural attitudes that foster such laws to begin with (p.135). As Azizah al-Hibri (2000) also argues, the most important element of Islam is piety, which is anathema to domination, consequently, all laws that attempt to dominate women by denying them equal rights must be revised to reflect the fundamental Qur'anic principle of human equality (p.71). Walseth's (2006) research on identity and sporting participation raises important issues about religious and ethnic identity.

Sporting participation for some females was seen as too masculine and 'those who participate in sport have often experienced being sanctioned by those who guard the ethnic boundaries' (Walseth, 1990, p.90). Identification with Islam on the other hand has different implications for sporting participation in that the focus on health and physical activity is important in Islam. However, young women's involvement in sport 'seems to challenge the boundaries of their ethnic identity because their participation is in conflict with hegemonic notions of femininity' (Walseth, 2006, p.91).

Most immigrants encounter stereotypes of themselves, their native culture, and their religion, if different than the one in the host society. Living in North America, Muslim women are often incorrectly viewed as Arabs and, more importantly according to Khan (2002), as oppressed and in need of rescuing. Like other women of 'colour', they are labelled as 'other' and subjected to discriminatory attitudes and practices. Khan's (2002) sociological study presents conflicted and pained testimonies of fourteen immigrant women in Canada. The research is based on interviews with each of her informants, whose transcripts she reproduces in part. She chronicles three case studies of women who, having internalized Orientalist depictions of Islam and Muslims, reject this category of identification and do not consider themselves Muslim although this seems in conflict with Khan's title 'Muslim Women'. Khan theorizes Islam as a constructed category and draws on theoretical work on the construct of 'ethnic identity'. She accepts the category Muslim 'as a starting point' and problematizes it 'in an attempt to understand the fluidity of cultural expressions, particularly those within diasporic communities' (p.xii).

These women have escaped post-colonial underdevelopment and oppression of their homeland by moving to Canada, yet they are confronted with a host of new oppressions in diaspora: racism, sexism, stereotypes, and multi-cultural homogenization. They are treated as homogenized Objects/Others: undifferentiated by sociological factors (of race, ethnicity, nationality, and sexuality), oppressed by their own religion, conditioned by their Islamic culture, and void of any agency.

Khan (2002) problematizes the concept of Muslim identity in diasporic context. By probing the implications of race, class, religion, and sexuality, Khan attempts to show the intricate intersections of these forces in the lived experiences of Muslim women in

Canada. She is critical of Orientalist depictions of Islamic societies as 'totalizing religious and ideological orders' and of Muslim women as passive, oppressed, and homogenous. These women are neither what the Orientalists depict them to be nor what Islamists want them to be. Disturbed by these disempowering stereotypes, Khan challenges Western assumptions about the female position in Islamic societies in general, and Canadian Muslim female identity in particular. She also criticizes attitudes of Islamic conservatives who deny female believers individuality by presenting them to the world as a homogeneous mass.

Muslim women's understanding and experiences of their religion are not uniform and coded, as perceived by Westerners and projected by Islamic fundamentalists, but are rather malleable, fluid, manifold, and even contradictory. Most of the women Khan interviewed for her research are in a double bind. On the one hand, they desire to maintain an Islamic identity in a non-Islamic environment, and on the other they avert the discriminatory and complicating aspects of their cherished religion. They find a sense of security in their religious identity but cannot be comfortable with its totalizing prescriptions. These immigrants are also attracted to the opportunities the new country provides them, but cannot tolerate its mythologies about Islam and Muslim women. The combined effects of this discriminatory treatment and misgivings about their own religion have produced feelings of diasporic estrangement and vulnerability among these female immigrants. The choices presented to these women often come in a binary form: faith and freedom, religious and secular, native and host cultures, family loyalty and individual autonomy, and past and present. Khan examines the ambivalence reflected in the lives of these women by looking for its causes in Orientalist and Islamist myths about Muslim women. To challenge these myths, Khan (2002) aims 'to complicate the term Muslim and write in the history that constructs and reinforces the duality of Orientalism and Islam' (p.xxiii).

Taking a post-colonial, post-modernist, and feminist approach, Khan argues for a constructed understanding of Muslim women based on their own sense of who they are and/or wish to be. Caught on the horns of two totalizing views of Orientalists and Islamists, these women struggle to construct a meaningful identity outside of these paradigms. To avoid these pressures and find a space of their own, these women resort to a 'third space' within which they resist oppression, confront racism and sexism of

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their adopted country, and negotiate a unique identity for themselves. Khan believes that this third space, which she views as an in-between grey zone, is where progressive politics emerges and where Muslim women can explore a new identity. Khan seeks to problematize the category 'Islam' as a cohesive entity and recognizes that Islam means different things to different people: she does not distinguish between Islam as a sacred and textual tradition and Islam as practised in everyday life. This leads her to argue that 'progressive politics cannot emerge from either Islam or Orientalism but in the in-between hybridized third space' (Khan 2000, p.x).

Khan (2002) presents a theoretical discussion of the non-structured interviews she conducted, with fourteen Muslim females in the Toronto area during the early 1990s. Khan (2002) aims to show that the Muslim identity of these female immigrants remains paramount, despite their high degree of diversity in religious affiliation, sexual orientation, class background, and ethnic differences. She believes that the discrimination against these women by the larger Canadian society is apparently much harsher than the inequalities assigned to them by Sharia Laws which they continue to follow because of their centrality in their lives and pressures from their families and communities.

People situated in transitional times and locations are more likely to experience feelings of confusion, contradiction, uncertainty, and self-examination, especially if they are dislocated or exiled from their own cultural centre. However, these contradictions, fragmentations, and fluidity are not to be essentialized so much so that distinctions and relationality become meaningless. Diluting Muslim women's identities denies them a sense of 'community'. Muslim identity is not the final destination of these immigrants, but a point of entry from which they construct their reality. While these women will continue to experience a certain level of ambivalence, they have no choice, at least not for too long, but to either leave or become rooted in their new homeland. In fact, as Khan's interviews show, most of her subjects feel rooted enough to safely engage in a critical examination of both their native and host culture.

Certainly, Muslim identity is fluid and has room for negotiation, interpretation, and transformation. However, high fluidity and abundant contradictions are neither theoretically sound nor empirically sustainable. These immigrants cannot stay too long in this in-between space where they remain detached from both their native culture and

the mainstream experiences of their new home. After all, the third space is a space in-between, a make-shift station, a temporary sanctuary, where one buys time for regaining energy and developing a perspective for the challenges on the way to a new settled status.

Issues raised by Khan are highly significant because, as the movement of people across the globe brings us closer to a post-national world, identity issues will arguably be rendered more ambiguous. Khan is against the static and singular notion of identity, arguing instead for fluid, dynamic, and oppositionally grounded identities. While this approach is relevant and represents an improvement over classical treatments of identity, it is not without risk. Fixed and un-dialectical notions of identity have to be problematized, but not at the expense of obliterating all demarcations of human experiences. The idea of a 'fluid identity' has limited utility and cannot be valid for all people, all places, and all times. It is a post-modernist cliché to see everything in fluidity, so much so that there is nothing to hold onto, nothing to refer to, and nothing to rely on. One may have conflicting attitudes about objects, people, ideas, and locations, but in the moment of action, one chooses to either go with an existing option or invent a new one. In the case of an invention, the choice still has a reference, however vague, and is fixated in a time and place, bounded by the person's capabilities, and privileged by his/her enactment.

For Muslim immigrants, fluid identity is more relevant during the earlier stages of their settlement in the diaspora. While many immigrants maintain such identities for a long time, many more grow out of them as they become more integrated into their adopted homeland. With the increased stay and structural integration of these immigrants, their transitional identities will transform into trans-national ones. Those who are either unable or unwilling to make this transition will certainly experience more anxiety, distress, and alienation. The latter cannot be the fate of majority of these women. In time, immigrants are able to make such a transition, though not without continued experiences of discrimination and stereotyping. More research is needed to address various aspects of discrimination, what in the Sharia works for them in a non-Muslim environment and what does not, and who in the diasporic community wishes to remain Muslim or who does not and why.

The theoretical disposition of Khan's (2002) research is exemplary of the dominant discourse in the diasporic public sphere. Nevertheless, both the selection of subjects and the presentation of their accounts make the research generalizations problematic. Her analysis is based on interviews with fourteen women who 'are the result of a chain reaction in which [she] asked one person to recommend another who wanted to talk about Muslim identity' (p.24). Thus, Khan admits, the commonalities among the women were 'not necessarily incidental' (p.24) and while she observes that 'representation is not an issue' because any study would necessarily be subjective (p.25), it does raises the question of whether one can address as large a category as 'Muslim Women in North America' based on fourteen interviews. Moreover, Khan's cues during interviews were not always neutral: she appeared to lead respondents to opinions and expressions not of their own construction and she also ignored many of the subjects statements and explanations that would have pointed away from conflicts between Muslims and Canadian society. Furthermore, these women's voices are extracted from their social and familial contexts. Thus, even as Khan seems to imply that the women have specific gendered problems with forging their Muslim identities, there is no basis of comparison for how their husbands, brothers, or fathers experience Muslim identity. These women come from the diverse regions and backgrounds of Iran, Pakistan, India, Somalia, Egypt, Turkey, and Malta. At some points, the interviewed women and Khan herself seem to critique the notion that they are seen as 'merely' Muslims by the wider Canadian community, but the structure of the book only reinforces this reduction.

But arguing that progressive politics cannot emerge from Islam would deny the work undertaken done by Azizah al-Hibri, Asifa Quraishi, Maysam al-Faruqi, Amina Wadud, and others presented in Webb's (2000) '*Windows of Faith'*. Throughout her work, Khan's (2002) definition of Islam remains elusive, although she is right to suggest that the category 'Muslim' is broader in people's identities than religious practices. In this vein, it is interesting to hear the voices of people who consider themselves secular Muslims and of non-religious people who identify or are identified as Muslims. But Islam as a textual religious tradition should not be confused with Islam as anything people who call themselves (or are called) Muslims say and do.

Khan's (2002) approach to Islam is subjective and phenomenological. She does not treat it as a given and allows for interpretative appropriation of this religion by her subjects. Islam and Muslims should be viewed in a situated manner. Islam is what Islam means to Muslims and Muslims are who they are, and not what we perceive or wish them to be. To understand religion, culture, and identity, lived experiences of people are as important as the abstract explanations offered by the experts. Yet, Khan herself does not engage different traditions within the Islamic community available to Muslim immigrants in North America. Khan complains of totalizing language and ideologies of both Orientalists and Islamists, but she also ignores the diversity of views among Islamists by not making any distinction among various Islamic traditions in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

Khan's (2002) theoretical approach to Islam poses questions about the theoretical and empirical challenges facing what has come to be termed 'Islamic feminism'. She views Islam in a much more open-ended manner than most Muslim intellectuals could imagine. It would be interesting to see how both modernist and traditionalist Islamic scholars, as the field has been divided, react to her approach. For reasons that are not hard to contemplate, the reaction seems to be muted.

Despite misgivings about her theory and methodology, Khan's (2002) work is reminder about the interplay of Muslim identity with race, gender, class, and sexual identities in the Canadian society. Diasporic communities are essentially hybrid ones, existing marginally 'between cultures', and embodying instabilities of cultural identity. Therefore, although the influence of Islam varies widely from country to country and also within countries, Muslim culture tends to be treated as normative Islam or an absolute truth. Several important insights are offered by Khan's study (2002). She highlights tensions in these women's relationships to Islam and attributes this problem partly to the long-standing effects of colonialism and current stereotypes about Muslims. She also successfully seeks to undermine essentialist notions of a 'Muslim' identity. One reason for the interviewed women's identification as Muslims is that they are defined as such by the wider, non-Muslim Canadian community to which they immigrated. Khan (2002) insightfully argues:

> 'At this intersection, women find themselves thrust into predetermined discourses and practices that help shape their agency and determine their

strategies of resistance, often to the extent that progressive politics do not appear possible within the category Muslim' (p. ix).

Khan's (2002) presentation of these women's voices, however incomplete, does raise some important issues about the difficulties of forging a Muslim identity in an anti-Muslim environment. She suggests that despite her informants' dis-identification as Muslims and the discrimination they endure on the basis of their religion, these women still desire to be Muslim.

Adolescence and ethnic identity

A significant feature of adolescence is a growth of concern with self-identity, taking in self-image, confidence in relationships, independence, personal aspirations and freedom of choice. Writers generally have agreed that ethnic is a dynamic concept, but relatively few have studied it over time. However, a number of researchers have examined changes related to generational status among immigrant groups (Rumbaut, 1998). Studies of generational differences in ethnic identity have shown a fairly consistent decline in ethnic group identification in later generations descended from immigrants (Fathi, 1972; Constantinou & Harvey, 1985). Ethnic identity was found to be similarly weaker among those who arrived at a younger age and had lived longer in the country (Garcia & Lega, 1979; Rogler *et al.*, 1980). However, a study of third and fourth generation Japanese American youth revealed virtually no generational difference (Wooden, Leon & Toshima, 1988) and a study of Chinese Americans suggests a cyclical process whereby ethnic identity became more important in third and fourth generation descendents of immigrants (Ting-Toomey, 1981). Rosenthal and Feldman (1990) found that among Chinese immigrants, ethnic knowledge and behaviour decreased between the first and second generations, but there was no change in the importance or positive value of ethnicity. The authors suggest that although some behavioural and cognitive elements of ethnic identity decline, immigrants retain a commitment to their culture.

Various aspects of ethnic identity formation are now considered including age, and gender. Situated within two cultural worlds, the second-generation Muslim females must define themselves in relation to multiple reference groups (sometimes two countries and two languages) and to the classifications into which they are placed by

their native peers, schools, the ethnic community and the larger society. Immigrants who arrive as adults seldom lose their original ethnic allegiances nor do they shed their homeland memories according to Rumbaut (in press).They come with pre-existing and fully formed identities. The central theoretical and empirical question is rather what happens to their children and how it is that they come to define their ethnic identities and sites of belonging, particularly during their passage to adulthood, the youthful years of 'identity crisis' and heightened self consciousness when the self-concept is most malleable. That developmental process can be complicated for Muslim girls by experiences of intense acculturative and generational conflicts as they strive to adapt in diasporic communities that may be radically and culturally dissonant and in family contexts where the different acculturation of parents and children may take a variety of forms. As this study is primarily concerned with teenage Muslim girls comprehension of the process of adolescence is necessary since identity formation is an important feature of the teenage years.

Ethnic identity is achieved through an active process of decision making and self evaluation. Indeed, Weinreich (1988) asserted that ethnic identity is not an entity but a complex of processes by which people construct their ethnicity. However, in research based on the social identity or acculturation frameworks, investigators have neglected identity at the level of individual change that occurs developmentally. In adolescence the search for a meaningful identity becomes even more important and the next section seeks to illuminate this important area.

Theories of adolescence

A general theory of adolescence was proposed by G. Stanley Hall (1904), who is usually credited with the 'discovery' of adolescence (Griffin, 1993). Adolescence is a process, which is spread out over a number of years and is technically regarded as commencing with puberty (Chadwick, 1932). However, adolescence cannot be perceived as merely a biological event as the period of adolescence has profound sociological and psychological implications. Hemming (1960) examined the incipient research into adolescence and observed that adolescents do not merely react to endocrine changes within themselves; they react in ways characteristic of the society in which they live. Furthermore, he noted that social anthroplogists discovered that social

expectations about adolescence vary from culture to culture and adolescents mirror these expectations in their adopted attitudes and the way in which they behave.

A developmental framework was provided by Erikson (1950, 1968) who observed that his coinage of the terms 'identity' and 'identity crisis' was inspired by 'the experience of emigration, immigration and Americanization, in a country which attempts to make a super-identity of all the identities imported by its constituent immigrants' (quoted in Rumbaut 1994, p. 753). According to Erikson, an achieved identity is the result of a period of exploration and experimentation that typically takes place during adolescence and that leads to a decision or a commitment in various areas, such as occupation, religion and political orientation. For children of immigrants, that developmental process can be complicated by experiences of intense acculturative and inter-generational conflicts as they strive to adapt in social identity contexts which may be radically and culturally dissonant. Although Erikson alluded to the importance of culture in identity formation, this model has not been widely applied to the study of ethnic identity.

The concept of developmental tasks introduced by Havighurst (1949) formed a basis of synthesising various fields of study of adolescence. He initially listed ten developmental tasks facing the adolescent, but later shortened the list to five. This included learning an appropriate sex role, achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults, getting along with peers, developing intellectual skills and developing conscience, moriality and a set of values. Others recommended similar lists (Cole 1943; Kuhlen 1989). Thus, the early literature presents adolescence as a period of conflict and uncertainty, isolation and adjustment. Hemming (1960) points out that while adolescence itself does not generate problems, it is a period of vulnerability. He argues that much of the conflict that arises between parents and their adolescent children is the direct outcome of the attempt of parents to apply to their children the attitudes and rules, which their own parents apply to them.

Offer (1969), acknowledges that the transitional period of adolescence presents the adolescent with a special burden, a challenge and an opportunity, since adolescents have to individualise, build up confidence in themselves and their abilities, make important decisions concerning their future and free themselves of their earlier

attachments to parents. Nevertheless, the majority of teenagers in his sample coped with these tasks successfully. As this was contrary to what most theoreticians proclaimed, Offer (1969) observes that because of the low level of turmoil in his sample, someone might view his subjects as cases of arrested development, a bad prognostic sign, which must necessarily prevent the adolescent from developing into a mature adult.

Kandel and Lesser (1972) reached similar conclusions. They conducted a comparative study of large samples of both Danish and American teenagers, concentrating particularly on home and school life and the relations between the two. They concluded that American and Danish adolescents are surprisingly close to their parents; they tend not to rebel against authority; and they often share their parents' goals for their future role in society therefore, representing a challenge to the view of adolescence as a turbulent time. The findings also fail to support the concept of an extensive gap between parents and their adolescent child, as far as both the quality of family life or personal aspirations of adolescents' future role in society are concerned. The notion of the proverbial generation gap was also challenged in an earlier study by Douvan and Adelson (1966). They argued that the conflict between the parent and the adolescent, the autonomy issue and the role of the peer group have all been exaggerated in theory. They note that the normative adolescent tends to avoid overt conflict with his/her family. If conflict is present, it is a largely unconscious conflict, often based on trivial issues such as clothes and make up rather than on more serious issues.

Thus, the empiricists reject the pessimistic theoretical portrayal of adolescence. In particular, they call into question the extent to which turmoil and rebellion actually form an integral part of adolescence (Coleman, 1974; Offer, Ostrov & Howard, 1981). Coleman (1978) notes the sharp divergence of opinion between what has been called the 'classical' and 'empirical' points of view. He contends that beliefs about adolescence, which stem from theory (the classical view), do not in general correspond with the results of research (the empirical view). He notes, in accordance with many other writers, that psycho-analysts and psychiatrists see a selected population and their experience of adolescents based on individuals they meet in clinics or hospitals. This encourages a somewhat one-sided perspective in which turmoil or disturbance is over-

represented. Similarly, sociologists see youth as being in the forefront of social change and confuse radical forces in society with the beliefs of ordinary young people.

Coleman (1980) points to the serious limitations of current theories. He argues that both psychoanalytic and sociological theories are based on the development of atypical young people. Furthermore, such theories have been extremely slow to take account of empirical evidence that has become available. Although he acknowledges the value of these theories in contributing towards the understanding of teenagers with problems, nevertheless, he considers them inadequate as a basis for insight into the development of the great majority of young people. Coleman (1980) observes that it is important to recognise that there is as yet no theoretical approach, which embodies as its main tenet, the essential normality of the adolescent process. However, later debate on adolescence (Furnham & Stacey, 1991) does point out that adolescence is a period of adaption and adjustments. The transition between childhood and adulthood cannot be achieved without substantial adaption and adjustments of both a psychological and social nature. Yet most young people appear to pass through this stage without undue stress.

Coleman (1980) proposed a 'focal theory' of adolescence. According to this theory, at different ages and different times, particular sorts of relationship patterns and issues come into focus, in the sense of being the most pertinent. Concerns about heterosexual relationships peak around 11, concerns about peer acceptance around 15, and about relationship to, and independence from, parents at 15 for girls and 17 for boys. Therefore, adolescents deal with one issue at a time and, thereby spread the process of adaption over a span of years. The stresses resulting from the need to adapt to new modes of behaviour are rarely concentrated all at one time. Problems arise if the individual does have more than one issue to cope with. Coleman's (1980) theory as regards a theory of normality for adolescence is apposite, since evidence form empirical research points in this direction.   However, the model appears to be reductionist as it has been criticised for not taking into account economic problems and unemployment. Furthermore, adolescence is a period of rapid development and vicissitudes and the teenager encounters several issues concurrently. These may be associated with friendships, examinations, shyness, bullying, racism and parental restrictions. Hence, it is not always possible to deal with one problem at once. The 'normal' theory of adolescence would need to be constructed differently. Moreover,

Gilligan (1982) recognised that traditional theories of adolescence might only apply to males and despite the theoreticians' emphasis on adolescence as a period of breaking away, studies of women and girls appear to contradict any theory postulating separation and individuation to be ubiquitous.

The adolescent Muslim female identity.

Patterson *et al*., (1992) point out that Josselson's (1988) conceptualisation of women's identity offers an integrative framework from which to view several previously puzzling aspects of women's identity. First, interpersonal content areas are more prominent concerns for women than for men, at least in the adolescent years. Second, although women may approach the task of identity formation during adolescence, there are other times in women's lives when they can be expected to be involved in the moratorium process, either for the first time or in a re-evaluation of earlier identity choices. In general, it seems that transitions in important inter-personal relationships often precipitate a reformation of identity. This is particularly true when relationship changes result in a lessening of the women's responsibility for others. Third, issues of identity and intimacy seem to blend for women.

Stern (1990) observes that if some sort of breaking away is a central concern of adolescence, while connecting to others is a central interest for females, then for female adolescents the conflict between these opposing tendencies will create a major existential dilemma. In her study on 23 young women, who were interviewed each year for three years, she notes that while issues of separation and connection are both foremost concerns for these young women, they seldom place these two approaches to relationships in opposition by constructing conflicts where they must choose either separation or connection. Rather separation and connection are seen as two compatible aspects of a person. Stern (1990) suggests that these aspects not only co-exist, but can also function in the service of the other. Developing independence is seen as improving the capacity to meet one's own needs, so that others can be appreciated as people rather than as instrumental providers. In reducing the pre-occupation with receiving care, there is a heightened capacity to look outside oneself and attend to others. At the same time, relationships provide the support one needs to push one's own development

further. Thus females construct their identities within a context of relationships. This process is manifest in the present research.

Bhachu (1991) writes of British Asian women as 'cultural entrepreneurs who have taken up roles as innovators and originators of new cultural forms' (p.402). To be a British Asian female means a mix of two cultures Asian and British. Basit's research (1997) with adolescent Muslim females found no evidence of rebellion. She concluded that the attitudes of her sample do:

> 'not conform to the straightjacket of rebellion, it does not fit into that of compliance either… the participants were not passive recipients of cultural legacy but active participants in shaping their identity. There was a complex and subtle link between identity and aspiration-set parameters' (p.156).

Although caution should be exercised as her ethnographic study made no claims of generalisabilty, these conclusions challenge the models of adolescence discussed earlier. Furthermore, Kay's (2006) study of female Muslim adolescents found 'for the most part the young women were accepting of parental authority and shared their parents' views on appropriate behaviour' (p.369), although it was evident that some questioned these expectations. This combination of small indications of individualism, counterbalanced by explicit reference to Islamic teachings in relation to day-to-day activities, concurs with recent analyses that reveal the complexity of ethnicity in Britain (Modood *et al.*, 1997; Parekh, 2000; Kay, 2007).

If gender is a variable in adolescent identity then ethnic and cultural background are also important mediating variables. Authors have distinguished between components of identity that arise out of choices available to individuals in their social contexts and components of identity over which individuals have no choice, but around which they must construct meaning (Grotevant, 1992). Immigrants come to their adopted country with labels such as Asian, African-Caribbean or Chinese amongst others. Whether or not they want to be identified by their country of origin, these racial and ethnic identifiers stick to them and even two or three generations later, their children may still be identified by means of these labels. Therefore, the process of identity formation in ethnic minority adolescents may be a complex phenomenon.

Stopes-Roe and Cochrane (1991) observe that determining identity may be difficult for people who have experience of two cultures and particularly difficult for young people who are nurtured by parents and families steeped in one tradition, but who grow up in close contact and daily interaction with another tradition. Brah and Shaw (1992) note in their research with Asian people in Britain, that these young adults are ambivalent about being British or Pakistani or Indian. This conclusion was further supported by Jacobson (1998) who found a 'theme of uncertainty' (p.79) in her study of British Pakistani youths regarding the question of ethnic identity. Similar variations were documented by Ellis (1991) in her study on Muslims in Coventry. She observed differences within the Muslim community in identifying themselves: while some will insist on seeing themselves first as Pakistanis and then as Muslims, others identify themselves first as Muslims and then as Pakistanis, then as Kashmiris. Ellis notes that while the level of family's insistence on ethnic identity will often affect that of the younger generation, very often such perceptions of ethnic differences are giving way to an identification as British Muslims.

Brah and Shaw (1992) also contend that for young Asians 'home' is the particular locality of Britain where they have grown up. Their 'Asianess' is not that of Mirpur, Lahore, Jullundher or Nairobi, but they are firmly rooted in Birmingham, Bradford, London and so on. Basit (1997) notes that the Muslim family, through socialisation, teaches a child about the world and the skills necessary to succeed. It also helps its children to acquire the attitudes, values and appropriate patterns of interaction conducive to their social and political environment. The 'black' family provides a sense of identity and historical continuity by instilling in its offspring a sense of racial purpose and pride, thereby preparing its children to live among white people without becoming white people (Ladner, 1978)

In an attempt to study ethnic identity formation, Phinney (1989) examined commonalities across various models of ethnic identity formation and proposed a three stage progression (see table 1.) from an unexamined ethnic identity through a period of exploration to an achieved or committed ethnic identity.

Table 1. Phinney's three stage progression of ethnic identity.

Stage:	1. Unexamined ethnic identity	2. Ethnic identity search (Moratorium)	3. Achieved ethnic identity
Processes	Lack of exploration of ethnicity. Possible subtypes: a) Diffusion: lack of interest and concern for ethnicity b) Foreclosure: views of ethnicity based on opinions of others	Involvement in exploring and seeking to understand meaning of ethnicity for oneself	Clear, confident sense of own ethnicity.

According to Phinney's model, early adolescents, and perhaps adults who have not been exposed to ethnic identity issues, are in stage one, an unexamined ethnic identity. Cross (1978) and others (e.g. Atkinson *et al.*, 1983) suggest that this is characterised by a preference for the majority culture. However, such a preference is not necessarily characteristic of this stage. Young people may simply not be interested in ethnicity and may have given it little thought. Their ethnic identity is, therefore, diffuse. Alternatively, they may have absorbed positive ethnic attitudes from parents and from other adults and, therefore, may not show a preference for the majority group. These adolescents have a foreclosed identity, which represents a commitment to an ethnic identity without exploration, usually on the basis of parental values. As parental values represent an important focal point for many Muslim females, this may represent an important route to their identity formation.

The second stage is characterized by an exploration of one's own ethnicity, which is similar to a moratorium status described in an earlier model of adolescence by Marcia (1980). This may take place as a result of a significant experience that forces awareness of one's ethnicity. According to Phinney (1989), it involves an often intense process of immersion in one's own culture through activities such as reading, talking to people, going to ethnic museums, and participating actively in cultural events. For some individuals, it might involve the rejection of the values of the dominant culture. Phinney's (1989) stage model suggests that as a result of this process people come to a deeper understanding and appreciation of their ethnicity, that is, ethnic identity

achievement or internalization. This culmination may require resolution or coming to terms with two fundamental problems for ethnic minorities: i) cultural differences between their own group and the dominant group; and ii) the lower or disparaged status of their own group. In relation to the first factor, for majority group youths who are in an ethnically consonant context, ethnic self identity tends not to be salient but contextual dissonance heightens the salience of ethnicity and ethnic group boundaries (Rosenberg, 1979). There are various ways in which the dissonance can be reduced, one could be to assimilate with the relevant social context; an alternative is to reaffirm their ethnic solidarity. This is exemplified by some of the female participants in a study by Atasoy (2006), who found that women wear the veil as a sign of identity, 'symbolizing resistance to the dominance of European cultural codes' (p.205). Nevertheless, Shaw (1994) observes that:

> 'most young British Muslims, while giving the appearance of being thoroughly 'Westernised' in the sense of being fluent English speakers and holders of educational and professional qualifications, are often committed to cultural distinctiveness and upholding their community's moral and religious identity' (p.35).

Furthermore Shaw, on Pakistani communities in Britain, speaks of the 'marked reluctance to adopt western attitudes and the tenacious retention together with a deep resistance to assimilation' (p.35).

The meaning of ethnic identity achievement is undoubtedly different for different individuals and groups because of their different historical and personal experiences. Additionally, Phinney (1990) recognises that the process does not necessarily end with ethnic identity achievement but may continue in cycles that involve further exploration or re-thinking about the role of one's ethnicity. Involvement in the social life and cultural practices of one' ethnic group is the most widely used indicator of ethnic identity but also one of the most problematic. As long as measures are based on specific practices that distinguish an ethnic group, it is impossible to generalize across groups. The indicators of ethnic involvement are language, friendship, social organizations, religion, cultural traditions and politics and finally miscellaneous ethnic/cultural activities and attitudes (Parham, 1989).

Researchers have attempted to identify the salience of these components by factor analysis. However because of the variety of types and the numbers of items used from the above list, different results have been found. Some researchers have found a single factor for ethnic identity or two or more factors (e.g. Phinney, 1990, 1997). Also, the salience of components differed widely between ethnic groups. Gender, may also be a variable in acculturation in that there may be different cultural expectations for males and females. As previously stated, women are the carriers of ethnic traditions (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Most commentators recognise the salience of all of the above factors for the Muslim female identity. According to Anwar *et al.,* (1998), 'religion is the main basis for ethnic identification' (p.117). Peers are also recognised as the most important feature of a child's school experience (Lomax, 1978) and once in school, children become part of a social system and are subjected to a variety of influences. Most important of all, they become members of a group of age-mates, most often from the same stream. These groups have values, norms and status hierarchies, which every member must take into account (Hargreaves, 1967) and their influence on behaviour in schools, inside classrooms and within the local environment should never be underestimated, especially among adolescents who are at a vulnerable age (Reid *et al.*, 1987). As individual experiences of the world begin to extend beyond the family, the influence of the peer group on an individual is very strong, particularly during the period of adolescence, 'a period of idealism as well as questioning, doubts, rebellion and frustrations' (Ashraf, 1988 p. 105).

Key Influences on the adolescent female Muslim identity

Friendship choices

The significance of friendship groups has been widely researched (Basit, 1997). There are, however, gender differences (Furlong, 1976). For Muslim females, this is further complicated by culture and religion in that there are significantly more friendships between pupils of the same sex and they may be sensitive to their parents' stance regarding boyfriends. Studies of children's friendships in the UK and the USA have generally identified a fair degree of same race preference (Smith & Tomlinson, 1989; Verma 1994; Connolly 1998; Bhatti 1999; Moody, 2004), but they also show that they vary greatly between schools, and between ethnic groups. It is also recognised that the

homophily principle operates within the Muslim community (Anwar, 1998). This principle according to McPherson *et al.,* (2001) structures network ties of every type, including marriage, friendship, work, and other types of relationship. The result is that people's personal networks are homogeneous with regard to many socio-demographic, behavioural, and intra-personal characteristics. Homophily limits people's social worlds in a way that has powerful implications for the information they receive, the attitudes they form, and the interactions they experience. Homophily in race and ethnicity creates the strongest divides in personal environments, with age, religion, education, occupation, and gender following in roughly that order. Geographic propinquity, families, organizations, and isomorphic positions in social systems all create contexts in which homophilous relations form. The implications of homophily for identity formation are that pressure from peers from culture can tauten the tug of war of ethnic and national loyalties (Rumbaut, in press).

Basit (1997) explained that the preference for Muslim friends may be due to first, the issue of freedom and second, issues surrounding the home and family, of traditional beliefs and lifestyles. Other writers such as Atasoy (2006) reported from one of her respondents that 'some girls are stronger in practising Islamic rules and some aren't' (p.210). Religious strength is, therefore, crucial to the formation of friendships as exemplified in the following extract from one of Atasoy's interviews:

> 'I can't spend much time with my non-Muslim friends, it is totally legitimate because they are at University and now and then they want to go to the bar. I can't participate in that. I've gone to movies with them but again they want to go with their boyfriends. In Islam there is usually no interaction with men unless it is necessary' (p.211).

This respondent illustrates the difficulty in socialising with non-Muslim friends in certain contexts. Basit's (1997) article illustrates clearly why this may be the case. She contends that the dynamics of family values shape the present and future aspirations of Muslim girls. Rumbaut (in press) also states that

> 'the family plays a central role in the process of ethnic socialization. It is the crucible of the child's first notions of belonging and home, and it is within the family that the child first learns about and forms ethnic attachments and self-concepts. Even in the sometimes bumpy passage through adolescence and under varying degrees of acculturation, how these

youths think and feel about themselves continue to be affected by the parents' modes of ethnic socialization and by the strength of the attachment that the child feels to the parents' (p.14).

It is clear that the biggest factor influencing the friendship patterns of adolescent Muslim girls is a similitude of circumstances, mores and values. As Hargreaves (1967) pointed out, a person's membership of a group indicates that s/he behaves in ways which are acceptable to other members and that the values acquired in the home and the values held by the peer group reinforce each other. Most Muslim girls have close friends who share their way of life (Afshar, 1989; Ellis, 1991; and Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1991). These girls have been socialised to live their lives in a particular way and hence they refrain from indulging in similar pastimes to their non-Muslim friends. Furthermore, there is also a strong tendency for these adolescent girls to have close friends whose families are known to their families. They are, therefore, free to visit these girls and vice versa. Such friendships have parental approval and thus transcend the school-based interaction sets (Furlong, 1976; 1984), as the girls could see one another out of school as well. Parental approval of friends allows less room for conflict and rebellion. It is now necessary to examine the role of the family in more detail to investigate the role in the shaping of the Muslim female identity.

Relationships with parents

Although most commentators recognise that the family is still highly valued in all classes and ethnic groups in Britain, family life is the basis and cornerstone of Islamic society and obedience and respect for the parents is constantly stressed in Islamic teachings (Joly, 1987). The Qur'an (92:83; 2:215; 46: 15; 47:22) and the Hadith [4] repeatedly emphasise the rights of the parents and relatives. Children internalise the values of parents at an early age and, thus, learn to behave in accordance with the ethos of the family. They also feel that they owe a debt of gratitude to their parents (Ballard, 1994). Leonard and Speakman (1986) observe that before they are married, young adults living at home owe a certain degree of obedience and deference to their families. Nevertheless, a point, which is frequently missed in the literature, is that Islamic teaching obligates Muslims to show such courteous regard to their parents even after they are married and, indeed, throughout their lives. Muslim parents do not necessarily regard their children as adults when they reach eighteen. The parents feel responsible

for, and protective towards, their children until they marry. As such, marriage represents freedom from parental authority. Exceptions may be made in the case of unmarried sons who become financially independent by becoming employed and supporting their family; such allowances are not made to their unmarried daughters even when they are financially active, as young women are more closely protected and are perceived as the epitome of family honour.

It has often been reported by the media and academia that British Asian Muslims lead a dual and parallel way of life and face conflict at home and at school (Sharpe, 1976; McDermott & Ahsan, 1980; Wade & Souter, 1992). Basit's (1997) research found little evidence of such conflict in her interviews with Muslim adolescent females. Most of those interviewed by Basit (1997) did not want the same amplitude of freedom as their English contemporaries had. Although they were clearly influenced by the western notion of freedom (Griffin, 1985; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1991) and admitted that they felt freer when in school and enjoyed themselves more when in the company of their friends, they selected friends who shared their way of life (Afshar, 1989). Basit (1997) found no evidence of girls' friendship groups like the 'posse' noted by Mac an Ghaill (1994). Fewer girls reported having a boyfriend as there was less social pressure on them to do so. The girls also reported that they had the freedom to do what they liked at home and they also appeared to appreciate the reasons for not being given more freedom by parents. Mirza (1992) also reported similar findings in her study of African-Caribbean girls whose perceptions of discipline and control matched those of their parents.

Basit (1997) suggested that there was a psychological defence mechanism, of rationalisation in operation. Where the girls were envious of the freedom of their western counterparts, they nevertheless rationalised it by saying that English parents do not care about their children, which served to justify the lack of freedom experienced by the British Muslim girls. Shaw (1994) goes further to say that the controlling activities of parents is widely perceived as the essence of the Muslim's community protecting itself from corrosive western influences. Parental guidance and control also shape the leisure activities of young women (Basit, 1997). This finding is supported by Pfister's (2000) research, which found that Turkish girls and women living in Germany spent much of their leisure time at home. Indeed, leisure time was limited to helping

with housework, visiting relatives, or homework, which leaves very little time and energy for sport.

Although British Asian Muslim families attach a great deal of importance to education, many are worried about the perceived corruptive influence of a largely secular society (Basit, 1995). Schools are seen as a means of upward social mobility, but also as a potential threat to their pubescent daughters (Afshar, 1989). In particular, in certain areas of the curriculum, such as sexual health and PE, there may be difficulties. Although the liberal views inherent in the sexual health curriculum may reflect the actual political, legal and economic circumstances in western society (Halstead & Reiss, 2003), there is a strong argument for the inclusion of religious and cultural values in sexual health (Sanjakdar, 2000).

According to Sanjakdar (2000), socialising and nurturing students in the Islamic faith and enhancing students' knowledge of the Islamic way of life, becomes imperative during the students' secondary school years. Education in Britain is compulsory until the age of 16. Muslim parents are, therefore, legally bound to send their daughters to school. It is often thought that they do so reluctantly and in the process create numerous problems with their demands such as for segregated PE lessons. It is proposed that there is a gap between the home and the school in that the aspirations of the home are moulded by the Islamic religion and Asian culture of the parent and the aspirations of the school are shaped by the secular western society. The present research, therefore, aimed to illuminate the factors, which shape the experiences of PE for Muslim females. In particular, parental guidance and control can influence the leisure activities of Muslim females, which can have an impact in participation in after school sport. Basit (1997) reported a tacit disapproval from parents as regards staying back after school, once their daughters were pubescent. The girls, therefore, refrained from participating in after-school activities as they seemed to agree with the parents.

Adolescents who belong to minority groups may develop multiple identities to help them realise their aspirations. While adolescence is partly moulded by outside agencies such as the media, the incipient quest for identity during this period may be influenced by intrinsic features pertaining to religion, family and peers. The process of settling down in a country, where the majority culture and religion is different, is difficult. It is

necessary, therefore, to examine whether teachers appreciate the pressures faced by their Muslim pupils.

It is clear that parental views shape the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of their adolescent daughters, but, the teachers' views may have an impact on the formation of the girls' identities. Nevertheless, the girls themselves also constantly negotiate their own identities and create distinct identities in different contexts without compromising their ethnicity, language and religion. Adolescent Mulsim girls are not passive recipients of advice but can also actively participate in creating their identities.

Basit (1997) reported in her study of educational aspiration among Muslim female adolescents that

> '...The identities of these adolescent Muslim girls are dynamic and helical not static. They change according to the vicissitudes of life. Furthermore, these multiple identities are linked to the multiple aspirations of these girls in complex ways' (p.79).

Bhachu (1993) also maintains that negative portrayals of ethnic minority women as passive recipients of culture fail to take into account the 'transformative powers of Asian women in generating and manufacturing their cultural system' (p.113). While the first generation of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women to arrive in Britain lacked education and occupational qualifications, together with a limited fluency in English, their daughters may be fully competent in English and have gained qualifications not available to their mothers, and most have also been exposed to western cultural values (Dale *et al*., 2002). Bertoud (2000) and Ahmad (2001) also highlight that participation rates in higher education for British South Asian Muslims are increasing. It can, therefore, be seen that young Muslim women in Britain are negotiating their identities. The legacy of their family's country of origin is a critical component of their experiences. According to Kay (2006), 'changes in family life and educational experiences place Muslim women in the vanguard of changing ethnic identitites in Britain, and represent points of divergence and possible conflict between young women and their parents' (p.362). However, Kay does conclude from her research on the sporting participation of young Muslim women that the young women were

accepting of parental authority and shared their parents' views on appropriate behaviour.

Religion

According to Tajfel's definition of social identity the ethnic identity of any group is his or her knowledge, values and feelings in relation to membership of an ethnic minority that originates in Pakistan and/or the Indian subcontinent; the religious identity is likewise his or her knowledge relating to membership of the Muslim minority in Britain and also the global Muslim *umma* (community of believers).

Some scholars in the field of ethnicity tend to regard religion as a component of ethnic identity; for example, Nash (1989) lists religion along with nationality, shared history, language and body, that is assumptions about biological origins expressed in terms of genes, blood, flesh and so on as the basic 'building blocks' of ethnicity. In the case of people of Pakistani descent, ethnicity as a source of identity is closely related to religion; the history of Pakistan, founded as a nation for India's Muslims ensures that Pakistanis are likely to associate being Pakistani with being Muslim. In addition, given that the Pakistanis make up the largest Muslim group there is little to distinguish the local Muslim from the local Pakistani community and religion and ethnic traditions are closely intertwined as part of day-to-day social practices.

The decision to treat religion and ethnicity as different bases of social identity despite their being so closely intertwined, is partially based on the belief that there is a useful analytic distinction to be made to a universal religion with a global reach and membership of a social group defined with reference to a place of origin. Furthermore, as is later demonstrated in discussion of respondents' attitudes to their religion, this distinction is important.

Social identities are, therefore, multi dimensional as well as interpenetrative: there are many aspects of the lives of young people, which can, potentially at least, reflect their belonging to the given social group. For example, regular religious practice and adherence to Islamic values in day-to-day life and private study of Islam and feelings of solidarity to fellow Muslims in Britain may contribute to the individual's sense of

religious identity. On the other hand, ethnic identity might be expressed through norms governing South Asian family life, an interest in the culture and history of the Indian sub-continent and an attachment to Pakistan as a place that can be at times called 'home'. Where respondents perceive they have a national identity as British, this might reflect assumptions about legal definitions of citizenship and the impact of a set of values associated with life in modern Britain; but at the same time an awareness of a resistance to Islamophobia and the racialisation of religion on the part of white Britons may provoke feelings of exclusion from certain definitions of 'Britishness'.

Tajfel's (1981) theory encourages a dynamic approach to identity on account of its emphasis upon the 'complex dialectical relationship between social identity and social settings' (Cairne 1982, p.283). This notion of social identity as dynamic is central to this study: both because at a collective level, there appears to be inter-generational changes taking place in perceptions of nationality and ethnicity and religion within the Pakistani community, also at the individual level respondents have 'identity options'. This term was used by Rex and Josephides (1987) in referring to the situation of second generation British Asians. Indeed, this was evident in research by Jacobson (1998)

In Islam, a human being must be treated as a spiritual and moral being, therefore, PE for Muslim students cannot be purely physical without any spiritual or moral dimensions. The concept of natural modesty in Islam goes far beyond a specific Islamic dress code, but deals with the entire spectrum of Islamic behaviour, attitude and etiquette. According to Pfister (2000), immigrants living in foreign countries frequently experience conflicts of identity and in the attempt to form an identity, often adhere to traditional values much more strictly than they would have done in their home country. Hence, in discussing Muslim women's participation in sport/physical activity, their social situation should be taken into account by asking the question whether an athletic appearance is a fervent wish of the Muslim female. Pfister's (2000) study of Turkish Muslim females revealed that an athletic appearance was not a fervent wish of Turkish girls and is incompatible with ideals of femininity and taste: '...An athletic lifestyle or a muscular body is not compatible with Turkish ideals of femininity and Turkish 'taste' (Pfister, 2000 p. 513). Although Pfister did report that slimness

combined with feminine curves is an ideal whose acceptance is growing and therefore, may encourage women to take up exercise to stay slim.

Body shape and size and their relationship to physical activities such as sport and exercise have long become markers of gender identity. Several researchers (Gorely *et al*., 2003) report evidence on this issue, first by considering young people's constructions of the relationship between masculinity and muscle, secondly, by considering femininity and muscularity and finally by analysing their perceptions of the risk of transgressing conventional boundaries of gender and sexuality (Walseth (2006) also found from her study of Muslim females that to participate in a competitive sport is a male activity and, thus, inappropriate for young women. Additionally, Walseth discovered that sport is a way for females to challenge ethnic boundaries of femininity and those who put more weight on the religious aspects of their ethnic identity are more likely to participate because of the health benefits of exercise.

The concept of religion is subject to various and contested definitions within social science. Of the broad perspectives on religion which are the most appropriate, are those, which treat religion as a meaning-system in the sense that Islamic tradition to which the study's sample of respondents adhere is self-evidently religious according to the major understandings of this term. Jacobson (1998) found in her study of British Pakistani youth that Islam for second generation Pakistanis 'plays a vital part in their lives as a source of meaning' (p.21). Religion has a significant role in the lives of many human beings to the extent to which they may want to identify themselves by their religion only. Human identity formation is a necessary and central function of religion (Bellah, 1968; Mil, 1976). Religion serves a basic and important function in, and for, society by preventing anomy. This brings us to the point of definition. Religion has been defined as 'a sacred cosmos that bestows the ultimate valid identity on humans; the name by which they are known to God' (Berger, 1967, p. 32) According to Berger, one of the primary functions of religion in society is to serve as a legitimating force. As such, religion reinforces and maintains the socially defined reality.

Geertz (1966) defines religion as:

> 'a system of symbols which act to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing those conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic'. (p.4)

This definition seems to follow directly from Berger's (1967) externalization, objectivation, and internalization. However, Durkheim's definition of religion as a system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things (set apart as wholly other), which unite individuals into a moral community, also relies heavily upon the assumption that man is the creator and creature of his socially constructed world.

O'Dea (1970) brings together these basic functions of religion for society and the individual with the following definition:

> 'Religion identifies the individual with his group, supports him in uncertainty, consoles him in disappointment, attaches him to society's goals, enhances his morale, and provides him with elements of identity. It acts to reinforce the unity and stability of society by supporting social control enhancing established values and goals, and providing the means for overcoming guilt and alienation. It may also perform a prophetic role and prove itself an unsettling or even subversive influence in any particular society. The contributions of religion to society may be either positive or negative--religion may support society's continued existence, or religion may play a part in undermining society' (p.128).

Religion plays an important part in most British Muslim communities and guides the principles by which they live. Sharpe (1976) argues that religious beliefs and principles determine their moral ethics from the social milieu in which they live into one centred around many requisites of behaviour. Such requisites include moral conformity, loyalty and cooperation, self-discipline, recognition of the dominant authority of the elders, respect for marriage and the advocation of modesty and restraint. However, these principles are confronted by the ethos of a capitalist and largely secular British society that impinges on the beliefs of these religious minorities, thus exerting pressure on them to adapt to the majority view.

However, individuals may believe in the teachings of a certain religion but not practise it fully in their everyday lives. (Delamont, 1980). This may be particularly true of British Muslims, the majority of whom originate from south Asian countries. Nevertheless, as Basit (1995) observes, 'it is very rare for a Muslim to become a non-believer or non-practising. S/he may become non practising due to laziness , but since Islam is not just a religion rather a way of life, every good act in life is an act of worship' (p.281). Consequently, etiquette and belief are closely connected and Muslims are required by their religion to live their lives according to their teachings.

The religiosity of British Muslims can be seen in a continuum, on the one end of which are those who live their lives entirely according to the tenets of Islam; clearly an ideal to be attained by all Muslims. On the other hand there are those who call themselves Muslims due to their belief in God the Creator and also because they were born to Muslim parents; they, however, do not practise the religion as dictated by the five pillars of Islam. The majority of British Muslims may fall somewhere in the middle of these two extremes whereby they identify strongly with the ethos of an Islamic Society but do not practise the teachings of the religion as staunchly as the first group, as far as worship is concerned.

Wherever the individual may lie on the continuum, it is recognised by many writers that religion will give a sense of identity, comfort and a set of moral rules to live by. There is a great diversity in the way Muslims interpret Islam and how they see religion being positioned in society (Hjaerp, 1983; Walseth & Fasting, 2003; Kay, 2006). Muslim females who hold a modernist position may conceptualise religion as playing a relatively narrow role within a secular society, adopt westernized practices, including clothing styles and may be unconcerned about engaging in physical activities in a mixed setting. On the other hand, Muslim women adhering to the more traditional interpretations of Islam follow Islamic teachings that include the importance of concealing the body from male view. They are likely to symbolise this through wearing the veil, which may be the hijab (headscarf covering the hair and neck only), the krimar (which covers the whole upper body except the face) or the niqab (the face veil, often worn with the krimar), and to consider participation in sport inappropriate unless it takes place in settings, where they are guaranteed to be wholly concealed from the male gaze.

Few attempts have been made to gather quantitative data on the patterns of religious commitment and practice among British Muslims. However, research by Modood (1997) and Jacobson (1998) include valuable sections on religion of second generation and first generation Muslims. Modood found that 65% of Muslim males from Pakistani backgrounds visit a mosque at least once a week compared with 80% of older respondents. Jacobson found that Islam provided meaning and a sense of identity for her Pakistani sample. She did find that the second-generation of Muslims were willing to question what they had learned from their parents in the light of their experience of growing up in Britain and to reformulate to some extent religious ideas to make sure they have relevance to lives spent in a western environment. This blending of the modern and the traditional allowed young British Asians the abilty to move with reasonable ease between alternative social settings while presenting what is deemed an appropriate image or an appropriate behaviour within each. Ballard (1994) refers to the 'code switching of young British Asians who act as skilled cultural navigators with a sophisticated capacity to manoeuvre their way to their advantage both inside and outside their ethnic colony' (p. 31). Whilst it is important to be cautious in generalising from these studies, it appears that religion seems to be motivating young Pakistani and other Muslims in Britain albeit to different degrees. The present study focuses on the interplay between Islam and school-based PE.

Summary

In summary, stances within the literature on gender relations within Islam vary according to the perspective and situation of the author. However, a common feature in the literature relates to the imbalance of power between males and females. An additional feature to be considered is how adolescent Muslim females negotiate their identities. Rosenthal and Hrynevich (1985) discovered that adolescents report that their feelings of being ethnic vary according to the situation they are in and the people they are with. The present work aims to add to the body of knowledge by providing a detailed study of Muslim schoolgirls and their PE teachers in two schools in order to understand the meanings given to PE. This thesis understands identity formation to be a contested terrain where race intersects with other forms of social identity

The paths to the formation of ethnic identities are shaped by a variety of social and psychological forces. Research suggests that identities are neither fixed nor irreversible

but always a function of relational processes whose meaning is embedded in concrete social and historical contexts. (Rumbaut, in press, p. 21). Studies have shown that ethnic identities are contextually malleable and may be hypothesised to vary across different social situations and across different development stages through the life course and across different historical contexts. As Jenkins (1997) reminds us, we should not think of culture and ethnicity as object people possess but rather should see tham as 'complex repertoires which people experience, use, learn and 'do' in their daily lives, within which they construct an ongoing sense of themselves and in understanding of their fellows' (p.14).

The social identity theory underpins the study but other perspectives are used where appropriate to inform and extend that interpretation. This 'creative', multi-dimensional approach should enrich the potential insights that can be gained from this research. In relation to the vital link between theory and method the selective qualitative methods (to be discussed in Chapter 4) offered the most appropriate ways of searching for deeper understandings of the life experiences explored.

Chapter 3

The Physical Education Context

The second aim of this thesis was to investigate whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE. Literature on the Islamic position on PE is limited but there is a greater reference to sport, as signified in Naciri's (1973) observation that 'Islam exhorts its followers to take up sports and to inculcate this practice in their children at an early age...For nothing in religion or tradition bars this' (p.600). Since Nacrini refers to inculcation in sports practice at an early age, his observation is helpful to the present study because sport is encompassed within the PE curriculum. The Qur'an and Hadiths encourage physical activity as an important part of development (Ibrahim, 1982; Sfeir, 1985; Alogleh, 1986; Kamiyole, 1993; Daiman, 1994; Daiman, 1995; Takim, 1998). For example, the Prophet Mohammed instructed Muslims to be health conscious and to be 'ready to fight with the best weapons and arms' (Sfeir, 1985, p.293). There are also accounts of the Prophet racing against his wife Aisha and of women participating in 'military expeditions (for religious achievements), bringing water to the thirsty combatants, treating the wounded and carrying them to safety, and sometimes engaging in warfare' (Daiman, 1994, p. 14). The evidence of Muslim women's participation in sporting activities is erratic and constantly changing in relation to political situations, but in general, it does not reflect a liberal or supportive position. In all Muslim countries, the issue of female participation in sport is tied to strongly held beliefs about the female body embraced by culture, tradition, religion and politics. Webb's (2000) research highlighted how the words of the Qur'an have become the measure of right and wrong within the legal sphere. Hargreaves (2000) takes a similar line of argument when she notes '... For women's bodies in sport, as in other areas of life and culture, the Qur'an has become the measure of right and wrong… as a result the woman's body is the site of power and struggle' (p.47).

Islamic religion in no way tries to deprecate, much less deny sport for women. On the contrary, it attributes great significance and function to physical strength and sporting activities. Islam is a constant concern with one's body, cleanliness, purification and force, with segregation of the sexes. But certain religious elements, such as Islamic fatalism and Hindu mysticism have been dominant factors in controlling general access

to sport. Nevertheless, in several countries women's sport is regarded as incompatible with the values and concepts of femininity prevailing in Islam, which forces women into subordination, dependence and restriction of their roles to the house and family (Sfeir, 1985). As Elnaser *et al.,* (cited in Pfister, 1996) commented:

> 'as Islamic nations struggle between inclusion and exclusion in a shrinking global community, it is to be expected that sport will take on the reflection of society which in most Islamic nations is value dominated by those empowered to interpret the words of the Qur'an' (p.511).

In sport and PE, moreover, females must observe the precepts of Islam and also maintain the honour of their families, which means above all they keep their bodies covered when they come into contact with males (Bauer, 1985). This has significant implications for PE and school sport. This chapter aims to explicate the factors inside the school that are instrumental in shaping the PE experiences of the Muslim females. Thus, the main issues, which are now considered, are the PE Curriculum and inclusion. The focus then moves to look at more specific issues such as the control of the body, the need for modesty and Qur'anic requirements, kit requirements, dance and teacher understanding. These factors constitute the major part of the pupils' social world in school and   only by understanding them can we properly ascertain the nature of these girls' experiences.

The PE Curriculum

The school curriculum is generally thought of as all the knowledge and skills schools are accountable for (Saylor *et al.*, 1981; Marsh & Willis, 1999) and the school curriculum decision-making and development process, as one that involves the political, cultural as well as the social climates of the school community (Brady & Kennedy, 1999; Lovat & Smith, 2003; Walker, 2003). As social institutions, schools are subject to considerable pressure from society and the school curriculum is in constant renewal and change. Schools have become agents incorporating and transmitting a 'mono-cultural' (Halstead & Reiss, 2003) education ideology to a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual society and the curriculum has become a powerful method of legitimacy, conformity and social control.

However, the limited educational effects of formal schooling must be contrasted with the educational impact of the family, the peer group, ethnic associations, the mass media and more formal institutions such as those associated with medicine, law, government, social welfare business and religion (Silberman, 1970). While schools are most often viewed as social instruments for educational purposes, it is probably more accurate to describe them as social institutions having a life and even culture of their own (Burnett, 1971). Furthermore, the anthropologist Waller (1932) likened the school to 'a miniture society' (p.107). It might be suggested that what passes as formal education in contemporary schools can be better understood as ritualized reaffirmation of cultural patterns transmitted earlier in less explicit ways.

Curriculum is a dynamic concept, the variations in definitions, understanding, desires and expectations for what the curriculum should deliver illustrate its complexity. What students *should* learn and *must* acquire are curriculum decisions made by many competing forces, ideologies and interest groups seeking to influence the curriculum, making the curriculum decision-making and development process essentially a 'manipulative strategy' (Print,1993, p.15). In relation to Muslim students, there are areas of the school curriculum, which present problems for them. In Australia, for example, Sanjaker's research (2006) demonstrates that it is not only the curriculum content of health education which is objectionable to many Muslim parents but also the presentation of the subject. Sanjaker (2006) calls for a culturally appropriate health education curriculum as she discovered in her research in the Australian schools that the sexual health needs of Muslim students were significantly marginalised. Islam attaches paramount importance to health education and is a curriculum area that concerns many Muslim students and their parents. Despite the cultural and ethnic diversification of Australia's society and the growing Muslim student population in many Australian schools, present health education curriculum decision-making, development and practice, exert a dominant value system and ideology (Donohoue Clyne, 2001). As Lindsay, McEwen and Knight's (1987) Australian study confirms, the health and PE curriculum appear to be 'purposely designed to serve a social integration function of the Judeo-Christian culture' (p.1). Moreover, Sanjaker (2006) argues:

> 'Australian schools have become agents incorporating and transmitting a mono-cultural (Halstead and Reiss (2003) educational ideology to a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi religious and multi lingual society and curriculum has become a powerful method of social control' (p.1).

Sanjaker's (2006) research was useful in demonstrating the clash of values between the Islamic view on sexual health and how this topic is presented in the curriculum. Sexual health programmes that fail to recognise religious and cultural diversity are susceptible to a variety of 'breakdowns' (Irvine, 1995, p.xii) and misunderstandings that are likely to occur across lines of ethnic or other difference. At present, curriculum structures and perspectives in Australian schools function to enforce an 'assimilationist mode' where an 'assimilationist mentality' is evident, particularly in the humanities, social sciences (Bullivant, 1981, p.4) and in health education. The dominance of the permissive sexual ideology and cultural bias in sexual health education needs to be challenged to fully address diversity and the multi-cultural nature of Australian society and identity. Although the present study focuses on a different area of the curriculum (PE), the issues of multi-culturalism and assimilationism identitfied in Sanjaker's research are relevant.

The culture of PE

> 'Through the use and knowledge of the body and its movement, PE makes a unique contribution to the education of young people' (Department of Education and Science 1991, a:5).

As Benn (2000) stated, '... PE is a school subject with its own culture' (p.168). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the history of the subject that in England dates back to the nineteenth century but examination of contemporary issues, which have implications for Muslim schoolgirls and the implications for inclusion, is important. The culture of PE 'involves values and meaning, maintained and perpetuated through principles, practices that permeate the subject' (Benn 2000, p.68). Culture itself is often defined in educational terms as 'the shared products of human learning' (Singleton, 1974, p.27). More precisely and from a psychological orientation, culture can be seen as 'standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be and standards for deciding how to go about doing it'(Goodenough, 1971, p.21). Redfield-Parke (1963), spoke of education as the process of 'cultural transmission' (p.

13) and, in order to examine this process, the experiences of the teacher, learner and school context should be examined. To look at education as cultural transmission implies a set of basic assumptions, it is no longer an individual but a human group, which shares a common cultural system. Furthermore, the meanings, which participants attach to their participation in the educational act, are examined in the present study together with which and to whom these meanings are shared.

According to Hargreaves (1986, p.166), PE is 'the most culturally ritualistic aspect of the school curriculum', an assertion which is supported by Bain (1990) who observes:

> '...The daily life of PE teachers and students is filled with routines: dressing for activity, taking attendance, forming teams doing warm ups, practising skills playing games. While the substance of the lesson changes from week to week, the routines and interactions which accompany them often retain remarkable consistency' (p.23).

Schools should also be seen as an arena for cross-cultural conflict and other transactions between representatives of different cultural systems. The meaning of education within schools is inevitably influenced by cultural identities and experiences which teachers, pupils and parents bring to their interactions with each other. Bernstein (in Giroux 1983), calls attention to the 'modes of pedagogy that need to unravel the ideological interests embedded in the various message systems of the school, particularly in the curriculum, modes of instruction and evaluation procedures' (p.111). Overt classroom pedagogies as well as the so-called hidden curriculum are the modes of transmitting and legitimizing the social organization and styles of learning that privilege white, mainstream cultural knowledges and communication styles, while simultaneously distancing minoritised students from the parameters of inclusion.

Contemporary discourse about the PE curriculum includes recognition that curricula can be analysed at many levels and from many positions. To date, developments in National Curriculum PE (NCPE) in England have been premised on notions of entitlement to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum (Clark & Nutt, 1999, p.211). However, as Evans *et al.,* (1996) noted, since the introduction of NCPE, opportunities to address issues of equality have been subsumed by texts that reinforce a very narrow and traditional definition of the subject and appear to have done little to

prompt teachers to reflect on their practices. The task that should be confronting teachers was defined by the then Department of Education and Science's (DES, 1991) view that equality of opportunity in PE requires:

> '... An understanding and appreciation of the range of student responses to masculinity, femininity and sexuality, to the whole range of ability and disability, to ethnic, social and cultural diversity and the ways in which these relate for children to PE' (DES, 1991, p.15).

In theory, PE should encompass and celebrate cultural diversity, however, in doing so, it should be recognised that working towards equality of opportunity and equity in PE is a complex and challenging process involving far more than offering equal access to a range of competitive activities. Evans (1989) argues that '... Unless a common curriculum is supported by other forms of organisational, curriculum, pedagogical and assessment innovations, the resulting changes in how children think about and act towards each other may be insubstantial' (p.85).

Curriculum Content and NCPE

Throughout much of the 1970s, the *British Journal of PE* (BJPE), carried articles, which expressed doubts about the concept of PE (editorial, 1970), the lack of recognition about the contribution of PE (Britton, 1972; Quant, 1975), the worth of PE (Westthorpe, 1974) and the marginal status of PE teachers (Dean, 1978). In summary, PE was 'still regarded by many as unimportant' (Carroll, 1974, p.103) and 'at best, only of peripheral value in the school experience' (Quant, 1975, p.77). The salience to government and status of school sport and PE during this period is aptly captured in the BJPE editorial on the 1975 White Paper, *Sport and Recreation*, which noted that just one paragraph in the 19 page document referred to the role of PE teachers and concluded:

> '... If PE teachers have thought that they had a fundamental part to play in the education of every child, that they provided an essential basis on which active life for work and leisure could be build for everyone, then, clearly they have to think again' (Spectator, 1975, p.93).

The marginal status of PE within the secondary curriculum was also fuelled, in part, by the critique of 'games' by the educational philosopher, R.S. Peters (1966), who

concluded that 'games' was not a 'serious pursuit, like science, history and literary appreciation' (p.159). Evans (1990) also noted that 'PE has rarely rested high amongst the interests and concerns of either the British media, or political circles or even the public at large' (p.159). In the late 1980s, an emerging concern with the state of the health of young people and the perceived lack of success of elite sportsmen and sportswomen in England combined to push sport to the centre stage (Evans *et al.,* 1993; Flintoff, 2003). Indeed, Kirk (1992) suggested that the events of the mid- to late 1980s represented 'a watershed in British PE discourse, a new moment in the production of definitions of PE' (p.2).

The 1988 Education Reform Act embraced a package of changes in state education. The legislation ushered in changes in school admissions, school financing and school curriculum. After over a century of state-provided education, a government sponsored national curriculum for children aged 5-16 was implemented in phases in England and Wales in 1989 with physical education introduced as a statutorily required curriculum subject in 1992 for the first time in its history. Two particular and related aspects of this development are widely acknowledged to have had a major impact on PE. The first was the Conservative Government's Policy Statement (*Sport: Raising the Game*) of 1995 and the second was the revised National Curriculum for PE (1999). These two developments were seen as tantamount to a significant shift back from the growing pre-eminence at the turn of the decade of a health-related ideology in PE towards a renewed emphasis on team games in schools. These developments served to reinforce a traditional PE curriculum revolving around the 'conventional diet of games and sports' (Evans *et al.,* 1986, p.17)

The NCPE was formulated in 1992 and underpinned rhetorically at least by the concept of equal opportunities and the prioritization of elite sports performance. However, just one year later, in 1993, the British Government announced that a revision of the National Curriculum would be undertaken. The NCPE 1995 emerged, in part out of the wider government policy document *Sport: Raising the Game.* The third version of the National Curriculum was stimulated, in part by the then Labour Government, wanting to stamp its own mark on an education system, which was at the heart of the political agenda (Houlihan & Green, 2006). On the 13th May 1999, David Blunkett, published his proposals for a review of the National Curriculum in England.

The outcome was the release of the National Curriculum in 2000. The Secretary of State, in his Foreword to the NCPE 2000, made clear his commitment to a more equitable curriculum. It is noteworthy that the NCPE 2000 contains a generic statutory inclusion statement. This was included despite many of those consulted suggesting, and the QCA recommending, that a subject-specific inclusion statement would be more beneficial.

NCPE established a statutory curriculum for pupils age 5-16 involving four key stages at 7, 11, 14 and 16 years of age; the latter two stages of which comprise the secondary years of schooling. PE sits as a foundation subject alongside the core subjects such as English, Maths and Science (plus Welsh in Wales). Each subject has a 'Programme of Study' (content) and 'Attainment targets' learning objectives. Over the four key stages NCPE requires pupils to experience six areas of activity: athletic activities, dance, games, gymnastic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming. The indication of certain core activities that must be experienced as well as recommended programmes of study, is ostensibly intended to ensure that all children, regardless of ability, gender and geographic location, for example receive a 'broad and balanced' experience through NCPE.

The programmes of study over the four key stages are summarised in table 2. below:

Table 2: Programmes of Study for the Key stages 1-4

Key Stage	1	2	3	4
Age:	5-7	7-11	11-14	14-16
Year Group	1-2	3-6	7-9	10-11
Activities	Dance Games Gymnastics Swimming	Dance Games Gymnastics and 2 from: Athletics; Outdoor & Adventurous Activities; Swimming and Water Safety	Games Activities And 3* from: Dance Gymnastics Swimming & Water Safety Athletics Outdoor & Adventurous Activities	Two Activities from: Dance Games* Gymnastics Swimming & Water Safety Athletics Outdoor & Adventurous Activities
			* At least one must be Dance <u>or</u> Gymnastics	*** Schools to provide Games for pupils who wish to take up this option**

The perceived role of the NCPE has noticeably expanded in recent years. In addition to changes in rhetoric, for example in relation to the emergence of a wider health agenda, the national curriculum has in the past three years been revised to place a greater emphasis on personalised learning that is built upon 'concepts' and 'processes', as opposed to the previous content led curriculum. Frapwell (2009) discusses the effect that such a change in curriculum will have in practice. However, irrespective of the potential impact that these changes may have in the long term as they have occurred during the period of this study, the amendments made would not have been expected to have taken effect at a local level, during the course of data collection. As a point of order, despite appropriately including the most up to date published legislation in this review, when the term 'NCPE' is used in context within this thesis, it continues to refer to the previous version as used in schools at the time (Department for Education and Employment/Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 1999).

According to Curtner-Smith (1999), the NCPE is a classic example of an attempt at what Jewett *et al.,* (1995) referred to as top-down curriculum change. Rather than being fashioned by small groups of teachers in reaction to local problems and

opportunities as occurs during attempts at bottom-up curriculum change (Jewett *et al.,* 1995), NCPE was sponsored by the central government, designed by a government-appointed Working Group, and imposed through legislation and formal inspections overseen by a specially created government department, the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). Several scholars have been highly critical of top-down change models because teachers' lack of involvement in the change process alienates them and prevents real change from occurring (Ruddock, 1986; Kirk, 1988; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Richardson, 1990; Locke, 1992; Evans *et al.,* 1997). In addition, Fullan (1982) and Sparkes (1991) observed that teachers who do adopt innovations imposed on them by outside agencies often take this course of action in order to survive and not because of changes in their beliefs or values. Moreover, critics of top-down approaches have generally argued that bottom-up attempts at innovation are much more likely to succeed because teachers are actively involved in and central to the process (Sparkes, 1991; Locke, 1992; Jewett *et al.,* 1995). In contrast, other researchers, including Hord *el al.* (1987), have been supportive of top-down change models. They have argued that these types of initiatives are likely to be successful because of their central source of support and because they are generally well-funded. However, as Evans and Penney (1992) noted:

> '... Even though state educational policy may strongly frame the range of opportunities which an individual teacher can enjoy, policy makers ... can rarely if ever control or determine the readings made of the policy texts in contexts of practice.... How will this piece of legislation [NCPE] be received, 'read' and implemented by teachers in schools? Will it be adapted, adopted, or as Bowe *el al.* (1992) found in their study of the NC [National Curriculum] implementation process in other subject areas, 'recreated' and 'produced' rather than simply reproduced?' (p.3)

Research undertaken by Evans and Penney *et al.,* (1993) indicated that what was actually practised by teachers and experienced by pupils was rather different from the official aims and policy of NCPE. Rather than reproducing NCPE legislation as practice, teachers were adapting, modifying, and recreating it to fit with their own beliefs about PE teaching and so that it was manageable within the unique contexts in which they worked. Laws and Aldridge, (1995), found that teachers working in one secondary school were reluctant to make any changes at all in their practices following the introduction of the new curriculum. In addition, two of the teachers thought that NCPE was beneficial, two thought that it caused teachers to engage in unnecessary

work, and two thought that it undervalued teachers' work. Other research undertaken by Harris (1993, 1994, 1995), Waddington *et al.,* (1998), Evans and Penney *et al.*, (1993) and Laws and Aldridge (1995) indicated that individual teachers and PE departments had indeed reacted to, interpreted, and delivered NCPE in a number of different ways. These early findings were also confirmed by Curtner-Smith (1999) who found 'the introduction of NCPE did not result in a transformation of the values and beliefs, which guided teachers' practices' (p.92). In his study, teachers who either interpreted NCPE conservatively, innovatively, or eclectically believed in these orientations prior to the introduction of the new curriculum. Using the definition provided by Sparkes (1991), then, no real changes in pedagogy occurred. Instead, teachers recreated and adapted the new curriculum so that it was congruent with their existing perspectives and ideologies. In some cases this process involved them making what Sparkes (1991) called superficial changes in their practices; in others it meant that teachers made no changes at all. These findings appear to be congruent with those of much of the previous research of NCPE (Evans & Penney, 1993; Laws & Aldridge, 1995; Penney & Harris, 1998).

A second important finding of Curtner-Smith's study was that teachers' pedagogical beliefs and values, and hence their interpretations of NCPE policy texts, appeared to be influenced by their occupational socialization. Although, as Lawson (1983) cautions, 'socialization is always problematic not automatic' (p. 4), the most powerful influences on teachers' thinking and practice appeared to be their pre-Initial Teacher Education (ITE) biographies and the cultures of the schools in which they worked. In contrast, ITE appeared to have relatively little impact on teachers' perspectives and practices. These findings are in agreement with previous research of, and theoretical work on, PE teachers' occupational socialization (Lawson, 1983; Schempp & Graber, 1992, Stroot, 1993). This research points to the need for a greater understanding of teachers themselves and their involvement in the social reproduction of gender and cultural inequalities.

Gender and cultural issues in PE

According to Williams and Bedward (2001), the 2000 version of the NCPE does go into greater detail with respect to pupils from different cultures, which represents a welcome step towards a curriculum accessible to all pupils:

'... Appropriate provision should be made for pupils with specific religious and cultural beliefs and practices to

- Provide appropriate activity at times of fasting
- Enable participation in physical activity in clothing appropriate to their beliefs and customs, that promotes safety
- Enable lessons to take place in appropriate settings' (QCA, 1999, p.10)

Recent evidence on the inter-relationship between race and gender suggests that although this represents a significant step forward, evidence of real and significant change still remains elusive. Whilst Williams and Bedward (2001) addressed various issues, one salient feature of their research related to differences between teachers and student views. Teacher and student views showed a several significant inconsistencies and potential conflcts. Scraton (1992) suggested that understanding of cultural expectations is vital to an understanding of young women's experiences and the complexity of culture and gender should not be underestimated. Williams and Bedward (2001) looked at the issues, which inter-relate between culture and gender; they found a number of issues were conceptualised in terms of gender by some and in terms of culture by others, sometimes at a group and sometimes at an individual level.

Their conclusions are summarised in table 3 below:

Table 3: Gender and culture issues in PE

Issue	Gender	Culture
Wearing of trousers for PE	Comfort and decency	Require concessions to the demands of Muslim females
Mixed sex swimming	Gender issues to avoid embarrassment from boys	Cultural issue of modesty problematic during Ramadan

Some of the issues were important for most female students irrespective of culture. There is a danger, however, in viewing the Muslim females through the same lens as

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the non-Muslim girls. Nonetheless, Williams and Bedward (2001) do recognise this in relation to out of school physical activities. In particular, the exclusion of traditional male activities from the girls PE curriculum disadvantages those more who do not have access to a wide range of out of school activities, namely the Muslim students.

Research (Dorn, 1985: Verma & Ashworth, 1986; Williams, 1987; Mac an Ghaill, 1989; Tomlinson, 1992) has indicated that children from minority cultures are differentially disadvantaged within the education system (OFSTED 1999). Inadequacies in addressing the needs of ethnic minority pupils in PE were recognised by OFSTED as a weakness in both secondary and primary schools (Clay 1997). It has long been acknowledged that teachers hold an array of myths about children from minority groups that they use to account for their under-achievement in PE. These myths include suggestions that African-Caribbean pupils were poor swimmers because they had heavy bones; blacks were good at sport because slavery weeded out the weak; all blacks had a natural sense of rhythm and therefore were good at dance; Asians were too frail for contact sports; and blacks were good at boxing because they could absorb a heavier beating (Bayliss 1989). Cohen and Manion (1983, p.59) argue that teachers respond to individuals as members of a generic class with generalisable attributes and the outcome for some pupils will be a channelling into, or away from, particular sporting activities. Furthermore, the school as an institution of cultural transmission is one that attempts to recruit children to a cultural system different from that of the community or culture from which the children come from.

Thus, while it is generally understood that Asians are not likely to be good at sport, explanations used by teachers have tended to be ethno-centric and in terms of cultural deficit. Yates (1987) thought that the Asians lacked the necessary physical co-ordination to play games especially the girls and found that teachers' understanding of the Asian culture was based on the cultural distance between the school and its clients; this was especially prominent in PE, where the Asians were not highly motivated and the Asian girls were viewed as 'pretty hopeless…lacked coordination and would be incompetent if a game involved catching or controlling balls' (Yates, 1987, p.198). Yates suggested that 'the PE teacher thought perhaps it was something in their background which caused this…it is interesting to note that not one Asian girl interviewed actually enjoyed games lessons, but several had a positive dislike of them'

(p.199). Factors, which may help to explain the performance of Asian girls in Yates' research in the recognition of cultural identity in school sport, were related to the actual meaning attached to the activity:

> '... Much of school sport is team based and the relational structure of teams, involving both competition and collaboration, with a group of people whose social ties need not extend outside the purposes of the game, is a difficult complex of ideas to translate within the values of a communal kin-oriented social structure. Running about with balls may be a meaningless activity in some cultural contexts. More specifically, sporting activity can induce a feeling of absurdity or a feeling of impropriety in some girls. (Yates, 1987, p.198).

Yates's research indicated that far from enhancing the self-image of Asian pupils, sport produced a sense of cultural alienation, which was further exacerbated when teams were picked: Asian girls were always left until last when the teacher then had to place them. Yates, however, does recognise that this may be based on sporting ability rather than any ethnic criteria. Although if one were using discrimination on grounds of ethnicity as a primary source of explanation, then it could simply look like racism.

Yates' (1987) research indicated a 'mutual ignorance' (p.207) between the Asian pupils and teachers. There was a clear pre-judgement on the part of the indigenous community who held inherited opinions about the social and moral qualities of the Asian community and the knowledge of the Asians of the UK culture was as shallow as the host community's knowledge of them. Recent research evidence has shown growing awareness of the needs of particular groups. For example, evidence suggested the need for increased physical activity levels among people of South Asian origin as mortality and morbidity levels from coronary heart disease were highest among this group (Lambert & Sevak, 1996). Research related to PE and sport and Asian communities has suggested that they do not always have the same cultural significance as in the dominant culture (Williams 1989; Figueroa 1993). Carrington and Williams (1988) found, for example, that ethnicity accentuated the differential rates of sporting participation between males and females. Some Asian parents do exercise greater control over their daughters' participation in community sport because of cultural conflicts; and some parents actually withdraw their children from PE (Brah & Minas 1985, p.24)

In relation to the interface of Islam and PE, knowledge of religious requirements and ways in which these could be met have been long recognised. Although Parker-Jenkins (1995) and Haw (1998) suggested the situation for Muslim pupils in PE to be improving, barriers still exist for some and awareness-raising is vital to sensitise teachers to issues that could emerge where Islam and PE meet (Benn 1996a, 1998). Efforts to improve the situation rested on the 'problematic approach', which placed 'the problem for PE' within the culture, for example, within the culture of being a Muslim woman. This perspective failed to examine the appropriateness of experiences on offer, that is, to critique what was 'going on' in institutional practices. 'A commitment to equity demands that we scrutinise the nature of experiences that are distributed through the curriculum' (Evans 1993, cited in McGuire & Collins 1998 p.80), and recognise the deeper racial tensions in wider society. 'It is dangerous, if not downright racist, to concentrate on culture and hope that racism will go away' (Bayliss 1989, cited in McGuire & Collins 1998, p.19).

The findings of the OFSTED (1999) research indicated that lack of data on the particular progress of ethnic groups is unhelpful. The failure to acknowledge Muslims as an ethnic group equally denies opportunities to collect important data, monitor and respond to specific needs and levels of attainment. De Knop *et al*., (1996) recognised the value of specific research on different ethnic groups and the particular under-representation of research into Muslims as a distinct group. Not all Asians are Muslims and not all Muslims are Asian. This is a key point. To conflate 'categories' of being Asian and Muslim tends to homogenise all Asians and fails to recognise the particular needs of those who prefer to identify themselves differently, for example as Muslims. In its study on *Raising the Attainment of Minority Ethnic Pupils,* OFSTED (1999, p.4) chose particular ethnic groups based on 'geographical' not religious distinctions. Yet, in relation to identifying barriers to improving standards of attainment within all the groups studied religion will have been differentially important to individuals. In the Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups studied, the majority may have been Muslim, but not all. The two schools in the survey that collected data on ethnic minorities found that 'none of the Asian girls opts for PE' (OFSTED 1999 p.24). This poses the question of 'Why?' and furthermore 'Can the school make any changes that might improve the

situation?' The answers might be more closely related to their religious, rather than their Asian, identity.

Teacher philosophies

Relevant to the present study is how teacher views and philosophies can have an impact upon pupils. Teachers' thoughts, perceptions, beliefs and experience are all aspects of teachers' culture and are a key factor in education, especially in times of change. Yet according to Cortazzi (1993), 'educational investigators have paid too little attention to teacher's voices. Teachers' culture is largely unexamined, except by ethnographic studies and case studies' (p.1). Although Cortazzi (1993) indicates that 'an increasing number of scholars are suggesting, however, that narrative research offers a way for us to hear teachers' voices and to begin to understand their culture from the inside' (p.1). The study of teachers' narratives (teachers' stories of their own experiences) is increasingly being seen as central to the study of teachers' thinking and behaviour. Since the early 1980s, ethnographic and second-order investigations of teachers practising in actual classrooms have revealed teachers as constructing their own explanations of teaching and highlighted the messiness inherent in how teachers think about their work (Elbaz, 1983; Lampert, 1985). The bulk of this research argues that what teachers know about teaching is largely socially constructed out of the experiences and classrooms from which teachers have come. Furthermore, it suggests that how teachers actually use their knowledge in classrooms is highly interpretive, socially negotiated, and continually restructured within classrooms and schools where teachers work (Clandinin, 1986; Bullough, 1989; Grossman, 1990). Such conceptualisations of teacher learning have parallels with socio-cultural theories (Leont'ev, 1978; Vygotsky, 1978; Newman, Griffin & Cole, 1989) that highlight the fundamentally social nature of cognition and learning. Others argue for parallels with theories of situated cognition, which maintain that knowledge entails lived practices not just accumulated information. (Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Chaiklin & Lave, 1996).

What teachers know and how they use their knowledge in classrooms are highly interpretive and contingent on knowledge of self, students, curricula, and setting. Since the early 1990s, the reflective teaching movement (Schön, 1983, 1987; Richards &

Lockhart, 1994; Zeichner & Liston, 1996), the predominance of action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; McNiff, 1993; Somekh, 1993), and the teacher research movement (Edge & Richards, 1998; Freeman, 1998; Cochrane-Smith & Lytle, 1999) have helped to establish the legitimacy of teachers' experiences and the importance of reflection on, and inquiry into, those experiences.

A compelling line of research to investigate teachers' experiences has been carried out by Clandinin and Connelly (1991, 1995, 2000), in which they view re-storying experiences as essential to teachers' personal and social growth. Their research relies on data generated by researcher observation, participant observation and observations by other participants. The resultant stories are jointly constructed by teachers as they re-story their experience. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue that the value of narrative enquiry lies in its capacity to capture and describe experiences as they occur 'in the midst' (p.63) of other lived experiences, to look *inward, outward*, *backward* and *forward* at teachers' experiences in order to capture their temporal nature and their personal and social dimensions and to see them as situated within the places or sequences of places in which they occur and from where they emerge. Narrative enquiry has the potential to create a 'new sense of meaning and significance' (Clandinin & Connelly 2000 p.42) for teachers' experiences and thus brings new meaning and significance to teachers within their own professional landscapes.

There are those writers who argue that it is crucial to understand those aspects of teachers' lives if current efforts at inclusion described later in this chapter are to be effective. Any real changes in the curriculum are not likely to be carried through unless teachers' perspectives and experiences are taken into account. Among those advocates is Louden (1991) who stated that

> 'the teachers are the ultimate key to educational change and school improvement…Teachers don't merely deliver the curriculum. They develop it, define it and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get' (p.365)

Wright's (1997) research drew attention to the significance of teachers in constructing gender relations through their pedagogy. As Evans, Davies and Penney (1996) point out:

> '... Patterns of personality and attitude no doubt mingle significantly with teacher's own pupil identities and careers to provide distinctive inflows to teachers training and thereafter into departments strongly influencing if not determining provision and practice in PE' (p.179).

Viewed in this way, the lives and identities that teachers bring to their profession position them not simply as products of professional socialisation but as knowing subjects whose sense of self is implicated in the pedagogical process. These points are important because if we are to move towards inclusive forms of PE then the lives and identities of teachers are significant since it is through these individuals that subject knowledge and pedagogy must pass. This is not to position teachers as rational consumer-driven professionals who are pivotal agents in educational reform, rather, the focus is on the subtleties of social reproduction in both the discursive and embodied sense. It is the everyday practices of exclusion, which are more subtle, more deeply embedded and more difficult to resist, despite the rhetorical claim towards egalitarianism.

What teachers know and how they come to know it and what they come to embody, is likely to shape individual interpretations of PE discourse, and as a consequence, modify and inform the delivery of the subject. Within the context of PE, there is evidence to suggest that many teacher educators are not equipped to deal with equity and equality issues (Flintoff, 1993). Research by Lloyd (1998) and Acker (1989) raise further alarms in that students often discard what they have learned in favour of the *modus operandus* of the school. However, the need to consider the effect of training as a differential experience for each individual is increasingly being voiced (Hagger & McIntyre, 2000; Rich 2001). As Curtner-Smith (1997) noted, much of the early work assessing the impact of organisational socialisation on beginning or newly qualified teachers generally ignored or failed to report the mediating effect of biography or pre-professional socialisation. The research has adopted a perspective where individuals are seen as essentially passive and accepting: that is, if they receive the appropriate socialization they will assume their 'proper' place in the social order.

More recently a number of dialectical approaches consider teacher education as the complex process that it is, which requires a number of different forms of knowledge and experience. The literature on learning to teach has, therefore, begun to emphasise the richness and complexity of the phenomena, which encompasses a wide array of

idiosyncratic, contextual and dynamic variables. More emphasis on teacher education as a complex dialectical process in which both structure and agency are in operation is providing more sophisticated insights into the processes at work.

Although many writers would agree that the teachers will play a pivotal role in classroom experiences, such as the PE lesson, Groves (2001) claims that 'the power of the teacher to influence classroom context is far from unidirectional' (p.29). Indeed, as early as 1975, Hargreaves recognised that children as a collective pose a threat to the teacher. Furthermore, although teachers are often seen to represent the interests of the school as an institution, this has been accepted as too simplistic. Essentially, the teacher works within institutional and environmental constraints as well as those presented by the children whom they teach. Whilst Groves' research focuses upon the interaction between the teachers and pupil, Green (2002) recognises that

> 'the network of relationships in which PE teachers are enmeshed are even more complex, their chains of interdependency lengthens to incorporate not only their pupils and fellow teachers but also the pupils, parents, local sporting and community groups and so forth, as well as professional interest groups representing PE teachers' (p.71).

To view PE teachers' philosophies merely in the context of their immediate circumstances would be to make a significant error. Peoples' thoughts as well as their behaviours, tend to bear the hallmark of past as well as present experiences. The networks of relationships in which teachers have been involved in the past can be seen to have as much potential significance for their identities. Indeed, PE teachers' own experiences of PE and sport as young people and the impact of these experiences on their sporting and teaching identities is worthy of attention. Much research provides reasons to believe that the biographies of prospective PE teachers have an on-going influence on their values, thoughts and practices (Macdonald, Abernathy & Bramich, 1988; Evans & Williams, 1989; Chen & Ennis, 1996; Macdonald *et al.,*1999). More specifically, there is evidence to indicate that teachers' own childhood experiences of PE and sport have a significant impact on both their sporting and teaching identities. Macdonald *et al.,*. (1999) identify a range of research in the period spanning the late 1980s to early 1990s which suggests that:

> 'PETE students in 'Western' Countries come from narrow sections of the community and hold similar values. Male and female students are attracted

to careers in PE teaching in order to continue their extensive and positive experiences of sport…and to work with young people' (p.33).

It is the significance of the sporting identities and educational experiences of these PE teachers for their habituses, which is a focus for the present research.

As Dunning (1996) has observed, 'personal and collective identities are particularly important in the world of sport' (p. 188). The emotional ties to, and identification with sport forms what Elias might describe as a 'deep anchorage in the personality structure of sports men and women. It is a significant dimension of their individual identities and one which cannot be easily shaken off' (Elias; cited in Mennell & Goudsblom, (1998), p. 251). Moreover, a plethora of ties binds sports people and PE teachers to what Elias (1991) describes as 'we groups which may range from sports clubs, PE departments, schools professional bodies to nation-states' (p.201). One of the central themes of these associations is strong emotional ties with sport. Chen and Ennis (1996) suggest that value commitments and beliefs form an important basis for the aphoristic or everyday philosophies of PE teachers. PE teachers value sport, and their everyday philosophies not surprisingly reflect this fact. According to Evans and Williams (1989), one of the most common reasons for entering the PE profession in England and Wales for both males and females is 'love of sport'. According to Capel, (2004) 'similar reasons suggest a homogeneity of values in attitudes to teaching' (p.7). Capel makes a fundamentally salient point in her advice to new PE teachers when she states 'it is easy to forget that many pupils may not share your views… as they may have had less positive experiences in their experiences of PE' (p.7). Those who have been attracted to careers in teaching PE have had positive experiences and want to teach to continue their association with sport. Macdonald *et al*.,(1999) cite a number of authors who observe that '...Many young people who have positive experiences with school PE and sport are attracted to further study of physical activity, bringing with them particular knowledge and expectations (p.33).

The high value placed on sport by PE teachers is, according to Green (2000), 'a pervasive and enduring influence on the philosophies of many of the teachers' (p.188). Their love of sport is central to their lives and identities, is influential at the outset of their teaching careers, and remains influential. In Green's (2000) study many of the teachers identified a career in PE teaching as a natural progression from enjoying and

being successful at sport whilst at school. Many viewed 'doing' rather than 'theorising' as their strength. One of the study's respondents stated: '... We're not academics, most of us... the vast majority of PE teachers went into PE because they enjoyed sport…That's all I ever wanted to be, a PE teacher, because I was interested in sport and I was good at sport' (Green, 2000, p.189). The respondent makes generalisations about the reasons for wanting to teach PE. His generalisations, however, are confirmed by Green's findings on the philosophies of PE teachers although he does clarify that the teachers did not possess coherent reflective philosophies. There is, therefore, a danger of viewing PE teachers as with Muslim females as a homogenous group. Instead their ideologies or philosophies are determined by networks of social relationships of which they are a part. What the above respondent does articulate is a bond, which seems to unite PE teachers through their passion of sport as the main uniting theme.

Professional Identities

Cross-cultural differences in communication styles between teachers and students can lead to negative evaluations of minoritised students who are not able to conform to the language styles privileged within the dominant pedagogical framework (Heath 1983; Saville-Troike 1989; Au & Kawakami 1994; Zine, 2001). Mis-communication is often based on the disjuncture between the standardization of white middle-class communication styles and the communicative styles of ethnic and class based minority groups. Cultural incongruities can exist between the 'pedagogy of the home', or the mode of transmitting cultural knowledge and social and behavioural rules through culturally specific socialization practices of the home and the dominant classroom pedagogy. Gibson (1988) refers to this as 'cultural discontinuity theory' (pp. 29-30) and argues that along with the social structural barriers that confront minority groups, cultural discontinuity can create inequality in educational outcomes. Gibson (1988) notes that Punjabi students were uncomfortable with the dominant participation structure in the mainstream American classroom such as the technique of 'brainstorming' ideas, and were often reticent in expressing their views within this cultural context. In comparison, Heath (1983) also found that black children did not respond to white teachers' questions or directives because these styles of communication were qualitatively different from those used in students' homes.

Culture, which is incongruous with dominant pedagogical practices, often leads to a 'resocialization process' for those students who lack the cultural capital required to succeed in mainstream society (King, 1994). Mis-communication and misunderstanding due to cultural variations of socio-linguistic styles are often attributed to presumed language deficits. Consequences of the mis-match between dominant cultural communicative styles and those of other groups can result in the mis-placement of minoritised students into remedial programmes (Zine 2001).

As indicated earlier in the chapter, Sanjakdar's research (2006) on health education in Australian schools has shown how contentious a subject this is for both many Muslim parents and students. In particular, it is not always necessarily the content of the health education curriculum that is objectionable to many Muslim parents and students, but rather the presentation of the subject, totally divorced from moral and values education. These findings are congruent with the presentation of PE (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993).

In relation to PE, recent research has drawn attention to the significance of teachers in constructing gender relations through their pedagogy (Evans *et al*., 1996; Wright, 1997; Brown, 1999; Brown & Rich, 2002). These and other studies have raised questions about the ways in which teachers own identities are invested or involved in the social dynamics of the PE class. The importance of a teachers' pre-professional background in the development of a professional identity has already been highlighted in the context of PE (Whitehead & Hendry, 1976; Templin & Schempp, 1989; Mawer, 1996; Armour & Jones, 1998; Green 1998; Brown; 1999). The work of Armour and Jones (1998) points to teachers' backgrounds, sports histories and educational careers as profoundly influencing their gendered understandings of role expectations and professional philosophies. Similarly the work of MacDonald and Kirk (1996) has also alluded to the dilemmas of the struggles between PE teachers' own sense of self and the stereotypes social expectations made of them. More recently focus has been placed on male teachers and masculinity where Brown (1999) suggests that PE teachers draw on their habitus in constructing their pedagogies and communicate gender, class and ethnicity with and through their bodies of teaching, by further considering the strength of personal agendas the teachers bring with then to their teaching will provide a useful

insight into how teachers relate to Muslim students. As Sparkes (1995) suggests it is useful to focus on 'central moments or critical incidents' to give a more complex view of reality (p.116).

It is, therefore, helpful to focus on how the life history of the PE teacher influenced how they socially position the Muslim females in their class. Ness (2001) indicates that much of the research on teacher socialization within PE has drawn upon a functionalist approach to occupational socialization. That is to say, it has adopted a perspective where individuals are seen as essentially passive and accepting: if they receive the 'appropriate' socialization, then they will assume their 'proper' place in the social order. Rich (2004) examined the influence of teachers' biographies of newly qualified teachers and how they construct the problem of girls low participation in PE. Rich's research focuses on gender issues *per se* rather than on cultural issues such as ethnicity and religion**.** Rich found a strong relationship between PE teachers' own experiences of PE as pupils. PE teachers do not arrive for initial teacher training as a *tabula rasa,* rather they arrive with particular disposition towards PE. Mawer (1996) observed that prospective teachers learn a great deal from the many 'happy' hours spent in school PE by 'intuition and imitation of personalities rather than pedagogical principles' (p.2). Ness (2001), on the other hand, goes beyond a functionalist approach to acknowledge the abilities of human beings to derive their own meanings and to play a part in negotiating their socialization. In other words, socialization is perceived as problematic, rather than automatic, and teacher socialization is viewed as merely one among competing forms of adult socialization. The life history approach enables us to focus upon the actor's view of socialization, it provides insights into a person's identity and sense of self, and how these change over time, as well as enabling us to locate individual experience within socio-historical contexts. It illuminates the process of an individual's life, and it captures life's ambiguities and chaos, rather than imposing a sense of order which is seldom present. 'In order to have a sense of who we are, we have to have a notion of how we became, and of where we are going' (Giddens, 1991, p 54).

By further considering the strength of personal agendas that teachers bring with them, the relationship between their own identities and experience can be further examined. More specifically, how teachers draw on their own identities and experiences to make

sense of cultural encounters and merge with them their developing pedagogies, which have a bearing on the way in which they teach. Therefore, while teachers may enjoy agency (that is, have the ability and power to act) in their socialization within PE, rarely are the conditions for this agency of the teacher's own choosing.

As Lawson and Stroot (1993) observe:

> '... Today's teacher roles, programs, schools, universities, and social structures shape us even as we may try to shape them. Acts of social construction by individuals, and process of social constitution by societal structures, occur simultaneously. There often is a tension between the two. To assert that socialisation is a dialectical process is to acknowledge this continuous tension between the social construction of reality and the constitution of reality. Thought of as a contest, it should come as no surprise which one normally wins. Although people enjoy agency (the *power* to act), only a few possess *power over* resources, resulting from *power in* structures' (p. 432).

Rich (2004) suggests that 'locating gendered social and cultural dispositions and understanding the processes by which they have been experienced (biography) and interpreted (identity)' (p.217) provided a useful insight into gender relations within and through their teaching. Furthermore, 'teachers experiences may well differ but it is the process of drawing upon and merging these experiences with developing pedagogies which emerge as a shared practice' (Rich, 2004, p.218).

Sport served as a pathway, which helped to foster a sense of identity that drew primarily on physical activity, skills and dispositions. Their positive and also empowering experiences of PE had strong implications for the ways in which PE teachers identified with, and socially positioned, girls as 'problematic' within their PE class. There appeared to be a lack of understanding of why girls were not as enthusiastic and successful as they had been. Rich (2004) found that the perceived solution to this problem was to change the attitudes of girls who did not want to participate and not to address the inequitable gendered dimension of the PE curriculum and structure.. Rich (2004) suggests that 'this discourse of individuality may pathologize failing individuals locating the fault in the individual while concealing contributing social factors (p.7).

Although Rich's research relates to gender rather than cultural issues, her work has significant implications as Williams and Bedward's (2001) research suggests that some issues of gender and culture inter-relate. An interesting discovery from Rich's research was how teachers viewed non-participation or 'failing' individuals. The perceived solution to the problem was to change the attitude of girls and not to address the gendered dimension of the PE curriculum and structure. 'The problem as they see it, is motivating these girls into the current system of PE, rather than the structure or nature of PE itself' (Rich, 2004, p.230). This may be particularly problematic given that research has pointed towards the struggles associated with a male-dominated sport curriculum in England and Wales (Kirk, 2001; Williams & Bedward, 2001). Discourses of individuality 'may pathologize the failing individual locating the fault in the individual while concealing social factors' (Rich, 2004, p.230). This was evident in Rich's teachers' sample who would characterise the less co-operative and able in terms of patriarchal definitions of femininity or as 'girlies'. There existed a lack of understanding or empathy with non-participating or 'failing' girls. As relatively successful PE students when at school, the female PE teacher may find it difficult to empathize with those girls disinterested in PE. Indeed, the use of oppositional gendered criteria to position themselves and their pupils only serves to reproduce the polarized stereotypes currently predominant in PE (Vertinsky, 1992).

Vertinsky (1995) alludes to a cycle of poverty where the lack of participation and proper support for the development of physical skills can lead to poor and less than successful performance. Barriers to successful performance can include what Garrett (2004) refers to as 'damaged bodies':

> '... Individuals who considered their bodies to be unacceptable, experienced themselves in ways that impacted significantly on their sense of identity, social behaviour and involvement in physical activity. Some individuals were so extremely self conscious of their external appearance that feelings of inadequacy pervaded every action and interaction in their daily life' (p.225).

Writers on gender and PE have recognised that girls require space, time and opportunities to develop their physical potential. In particular, they need to develop competence and learn to be in control of their bodies. Some educators advocate single sex classes. Single sex PE has both a history and a tradition of sex/gender segregation. The rationale for a differentiated curriculum has been based around stereotypical

assumptions concerning sex/gender and what is appropriate male and female activity. Co-educational PE was intended to overcome such sex differentiation, by instigating a forced structural equality. This is a crude rationale for using mixed practices. Much subsequent research (MacDonald, 1989; Wright & King, 1991; Scraton, 1992; Vertinsky, 1992) confirmed that neither co-education nor single sex classes fundamentally challenged gender inequality until it focused on the complex discursive, embodied and textual practices that underpin the schooling experience of individuals. Provision of 'the same' programme of activities for all children, without regard to the myriad of diverse identities and subject positions teachers and pupils bring to these contexts does not automatically produce or provide equal opportunity. Equal access may be achieved, but equality is also affected by the positioning of the teacher, the social and cultural background of the pupils, previous experience, levels of competence and embodied and discursive messages that are transmitted during interactions within the classroom. This viewpoint is fundamental to the theoretical juncture, which presents an 'either/or' scenario to the organisation of the PE class.

Kenway and Willis (1997) suggest that there are sometimes unintended consequences of moving to single sex classes that can on occasions be counter-productive and neither single sex nor mixed sex classes will be fully effective until we consider the complex discursive, embodied and textual practices, which influence the schooling experience of individuals. As Wright asks: 'Does single sex PE actually challenge the major issue of sex-based harassment of the power relations operating between females and males – or does it only contain it?' (p.183). This is not to deny that co-educational PE may be a productive strategy and indeed improve participation amongst boys and girls. However, further insights into what happens in single sex classrooms are needed, especially in relation to race, what forms of behaviour and attitudes remain unchallenged and how teachers' own identities are involved in the social dynamics of the PE class.

Inequality may be overlooked and legitimised in the belief that particular forms of provision (i.e. single sex or mixed sex) in themselves eradicate inequality. The rationale for this is that single sex classes allow girls the opportunities for time and space to develop their physical potential in contexts, which are free from harassment (Garrett, 2004). However, it should be pointed out that this practice does little to

challenge the forms of behaviour that produced girls' passive resistance to physical activity in the first place (Vertinsky, 1995; Wright, 1999) Furthermore, interventions, which seek to target girls as a homogeneous category are bound to fail, since not all girls are equally able and disposed to lead a physically active life. Moreover, such interventions should challenge and change aspects of the physical culture, which are oppressive for particular groups. Additionally when considering whether single sex PE removes power relationships between males and females, it ignores what Simmons (2003) refers to as the 'hidden culture of aggression in girls' (p.15). Dellasega and Nixon (2003) use the term relational aggression to describe female bullying, which refers to the use of relationships, rather than fists, to hurt another. 'Rumours, name calling, cliques, shunning, and a variety of other behaviors are the weapons girls use against one another on an everyday basis in schools, sports, and recreational activities' (p.16). The authors suggest that

> 'contemporary young women are subtly influenced to interact in ways that reduce rather than enhance their underlying power to connect with one another. They are bombarded with messages about their physical appearance at an early age. Their bodies are reaching physical maturity earlier and earlier, yet their cognitive skills remain anchored in adolescence. Contemporary role models are not powerful women who have succeeded because of their persistence and kindness to others, but rather superstar singers acting like sexy schoolgirls and movie stars firing machine guns or using martial arts on opponents while wearing skintight jumpsuits. No wonder young women find themselves in a state of extreme confusion, unsure of how to relate to either themselves or others' (p.99).

In the context of PE, bullying may therefore occur within single sex PE. In particular, pupils whose body does not conform to the norm might be excluded from gaining positive embodied identities through the subject of PE. This raises the issue of the intersection of gender and race, for instance the forms of physicality that are acceptable within various racial and religious groups as well as the extent to which it is acceptable for Muslim girls to use their bodies within the context of PE. Power differentials can and still do exist within single sex PE. Muslim girls may be at risk of becoming a victim of 'double marginality' (Sparkes, 1994) by nature of their gender and culture.

Rich (2004) indicates that the female PE teachers in her study demonstrated a lack of understanding of non-participating girls:

'many of the women enter the PGCE course having never been unsuccessful in learning a new physical skill, unable to imagine what it is like to have co-ordination difficulties and unable to comprehend that girls lack interest in physical activities' (p.231).

Girls were also seen as unitary subjects rather than diverse groups that had a differing range of social experiences, which together may act as barriers to participation such as stigma about size. Although teachers might hold inclusive notions of equal opportunities, this included a liberal notion of encouraging girls into the current system of PE rather than trying to challenge the inequalities embedded within the structure, content and delivery of PE. Furthermore, attention will be focused more on individuals rather than social structure, which, according to Rich (2004), 'depoliticises the central question of power and control in explaining gender inequalities' (p.232). Consequently, the complex, discursive, embodied and textual practices that undermine the PE experiences are seldom critiqued. Wright (1996) suggested that liberal frameworks are fundamentally flawed since they fail to take into account the

'complex work of political, economic and ideological practices in constituting what happens in and through schooling in both subverting and facilitating change…it rarely involves a critique of its assumptions about the homogeneity of girls' experiences and desires, or a critique of the way in which sport and PE continue to reinforce and be reinforced by dominant discourses of gender (p. 32)

The teachers were positioning the girls within a framework of Liberal individualism where, 'the burden of change rested with the girls themselves and their 'attitudes' to PE...rather than the gendered social barriers present within the current practice, structure and curriculum of PE in England' (Rich, 2004 p.232). Teachers who try to increase participation and fail, thus become frustrated and blame the non-participating student. Often this position fails to recognize the social and environmental barriers or influences on participation. Penney and Chandler (2000) call into question the prevailing activity-based framework which dominates PE. Teachers come to judge the efforts of girls in their classes only through the narrow structures and options of the PE curriculum and not through activity outside school (Flintoff & Scraton, 2001). It would seem imperative, therefore, that student teachers are encouraged to expand their understanding of girls' attitudes towards, and experiences of physical activity and that includes physical culture. This would entail exploring the meanings that girls attach to sports, activities, clothes, friendship groups, music and the media and the ways in

which they relate to the physical culture (MacDonald, 2002). This is much needed as there is evidence to suggest that teacher education programmes have not given sufficient attention to critical issues of gender and subjective experiences are often sidelined (Flintoff, 1993; Rich, 2001).

Teachers may possess a nostalgic view of their own experiences where the desire to emulate their favourite PE teacher may lead to a self-replication process where many teachers are committed to 'traditional' PE and its values underpinning. This emphasis on traditional PE values has important implications for the present research. On the other hand, not all PE teachers view their own PE teachers as models of good practice and this may encourage a desire to provide their pupils with a more inclusive range of sporting experiences. In contrast to the more 'nostalgic' approach, some teachers may take a more reflective, even critical view of the PE they experienced although their experiences do not undermine their commitment to sport. Placek *et al.,* (1995) have observed that the sporting background of intending teachers has an enduring effect on their ability to envision 'alternative curriculum models for PE... and few may accept that such alternatives can exist except in the minds of textbook writers and teacher educators!' (p.258). This is consistent with Evans *et al*'s (1996) observation of the 'widespread pedagogical traditionalism of PE teachers, whose views are neither shaken nor stirred by their training' (p.169). Macdonald *et al.,* (1993) also point to research, which '...confirmed that students' beliefs about teaching remain largely unchanged throughout their teacher education programme' (p.33).

Professional socialisation is processual in that teachers can amend their views and practices in accordance with their perceptions and surrounding contextual constraints. Also their experiences change as they become older; male teachers in particular were seen to be more likely to be wedded to traditional views the older they were, they were also more conservative in their outlook and more resistant to change. Constraints operating at the school level were also likely to influence their philosophies. As Green (2000) comments,

> 'as the network of relationships in which PE teachers are enmeshed becomes even more complex, their chains of interdependency lengthen to incorporate not only their pupils and fellow teachers but also the pupils' parents, local community groups and so forth' (p.217).

Moreover,

> 'the interdependency networks of PE teachers does not end at the staffroom or the gym door. Local dimensions of the networks incorporate the impact of pupils and parents on what PE teachers do and what they think about what they do' (Green, 2000, p.224).

Green (2000) found that extra-curricular PE tended to reflect, more than did PE, in the curriculum, traditional gender stereotyping in that pretty much all of the extra-curricular clubs are single-sex. The inheritance of tradition amid the on-going influence of custom and practice was an important constraining influence. Green (2000) does recognise from his research that such traditions as religion, appear to constrain teachers to provide *ex-post facto* justifications for their practices and philosophies and they were in effect 'bolted on' to what they already did without feeling the need to provide justifications' (p.242). The networks of inter-dependency that link PE teachers *within* a breadth of groups such as headteachers, HoDs and colleagues and *without* to increasingly powerful groups such as parents, government inspectors and sports governing bodies involve them in even more complex and opaque figurations. These varying power-balances between PE teachers and the aforementioned groups are rooted in different kinds of power -persuasive, economic or coercive (Green, 2000, p.249).

Unlike the personal philosophies of the PE teachers variously shaped by personal experiences, or in Clandinin and Connelly's terms 'secret' stories, the NCPE is a 'sacred' story, a legal requirement and a daily constraint on what PE teachers do. It has introduced new constraints such as the requirements for the involvement of pupils in the planning and evaluation whilst at the same time it has tended to exacerbate existing constraints such as time pressures and teaching expertise. On the other hand, the NCPE may introduce new opportunities for the development of new skills. Moreover, the NCPE is central to any consideration of inclusive PE, and the NC requires teachers to consider the three principles of inclusion:

a) setting suitable learning challenges
b) responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
c) overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils (DfEE/QCA 1999, p.32).

Although the arguments in support of inclusion are growing, such positive endorsements of inclusion are not universally accepted and key advocates such as Block (2000) are quite right to question whether the cause of full inclusion have blinded supporters to the realities of inclusive schooling. 'In PE as much as any other subject, inclusion has its admirers and denigrators' (Goodwin, 2007, p.13) The traditions of PE have followed an elitist, competitive and games orientated curriculum, which, thereby reduces the potential for meeting every individual's needs. According to Goodwin (2007) a fundamental problem for PE is that its curriculum, pedagogy and attitudes appear rooted in the traditions of motor elitism and participation. It is not surprising, that Bain (1990) in her review of the hidden curriculum, was concerned by the importance that PE places on 'doing' rather than 'learning' and the implication that success is measured by participation and effort. Likewise, many schools still grade pupils on their effort in PE (Scott & Stevens, 2003). Certainly, there is nothing in the National Curriculum for PE (DfEE/QCA, 1999) to suggest that teachers cannot adopt a traditional games orientated curriculum and many do so. These traditions, coupled with issues of access to the curriculum and social environment, suggest that the challenge for PE is to provide opportunities that give the same high quality educational experience to all pupils. Goodwin's (2007) research was rooted in the belief that PE experiences for some youngsters were neither inclusive nor effective.

Inclusion and multicultural education

> 'Education in the twenty-first century can become an essential contributor to integration, to a culture of peace, and to international understanding. Through this we can assure respect for diversity, whether diversity of behaviour, or diversity of phislosophical or religious belief' (Verma, 1997, p.337).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, two movements took place in the field of education, namely multi-cultural and anti-racist education. Each was based on differing concepts of racism in society leading to 'ideologically divergent programmes of educational reform' (Rattansi, 1992, p.24). The broadly liberal position was associated with multi-culturalism and left radicalism was thought synonymous with anti-rasicm. More liberal than integration and assimilation but drawn from similar underpinnings, multi-culturalism assumed a position at the centre ground. Power relations between ethnic

minority groups and whites and how they affected education, however, remained unchallenged (Troyna, 1988).

Schools in society were encouraged to adopt multi-cultural education programmes to reduce inequality by providing both the pupils and their teachers with positive histories and images of ethnic minority groups (Verma, 1989). The Department of Education and Science (DES, 1977) *Green Paper*, entitled *Education in Schools,* affirmed the multi-cultural education impetus. Schools and teachers working within them were instructed to learn to appreciate and respect other faiths and cultures to overcome the ethnocentric overtones in the curriculum (Verma, 1988). Multi-cultural education was an attempt to beak down stereotypes by calling for 'greater tolerance' (Sarup, 1991). It involved the school in creating an appropriate environment where respect would be given for example to 'dietary preference, dress, custom, religion and culture, heritage and sensibilities' (Parekh, 1988). In effect, it is argued that multi-cultural education extended the philosophy of cultural pluralism. Although it was able to reduce racism, it was not able to eliminate it. Furthermore, some LEAs were reluctant to promote multi-cultural education to hesitant schools (Troyna, 1985, p.212). It permitted certain teachers at the everyday teacher-pupil interaction level to maintain a 'colour-blind' approach and legitimise the *status quo* (Troyna, 1985, p.212).

Multi-cultural education was regarded by many radical commentators to be 'essentialist' and 'reductionist'. Multi-culturalists, arguably viewed racism as merely a product of the few. As it was a personality-orientated frame of reference and not structural, the view perpetuated the socio-pathologisation of ethnic minority groups (Troyna, 1987, 1993). The problem of educational underachievement was felt to emanate from individuals and not from the workings of society, implying that ethnic minority groups possessed deficiencies requiring 'compensation'. As a result, the multi-cultural educationalist programme was seen as an 'instrument of social control' (Figueroa, 1991, p.46). By reducing structural issues to cultural, questions of individual empowerment to combat racism were largely ignored..

In reality, multi-cultural education concentrated on cultural difference between groups rather than structural (Lynch, 1992). It gave rise to a number of studies throughout the 1980s maintaining that ethnic minority achievement was closely associated with low

self esteem (Verma & Ashworth, 1986; Verma & Pumfrey, 1989). It became increasingly 'fashionable to argue that the educational failure of working class and black children was due to poor self concept and self-esteem' (Stone, 1981, p.8). Furthermore, self-esteem was thought to evolve over the entire education and life cycle of individuals and so it was 'culturally grounded'. Inclusion is not about assimilation (Slee, 2001) instead as Touraine (2003) pointed out diversity rather than unity is the way forward. Therefore, inclusion in relation to ethnicity may relate to multi-culturalism or cultural pluralism rather than integration, which is more in the spirit of assimilation. Feeling valued is the basis of inclusion, creating 'community acceptance' (Risdale & Thompson, 2002, p.23).

Since the late 1980s, the word 'inclusion' has come to supersede 'integration'. Where attempts have been made to draw a distinction between inclusion and integration, the emphasis is focused on how well the curricular and pastoral systems of the school can be said to make comprehensive education meaningful for children. Most educational discussions on inclusion concentrate on curriculum, pastoral systems, attitudes and teaching methods, but there is a further dimension to inclusion, which goes beyond narrow school-based consideration. It is the wider notion of inclusion in society. There is an interesting notion of reciprocity, a recognition of mutual obligations between the wider community and institutions such as schools. The ethic that guides our culture is one of collective responsibility. This theme of collective belonging is linked by Tawney (1964) with the question of inequality in a civilised society and his reasoning is relevant when thinking about the organisation of education. Tawney did not deny that people are born with different abilities. However, he asserted that a truly civilized society strives to reduce these 'givens' from its own organisation. The organisation of society's institutions such as schools should lighten and reduce those inequalities, which arise from birth or circumstance rather than exaggerate them:

> '..While [people's] natural endowments differ profoundly, it is the mark of
> a civilised society to aim at eliminating such inequalities as have their
> source, not in individual differences, but in its own organisation, and that
> individual differences, which are a source of social energy, are more likely
> to ripen and find expression if social inequalities are as far as practicable
> diminished' (Tawney, 1964, p.57)

Some might query whether existing inequalities between children – in what they can do with their bodies or their cultural capital – cannot be compensated simply by the

physical and personnel resources they are given at school. Those inequalities lie more importantly in opportunities to do the same as other children to share the same spaces as other children and to speak the same languages as other children. 'Reducing inequality is thus about more than providing money and other resources, it is about providing the chance to share in the common wealth of the school and its culture' (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 2000, p.9). Many contemporary writers on inclusion believe that inclusion is a moral and social necessity. Indeed, inclusion reflects the worldwide recognition of the rights of youngsters to be educated within their own community, yet Smelter, Rasch and Yudewitz (1995) contend that it is neither fair nor possible to include all pupils in the same educational setting. In comparison Booth (1996) also warns against investing too much in the notion of inclusion, suggesting that the word is being used to describe an ideal and unrealisable state.

Skidmore (2004) suggests that inclusion has been more philosophical than practical, that integration has been a key topic for the past 30 years and that legislation, policy, research and good practice have all contributed to greater inclusion (Hegarty 1993). However, despite excellent practice in some schools, there is still a notion of trendiness among policy makers in discussing inclusion. Block (1999) points to the reluctance of advocates of full inclusion to recognise that it might not be in the best interests of every child. Inclusion will be unsustainable unless greater understanding and approaches that are more creative are adopted. This, coupled with a perception that inclusion is an academic contrivance, creates barriers for inclusive practice (Booth, 1996). Such a lack of understanding will be its downfall if inclusion is only perceived as the politically correct, updated term for integration. They may be correct in dismissing inclusion as an educational buzzword, which is a chimera but we should only dismiss full inclusion as unattainable when we have provided the right opportunities and support for all young people and we are sure that it cannot be effective. Furthermore, Goodwin (2007) argues that:

> 'Inclusive PE is an emotive subject, not least because it challenges teachers'
> expertise in an environment where they have competed and achieved
> themselves. They are intent on passing on those experiences to the next
> generation of sporting pupils, or at least to those who can succeed in the PE
> settings offered to them. In order to break the cycle of exclusionary practice
> we need to understand how exclusion occurs in lessons and how we can
> change teacher behaviours to enable them to become more inclusive'
> (p.17).

In order to examine inclusive practice within the PE setting, it is useful to distinguish between inclusion, integration and exclusion.

Inclusion v Integration

In their seminal work, on early integration programmes in the UK, Hegarty *et al.,* (1981) pointed out the various ways in which integration might be used, noting that there had been a temptation to think predominately about what the minority group needed to do to become absorbed into the mainstream. Moreover, further included in their definition of integration is 'a process where the ordinary school and a special school interact to form a new educational whole' (Hegarty *et al.*, 1981, p.15). Ainscow (1995) suggests that whereas integration is about additional arrangements in schools, which are essentially unchanged, a move to inclusion on the other hand implies a more radical set of changes through which schools come to embrace all children. Furthermore, an important distinction between integration and inclusion concerns inclusion's status as the opposite of exclusion (as separate from segregation) Booth, (1996) Segregation and exclusion are often thought of as different processes: segregation is usually associated with children who have learning difficulties, or other disabilities and, in contrast, exclusion is usually of children with challenging behaviour. Thus, it is possible to think of the two terms separately. Whereas integration and inclusion are often used as synonyms when there are key differences between the two terms as outlined in table 4.

Table 4: Walker's (1995) contrast of inclusion and integration

Integration emphasis	Inclusion emphasis
Needs of 'special' students	Rights of all students
Changing/remedying the subject	Changing the school
Benefit to the student with special needs being integrated	Benefits to all students of including all
Professionals, specialist expertise and formal support	Informal supports and the expertise of mainstream teachers
Technical interventions (special teaching, therapy)	Good teaching for all

Another key difference between inclusion and integration lies in the assumption about difference. 'Integration' was usually used to describe the process of the assimilation of children with learning difficulties and so on into mainstream schools. However, the use of the term special educational needs has usually excluded children whose first

language is not English (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998, p.14). As indicated by Walker (1995), the integration emphasis benefits those with special needs whereas with inclusion children who are at a disadvantage for any reason are not excluded from the mainstream. The notion of inclusion does not set parameters (as the notion of integration did) around particular kinds of special needs. Rather, it is about the philosophy of acceptance, it is about providing a framework within which all children regardless of ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origin can be valued equally and treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities at school. In short, accepting inclusion means moving from what Roaf (1988) has called 'an obsession with individual learning difficulties' (p.7) to an agenda of rights. This is in the spirit of the Warnock Committee (1978)[2] which argued for a fluid definition of 'special need', whereby categories are abolished and a child's needs would be defined as and when they arose.

Special needs, therefore, may arise from a multiplicity of factors related to disability, language, family income, cultural origin, gender or ethnic origin and it is inappropriate to differentiate among these. Salisbury and Jackson (1996) suggest that 'special' has become a euphemism for 'lesser'. Essentially, inclusive schooling is a context where no special education exists (Oliver, 2002). As Young (1990) asserts the mere existence of supposed groups of this kind forces us to categorise, and the categories encourage a particular mindset about a group, while in reality the 'groups' in question are 'cross-cutting, fluid and shifting' (p.45). Assumptions about disadvantage and oppression rest on these categorisations where they may not be warranted. In relation to disability, Meekosha and Jacubowicz (1996) make a similar point in that there is no discrete class of people who are disabled; they argue that people with disabilities are heterogeneous as people in general and the agglomeration of all disabilities alienates disabled people from other minorities. Booth (1996) also highlights the danger that homogeneity engulfs those who do not wish to be characterised under the disability umbrella. Indeed, the stressing of a minority status (in disability or any other area such as race) emphasises the personal weakness of the group in question rather than the inadequacies

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[2] The Warnock Committee was the first Committee of Enquiry specifically charged by any government of the United Kingdom to review educational provision for all handicapped children, whatever their handicap. The establishment this Committee, provided a formidable challenge, as well as a unique opportunity to take a comprehensive view of the way in which educational provision for handicapped children and young people, as well as arrangements for their transition from school to adult life, have developed and should develop in the future.

of the supposedly supportive system. Hence, there is a tendency to provide services by looking for the difficulty, where we think special help is needed rather than providing a service for all. One of the least prescriptive definitions of inclusion is provided by the *Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education* (CSIE, 2003). Inclusion involves valuing all equally and demands an acceptance. Each individual has a stake in a community and involves ideals of reciprocity, mutual obligations and responsibility. Furthermore, an inclusive school is community-based, barrier free, promotes collaboration and promotes equality. Inclusive schooling is concerned with 'values and principles, about the kind of society we want and the kind of education we value' (Evans & Lunt, 2002, p.3), a philosophy that every person has value. CSIE (2003) asserts that society is diverse and segregation promotes fear suspicion and ignorance, thereby fuelling intolerance. Such exclusion may affect the life chances of Muslim females since it confirms they are part of a 'lesser; group'.

Faith schools may also contribute to exclusion and segregation. Tinker (2009) concudes that it is possible to argue both for and against faith schools. Social cohesion could be achieved by ensuring Muslim children have contact with those of other faiths, or by educating them separately to give them confidence in their own religious identity. Muslim identities could be best served by being protected from western and extremist influences within a separate school, or by being educated in mainstream schools to avoid prioritising the religious aspect of identity over all others. Tinker (2009) presents arguments for state-funded Muslim schools. She posits that discourse of rights and equality is a principal line of argument for those on both sides of the debate. Advocates argue that Muslims have the same right to faith schools as other religious groups, while opponents claim faith schools infringe the rights of children. Similarly, the impact of Muslim schools on the cohesion of wider society is invoked by those in favour of and those opposed to Muslim schools. The discourse of identity is also raised by both advocates and opponents. Those in favour argue that they impact positively on a Muslim child's identity, whereas some of those opposed to Muslim schools claim that in a cosmopolitan society such as Britain it is inappropriate to prioritise a child's religious identity over their other identities.

> Some claim that social cohesion is most likely to be achieved by ensuring that all children have contact with those of other faiths, while others argue that Muslim schooling gives pupils confidence in their religious identity

which allows them to interact with wider society without fear of assimilation. Muslim children's identities could arguably be protected by educating them in an Islamic environment to shield them from the dangers posed by assimilation, discrimination and extremism, or by educating them alongside children of other faiths to avoid the adoption of an obsessive identity' (Tinker, 2009, p.551)

Tinker (2009) calls for more systematic research into the impact of faith schools and their impact on inclusion before dialogue can be successfully advanced.

Booth (1996) suggests that inclusive schooling is 'an unending set of processes rather than a state' (p.89). Thomas' (1997) assertion that the *raison d'etre* of an inclusive school is to involve everyone and ensure that everyone belongs' (p.103). Unfortunately, as O'Brien, Forest, Pearpoint, Asante and Snow (2001) highlight, there is a common misconception that inclusion means everybody agreeing with, and working in harmony with, everyone else, which is not the case. The notion that inclusion is a panacea for the ills of society is asinine. Instead, inclusive schooling is concerned with values and principles about the kind of society we want and the kind of education we value (Evans & Lunt, 2002, p.3), a philosophy that every person has value. However, Evans and Lunt do highlight the concerns teachers and educationalists still have regarding the reality of inclusion and what it means at a practical level, in particular how feasible it is to include everyone in everything.

Thomas, Walker and Webb, (1998) listed various principles of the inclusive school, which are represented in Table 5.

Table 5: Principles of the Inclusive School

Principle	Explanation
School ethos	Establish a school philosophy which promotes a vision of inclusion, publicly articulated.
Leadership	Have an inclusion task force which gathers information on inclusion and establishes objectives for inclusion and publicly espouses inclusion and equal opportunities.
Democratic management style	Seek to involve students, staff, parents and governors in the development and management of the school.
Communication Systems	Inclusive schools foster natural support networks across students and staff. Strategies such as peer tutoring, buddy systems, circles of friends, co-operative learning and other ways of connecting students in natural on-going and supportive relationships. All school personnel work together and support each other through professional collaboration, team teaching and co-teaching, teacher and student assistance teams and other collaborative arrangements. Assumption that all members will have a voice and that voice will be heard and there will be systems for ensuring that this voice will be heard.
Flexibility	Maintain flexibility in the face of false starts; treat the move to inclusion as a problem-solving exercise and don't assume it will be an easy ride.
Partnerships	Parents should be involved in the planning an implementation of inclusive school strategies
De-professionalism	An inclusive school is one where there is an assumption amongst staff (shared by students) that all staff share in the contribution they make to children's learning.
Self-advocacy	An inclusive school has communication which is all embracing and the views of all school members including children and those with disabilities are considered and acted upon

The above principles offer practical solutions to inclusion, although as Goodwin (2007) asserts 'inclusion means different things to different people' (p.380) and that rhetoric may not match reality. Local Education Authorities have taken their own paths to inclusion and such variations cause complications. Some schools and teachers are not ready to accommodate all pupils and a salient point is made by Risdale and Thompson (2002) who warn that a child does not participate in a general education simply because he/she is located in a particular school. Even in schools where an inclusive ethos prevails, Carrington and Elkins (2002) suggest that the atmosphere in many classrooms is not suited to the learning needs of some pupils.

Classroom routines do not always provide an effective, inclusive environment for learning and as Wedell, Steven and Waller (2000) indicate some pupils placed in mainstream schools are being ostracised and made to feel even more segregated. They may be included but not fully integrated within the social network of the school and the schooling experience is more that just classroom routine - it consist of break times and friendship networks. Haug (2002) identified social development as a basic tenet of inclusion. Therefore, the learning environment should facilitate social development in the form of increased fellowship, involvement with peers, increased democratisation and equal status and the recognition of individual difference, personal achievement and progression. Risdale and Thompson (2002) highlight the friendships that arise from schooling and the importance of giving children the opportunity to share 'in the common wealth of the school and its culture' (Thomas, 1997, p.105). Given that the homophily principle operates with in the Muslim community (Anwar, 1998) a culture of inclusion must be regarded as critical to their social development.

The CSIE (2003) asserts that segregation hampers our understanding of those that are different, while familiarity reduces fear and prejudice. The Enabling Education Network (EENET, 2003) sums up their beliefs and promotes inclusive education as an ingredient of an inclusive society. For Ainscow (1997), to be fully inclusive, schools need to be restructured to respond to the needs of all children - 'a schools for all approach' (p.3).

Inclusion and the challenges for PE

Inclusion raises particular issues for PE as those most likely to succeed in the PE environment are the well co-ordinated, able-bodied and skilful pupils. Penney and Clarke (2005) reiterated that traditional values and behaviours alienate many children in PE lessons. A child may be located in the lesson doing the activity and responding to instruction but without social engagement structured by teachers. This is an important point which Thomas *et al.,* (2005) make when they suggest main-dumping pupils without special support is a consequence of inadequate preparations. The English National Curriculum is what Mackay describes as a 'one size fits all curriculum' (2002, p.3), adding to the confusion between equity and homogeneity. No community can be considered as a single homogenous group, likewise the Muslim community does not share a single defining characteristic, despite the categorisation

that persists in educational, societal and sporting contexts. Booth (1996) also highlights the danger that homogeneity engulfs those diverse groups.

Macdonald and Hayes (2003) suggest that 'PE teachers are generally committed to delivering high quality PE and sport to all of their pupils' (p.153) Rutter (1983) argues that though individual teachers vary in their effectiveness, which is partly dependent on the curriculum, the school ethos determines whether the teacher will teach effectively. Further, the way in which teachers manage the classroom by maximising the amount of time the pupils are engaged in useful learning by engaging their attention, securing orderly behaviour and managing their own behaviour is crucial to effectiveness.

Reid *et al*., (1987pp. 24-29), on the basis of research into school effectiveness, break down the findings into 11 categories and show that the effectiveness of a school is related to successful school leadership; effective school management; favourable school ethos; good discipline; efficient teachers and teaching; a balanced curriculum; effective student learning; emphasis on reading; effective pupil care; well maintained school buildings; and a small school size. Which of these categories are crucial as compared to the others and whether a school can still be effective if it lacks some of these is, however, contentious.

Less effective schools tend to be found in areas where children from families with low socio-economic status and the ethnic minorities form the bulk of the school population and this leads to the conclusion that schools can widen the gap in educational results between different social and ethnic groups (Teunissen, 1992). African-Caribbean children are more often found in ineffective secondary (Rutter *et al*., 1979) and primary (Mortimore *et al.,* 1988) schools than in effective schools. Nevertheless, effective schools are effective for all the pupils regardless of gender, social background or ethnic origin (Williams & Cuttance, 1985; Mortimore *et al*., 1988; Smith & Tomlinson, 1989). Furthermore, effective schools are not only interested in enhancing academic qualifications, but they are also concerned with the social and moral development of their pupils and their participation In the day to day life of the school, both inside and outside the classroom. Thus effective schools have a profound impact on the way their pupils' aspirations and identities are shaped.

Inclusive practices are required in single-sex as well as mixed sex PE. Hills (2007) found a range of practices that excluded some girls from developing skills which included teasing, marginalisation within games and the public scaling of bodies. Differentiated practices may necessitate de-emphasising competitive outcomes, introducing individualised as well as group approaches to learning, integrating multi-dimensional learning environments and modifying or adapting physical activities (Talbot, 1993; Utley *et al.*, 2001; Rust *et al.*, 2003).

Friendships may facilitate and hamper interactions and participation within lessons. Some girls enjoy opportunities to participate with their friends and this can lead to increased motivation in the lessons, however, the formation of cliques or partnerships designed to exclude or marginalize other girls may also occur. Choosing partners and teams, assigning positions and passing to each other represented activities that girls defined as having the potential to facilitate inclusion and also increase the experiences of exclusion. The intervention of teachers, therefore, may be essential to create a cooperative environment where inclusion is required and encouraged.

Freire and Cesar (2003) suggest that subject teachers lack the confidence and knowledge to meet the needs of some individuals. While Florian and Rouse (2001) maintain that encouraging inclusion will promote effectiveness in schools, not all educationalists are in favour of inclusive schooling and some believe that inclusion is only being addressed because it is morally the right thing to do and that 'inclusion is not inherently good' (Barrow, 2000, p.36). While the three NC principles extol the ideology of inclusion (DFEE/QCA, 1999), individual Departments are expected to address the practicalities of inclusive PE. Goodwin (2007) found:

> 'the application and interpretation of inclusive ideals did not match the changing attitudes of teachers. Teachers still expect a level of competence because their experience relates to the performance of ablle-bodied pupils, and teacher training reinforces these traditional expectations. Consequently, children who do not conform to PE teachers' understanding of physical development and ability can be misunderstood' (p.74).

PE by its elitist nature has yet to prove its inclusive nature in schools and the literature suggests a gap in teachers' understanding of the PE experiences of Muslim girls in mainstream PE lessons. The culture of success in PE is one raised by Theodoulides (2003) in considering the key role that winning and losing have in PE. Competition

and its many forms is a concern for the less able and not being picked to be on a team creates just as much anxiety as being embarrassed by their own limited motor skills (Blinde & McCallister, 1998). Leah and Capel (2000) perceive that competition dominates PE experiences. Although the exact level of competition on PE lessons is variable, physical prowess leading to winning is still an essential component of the PE experience. It is legitimised by arguing that competition is a natural instinct for children and motivates them to do well and it prepares youngsters for the realities of the adult world. However, the very public nature of success and failure in PE sets it apart from other NC subjects and can result in demotivation and a negative self concept. In a similar vein, Lines and Stidder (2003) suggest that by providing privileged experiences to some pupils, such as competition and access to peer and cultural esteem, PE teachers are reinforcing negative aspects of difference. This creates an obvious issue for PE teachers since they come from a background of able performers and, therefore, were invariably picked to be on the team. As Theodoulides (2003) points out, PE teachers as sports' participants themselves, continue socialising pupils in the physical nature of competition.

Moreover, there is a controversial but common assumption that teachers' perceptions, expectations and behaviours are biased by racial stereotypes. The literature is full of seeming contradictions. For example Lightfoot, (1978) commented:

> '... Teachers, like all of us, use the dimensions of class, race, sex, ethnicity to bring order to their perception of the classroom environment. Rather than teachers gaining more in-depth and holistic understanding of the child, with the passage of time teachers perceptions become increasingly stereotyped and children become hardened caricatures of an initially discriminatory vision' (pp. 85-86).

Similarly, Baron, Tom and Cooper (1985) observed:

> '...The race or class of a particular student may cue the teacher to apply the generalized expectations, therefore making it difficult for the teacher to develop specific expectations tailored to individual students. In this manner the race or class distinction among students is perpetuated. The familiar operation of stereotypes takes place in that it becomes difficult for the minority or disadvantaged students to distinguish themselves from the generalized expectation' (p.251).

Conversely, doubting that bias is important, Haller (1985) noted:

'... Undoubtedly there are some racially biased people who are teachers…However…the problem does not seem to be of that nature. Conceiving it so is to confuse the issue, to do a serious injustice to the vast majority of teachers, and ultimately to visit an even more serious one on minority pupils. After all,…children's reading skills are not so much improved by subtly (and not so subtly) labelling their teachers racists. (p.481).

These contradictions regarding the bias in teachers' perceptions and expectations of minority pupils present challenges for inclusion. Ferguson (2003) suggests that the above contradictions stems from the meaning of bias and refersto at least three different conceptions of bias (see table 6 below). Bias is deviation from some benchmark that defines neutrality (or lack of bias).

Table 6: Bias in teacher's perceptions of their pupils

Conception of bias	Explanation and impact upon teacher expectations
'Unconditionally' race neutral	Teachers who are unbiased will expect the same on average of Muslim girls and non-Muslim girls. Race and expectation is uncorrelated
'Conditionally' race neutral	Teachers will expect the same of Muslim and non-Muslim girls on the condition that they have the same past grades and test scores
Conditioned on unobserved potential	Teachers will have equal expectations and aspirations for Muslim and non-Muslim girls who have equal potential

(Source: Adapted from Ferguson 2003).

As Ferguson (2003) asserts, the third conception is problematic as potential differs from past performance as it is difficult to prove. Miller (1995) found that teachers underestimate 'Black' students' potential, not necessarily their performance. The literature suggests that although teachers may believe certain stereotypes and may use the stereotypes but it does not establish that the stereotypes would be biased estimates of the average if they were applied in real classrooms outside the experimental setting (Ferguson, 2003). Nor does it prove that teachers treat students inappropriately or that their stereotypes prevent them from forming accurate perceptions about individual students (DeMeis & Turner, 1978; Baron *et al*.,1985).

Writers concerned with bias often claim that it can lead to self-fulfilling prophecies. Their point is that children would achieve more if teachers and other adults expected that they could. A more appropriate terminology than self-fulfilling might be to say

that this type of bias produces expectations that are sustaining of past trends (Good, 1987). A sustaining expectation is likely to block the absorption of new information into a decision process and thereby to sustain the trend that existed before the new information arrived.

The concept of modesty

> 'Every religion has a distinctive quality and the distinctive quality of Islam is modesty' (Kazi, 1992, p.120).

The most prominent current discourse related to the body and Muslim women, especially in the West, is wearing of the hijab (Fekete, 2008; Zebiri, 2008). The notion of 'hijab' has many meanings but here is used to refer to the religious requirement to cover the body in pursuit of modesty. While most people in the world cover parts of their bodies for modesty reasons, the religious symbolism is highly significant in Islam and in current discourse about Muslim women. Hijab or religious modesty is fundamental to all Muslims. It is widely believed that the Prophet Mohammad initiated the practice of women wearing the hijab or veil[3]. However, the idea of covering oneself in such a way pre-dated the Prophet Mohammad. Islam was not the only religion that commanded women to cover their heads and bodies: Judaism and Christianity have scriptures that also include this rule. In the Jewish tradition, a woman who covered her head was a symbol of modesty and, oftentimes, the veil would symbolize nobility. In fact, prostitutes were not allowed to wear the veil and, in rabbinic law, prayers or recitations were forbidden in the presence of a woman who was bare-headed. It is interesting to note that until the 19th century Jewish women in Europe wore the headscarf and, even today, in some sects of Judaism, the practice continues. In the Christian tradition, covering of the head by women has had a long history. In the New Testament St. Paul states 'every woman who prays or prophesizes

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[3] Hijab is the Arabic term most commonly translated as "veil" in English—-the traditional head, face or body covering of women in the Middle East and the Islamic world. Hijab, however, does not necessarily mean "veil" in the English sense of a head scarf, and has no exact translation in English. The word derives from the Arabic root *hjb* and means "to veil, to seclude, to conceal, to form a separation, to mask."

with her head uncovered dishonours her head – it is as though her head were shaved' (I Corinthians 11, pp.3-10). Some orders of Roman Catholic nuns wear a veil. It is also common in many Christian sects throughout the world for women to wear head coverings and long dresses, particularly for worship. From these examples covering the head with a scarf or hijab clearly existed prior to the founding of Islam. Islam simply continued the practice.

The Qur'an speaks of being modest in 'thy bearing', verse 31,19; it mentions Allah's reward for men and women who guard their modesty.

> '... Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty. And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and adornments except what ordinarily appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms' (pp. 24-31).

Although this concept of modesty or *sitr al' aura* (covering ones nakedness) applies equally to males and females in practice, it has been used exclusively to regulate the usage and attitudes of the female body. Specific instructions for women are set out in verses 24; 30-1 of the Qur'an 'Oh Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women that they should cast their outer garments over their bodies so that they should be known and not molested'. Therefore, in Islam, the primary motivations for wearing of head and body coverings relate to modesty as well as protection.

The hijab

The hijab or veil is a symbol of cultural difference: it conveys the idea that Muslim women are the objects of oppression. Zine (2006) suggests the practice of veiling has made Muslim women subject to dual oppressions of racism and Islamophobia in society at large and patriarchal oppression and sexism from within their own community. At the same time, they are subject to Orientalist representations of veiled and burqua clad women, which represent them as oppressed and backward. The veil represents the 'otherness' of Islam, a constricting form of dress, a form of social control and a sanctioning of women's invisibility and sub-ordinate socio- political status. 'The Other is one who is imprisoned in their own cultural tradition, a slave under various cultural norms which must be followed' (Carlbom, 2006). Ahmed (1982,

1992) agues that the veil has no innate meaning inimical to women's interests. She suggests it is a historically specific symbol of women's oppression and inferiority constructed during the colonial encounter between Muslim societies and European powers. These powers structured a discursive dichotomy between Islam and the West. Steet (2000) examines a Century of National Geographic's representation of the Arab from 1888 to 1988. She identifies several consistent themes from the dancing girl or prostitute to the anonymous, veiled and 'primitive' woman. These representations differentiate the eroticized Eastern female marking her as essentially other than the rest of the women in the world. Such representations have the effect of fostering common suppositions about Islam, which denote it as a faith and cultural system that is basically inferior to that of the West. In popular Western media such as films or television, Muslim women are depicted as passive victims of masculine dominance, either fully shrouded and demeaned or semi-naked and kept in harems for the fulfilment of male sexual fantasies. Said (2004) states that these accounts of the Muslim female have much to do with defining the West through its opposition to the Orient. The West is democratic, modern and a place where women are liberated, whereas the Orient is primitive, barbaric and despotic. Thus, the elaboration of the difference between Islam and the West has often centred on the status of women in the Muslim world. The likeness of a veiled woman appears to many Westerners as a stark contrast to western democracy. Most importantly, the depiction of Muslim women as oppressed and subjugated serves to reinforce and justify the colonizing mission of the West coming to rescue oppressed and vulnerable women. This image is reinforced constantly by the media, for example, the prevailing symbol of western victory in Afghanistan was the image of Afghan women throwing off their enveloping burquas. In a political environment of increasing hostility towards Islam and the manipulation of gender to reinforce the so-called clash of civilizations, Muslim women in Western societies have been placed in a difficult position.

Muslim females in the news media are frequently presented as the oppressed victims of a conservative brand of Islam. With the fundamentalist Islamic threat positioned as the new global enemy in the post-cold war era and diasporic populations of Muslims increasing in western metropolitan areas, long-held anxieties about the intent of Islam to destroy the values and lifestyles of Western-style democracies have come to the fore. Before and after the so-called 9/11 terrorist act in New York, consumers of

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western based media outlets were supplied with various analyses of Islam, many of which featured the powerlessless of Muslim women. Many accounts have portrayed women as passive victims of oppressive and harsh laws. There is, therefore, little question that the hijab has become the most stereotypical symbol of Muslim womanhood. There also exists a range of opinions within the Muslim community as to whether wearing the veil is an Islamic requirement or whether it a woman's choice as to whether she wears the hijab or not. The wearing of the hijab/veil symbolizes anything from repression to liberation. However, in diasporic communities, the wearing of the veil may present the wearer with discrimination. Haddad, Smith and Moore (2005) write that the hijab may mitigate against a women's professional advancement in the workplace; they comment 'ironically, regulations that may have originated in response to clothing considered too skimpy, such as mini skirts, now may function to prohibit clothing that serves the opposite purpose of modesty' (p.39).

The hijab is viewed as a threat to secularity, as an expression of religiosity - it frames the female body as an icon of 'the clash of civilizations'. The importance attached to the hijab by Muslims and non-Muslims alike has led many to take a one-dimensional view of what it means to be a Muslim female. Muslim feminist organizations such as the *Muslim Women's League* and KARAMAH have addressed the question of what the hijab means. Drawing on a Qur'anic framework to explain the significance of the attire, they insist that the overriding motivation in covering is modesty. What is unfortunate, these groups insist, is that the headscarf has become the litmus test of a Muslim women's piety, and even those who do not cover their hair and throat are judged to be women who have not yet quite arrived. In order to address this one dimensional view of Muslim females, Watson (2004), presents accounts from Muslim women and their decision-making concerning issues of import in their religious beliefs and practices related to the intersection of the religion of Islam and US culture.

Watson's (2004) objective in her documentary *Wearing Hijab: Uncovering the Myths of Islam in the United States* is to promote a deeper understanding and to provide US students with dynamic slices of real human experience, particularly with persons coming from different cultural and religious backgrounds.

> 'My goal is for students to understand and appreciate the differences in religions and cultures as well as to experience more directly the similarities

of the human experience worldwide. I have discovered that one of the most powerful ways of changing existing prejudices is to meet real people through the medium of video. We can best understand the ways of other human beings not by making assumptions, but by observing and listening and resisting the temptation to reach conclusions before gathering information' (p. v).

Watson illustrates the interplay of nationality and Islam, which also serves to illustrate that Muslims from different nationalities practice clothing styles that juxtapose their own national and cultural practices with their Islamic practices. It confirms the differences in the ways in which Muslim communities and individuals negotiate their space, cultural practices and identities (Ansari, 2002). For compulsory veiling in Iran, the veil is a symbol of the subordination of Muslim women to men and a cultural element, which restricts women's personal freedom. However, in considering voluntary veiling in Egypt, scholars such as Macleod (1991) and Hoodfar (1997) recognise the veil as a site of women's agency. Veiled women seem to be conscious and purposeful actors who deliberately negotiate the dominant gender ideologies in their societies to advance their own interests and agendas. The findings from Atasoy's (2006) research also challenge strongly contested ideas about whether the veil is a symbol of women's subordination to an oppressive tradition or a means of emancipation from that tradition. Atasoy interviewed thirteen veiled Muslim females living in Winnepeg Canada. Although her findings demonstrated that the veil is configured as central to an Islamic moral code of feminine modesty, the women's narratives suggest that 'the experiences of Muslim women do not necessarily converge on a certain embodied behaviour of dominant Islamic norms' (p.219).

Sports participation in school may conflict with the Islamic requirement for modesty. Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) reported 'for the devout Muslim, there is a real feeling of guilt and shame at exposing their bodies and legs, which had not been fully appreciated by the teachers' (p.158). Associated concerns were echoed by Pfister (2000) who surveyed sports participation amongst Muslims and found that a high percentage reported sporting activities, especially among girls and women might conflict with religious rules: sport itself was regarded as dangerous ground. Virginity is absolutely required of Turkish girls, even in families who do not follow Islamic laws strictly. In the middle of the 1980s, more than 80% of Turkish parents in Germany were convinced that virginity was more important for their daughter than a good

education (Konig, 1989). Numerous rules and regulations are intended to guarantee that girls do not lose their virginity. This explains why many parents do not allow their daughters to have contacts outside the family after puberty or visit youth centres and sports clubs. The widespread notion that physical exercise may damage the hymen is a further reason why many parents do not allow their daughters to join a sports club or take up a sport (Pfister, 2000).

In a comparative study of young Muslim women's experiences of Islam and PE in Greece and Britain, Dagkas and Benn (2006) reported that the attitudes of British Muslims towards PE were positive, with recognition of the health benefits. The issue of needing private space for changing often meant that some girls changed in the toilets and found ways of avoiding showers. There were also, conditions to the enjoyment related to good and bad inclusive pedagogy and practice.

For sporting Muslim women, it is not participating in high level sport that is the issue but the question of how they can protect their religious identity by retaining commitment to the hijab whilst participating. Manal Omar went for a swim at her local David Lloyd Fitness club in April 2007 in Oxford in her five piece Islamic-style swimsuit. The swimsuit has recently been celebrated as an innovative way for Muslim females to be active whilst at the same time retaining the Islamic requirement for modesty. However, another male swimmer objected to her 'burkini'. The incident received local publicity and prompted an online debate on integration raising awareness of the tensions surrounding Muslim women in diasporic communities. What disturbed Manal Omar most was that her 'very identity was reduced to a cluster of clichés about Muslim women and she was made an object of ridicule and a one dimensional stereotype'. Omar added that although she was no stranger to discrimination she, 'had never felt so isolated and discriminated against as she had done in Oxford, having lived in post 9/11 Bible belt America'. Her swim suit did not blend in with the mainstream and she called for 'a middle ground of interaction' (The Guardian 2007).This supports what Khan (2002) refers to as a third space for Muslim females to negotiate their identity in the diaspora. This swim-wear case is evidence that women who adopt Islamic dress in the West suffer an increase in discrimination, prejudice and exclusion (Runnymede, 1997). The majority of letters, which appeared

in *The Guardian* following the article 'Why can't I go swimming like this?' were in support of Omar. However, one reader wrote:

> '... I'll tell you why you shouldn't go swimming like this in Britain; it's because women in this country are equal to men and are not obliged to cover themselves up when swimming - or indeed at any other time - because some men somewhere have decided that's how it has to be. Women in Britain fought for and died for the right to be equal. In this country we are able to dress, or undress, exactly as we see fit. If that's not your choice, poor you. But don't be surprised when people mock you and pass comment on your totally inappropriate clothing for swimming' (*The Guardian*, 2007).

From the above letter, the values and practices of Islam were seen to embody a backward culture, which requires women's passivity and submissiveness. Western cultural norms, loosely identified with the liberal tradition, presuppose freedom in favour of individual autonomy and self-realization. In relation to freedom, Basit, (1997) maintains that 'the issue of freedom is complex' and contends that 'the image of a Muslim home as an oppressive arena where girls lead lives of suffering appears to be deeply embedded in the minds of some individuals' (p.436). This reader views the Muslim female through the same lens without taking into account the subtle differences in the ways of life of the ethnic minorities and the ethnic majority; the reader also presents the notion of freedom as sacrosanct. There is growing evidence that Muslim women can face similar problems across the world (Jawad & Benn, 2003), gaining an insight into the schooling experiences of young Muslim women in Britain can add another dimension to the limited literature in this area (Dagkas & Benn, 2006).

Carrington and Williams (1988) examined the difficulties faced by south Asian children in school-based PE. Carrington and Williams's work does show that south Asian Muslim children face difficulties in PE and that ethnicity heightens gender differences with girls facing more problems than boys. The specific problems were due to religious and cultural traditions, which assign roles to men and women and contain strict moral codes controlling behaviour and conduct, thereby restricting access to PE and leisure opportunities. Their research fails to discuss whether cultural traditions open up other avenues. Nevertheless, Carrington and Williams show that, without taking into consideration these cultural traditions and codes, equality of opportunity cannot be a realistic policy. These views are repeated in research by Carrington,

Chivers and Williams (1987), which is heavily criticised by Raval (1989). Raval's criticisms are based around the Eurocentric framework and definitions, which fail to encapsulate the leisure experiences of Asian women and address the racist policies in British society. As Raval notes:

> 'such studies by white male academics use Eurocentric models, frameworks and definitions, which leave no room for validating the struggles and concerns of Asian women in British society. Because the writers of such studies are not acquainted with traditions outside their own cultures and histories, the ideological and theoretical legacies from which they observe and write inevitably deny as valid any mode of struggle and organization which does not have its origins in European philosophical traditions. Thus, in adopting research methods and frameworks typical of white male academics, the writers fail to challenge common-sense assumptions, and reify racial chauvinism. This is evident in the narrow conceptualizations of leisure which are used; the failure to account for, and identify as leisure, the cultural activities of the Asian women who are being observed, has serious consequences in the conclusions they draw. Although the authors argue that their study is geared towards sport as a leisure activity, it is nevertheless important when accounting for women of different ethnic origins to account also for their particular cultural leisure activities' (p.237).

Carrington *et al*'s (1987) explanations tend to locate the issues as problems for the teacher and the child, and in gender relations in Muslim society. Thus, they fail to locate the racist practices inherent in school-based PE. As Raval (1989) observes:

> '... The authors constantly reiterate that gender differences are heightened by ethnicity, but fail to acknowledge and address the British social and institutional response to Asian women in such settings. As Parmar (1981) argues, it is important to situate the experiences of young Asian women in historically specific relation to their race, gender and class positions. The focus of analysis and explanation needs shifting from the Asian culture, religion and norms, to the racist structures and institutions of British society. Which is more problematic? (p.238).

Raval's critique of Carrington *et al*'s research raises important issues regarding the position of the researcher and racism in PE. PE and Sport is often regarded as an integrative force (Hargreaves, 1986; Mangen, 1986) and as a sphere of activity where equality of opportunity and racial harmony exist. Consequently PE teachers would be reluctant to admit and believe that racist policies do occur and that sport and PE can sometimes be a divisive force. (Fleming, 1991; Hills, 2007). Carroll and Hollinshead's (1993) research raised the question of what sort of PE can produce 'forms of racism

and practices,…attacks the cultural and religious values of the child, causes the pupils severe conflicts and puts them off physical activity, and even causes them to 'wag' PE lessons and school?' (p.163). They discovered that it was not the activity itself, which was problematic for pupils but kit requirements, showers, Ramadan and extra-curricular activities.

Kit requirements

Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) cited PE kit as a major cause of embarrassment for the Muslim female. The wearing of uniforms for movement activities caused embarrassment for those students whose religion demanded that they keep certain parts of their body covered in public. The embarrassment was experienced by males as well as females. Associated concerns were identified by Scraton (1992) who cited PE kit and compulsory showers as significant factors that contributed to some girls' negative perceptions and experiences of PE. In England, a traditional PE kit of short skirt, tee shirt and 'PE knickers', continues to be seen as problematic by many girls and young women (Kamiyole, 1993; Benn, 1998). On the one hand, its revealing nature potentially puts girls' and young women's bodies on display and opens up opportunities for unwanted and uncomfortable heterosexual male gaze and comment and this is especially problematic for Muslim females but not exclusively so. Secondly, the wearing of the PE kit is viewed by some girls and young women as childish and in conflict with their developing adult, heterosexual femininity. Where race and gender intersect, there is potential conflict for female Muslim students. McCullick *et al.,* (2003) found that while children frequently enjoy the chance to get exercise they cite the embarrassment of getting dressed and undressed for class, being compelled to participate in 'boring' activities and expressed concern about being compared with more athletic classmates (NASPE, 2000). The issue of the PE kit provides interesting insights into gender and cultural issues. Both white and Muslim girls commented on the unfairness of uniform policies which gave concessions to the Asian students that were not extended to their white peers (Williams & Bedward, 2001). This illustrates that kit requirements present problems for some females *per se* regardless of religious requirements but the problem is clearly exacerbated if kit requirements and the need for modesty conflict with Islamic requirements.

Similar sources of conflicts are highlighted by Williams (1989) as aquatics and co-educational classes. Furthermore, Clyne (1994) refers to problems for Muslims associated with dress requirements for physical activity such as swimming in co-educational settings. However, tensions arise, not so much in the activities as in the traditional PE practices of kit, changing and showering arrangements and exercise during the month of Ramadan and the timing of extra-curricular activities that clash with the Mosque teaching or other family commitments: '... Muslim requirements for modesty in dress, covering the body, arms and legs and avoiding public nudity, even in same sex situations, have led to the kit/showering/changing issues in PE' (Benn, 2005, p.208).

Benn (2005) reports some instances where strict kit regulations were unhelpful and rigidly non-negotiable, the allowance of a tracksuit, which would have solved the requirements for modesty, was not allowed because of safety issues, which could be problematic in an increasingly litigious PE environment. However, responses to the needs of Muslim pupils varied between education authorities and also varied from being able to wear track suit bottoms to more traditionalist departments where students used coping strategies such as 'pulling their socks up and their skirts down'. The greatest problems occurred in swimming especially mixed sex sessions, for which parents would write seeking exemption for their children. The tensions with the public nature of swimming were exacerbated at Ramadan, when some students did not want to swim because they were fasting.

In Dagkas and Benn's (2006) study, there were encouraging signs of positive changes driven by political sensitivities towards 'inclusion' of marginalised' groups, which allow tracksuits to be worn and increasing single-sex teaching and making showering optional and ensuring that new build facilities have more privacy in changing/showering arrangements. There were, however, concerns among some of their respondents, who

> '... Hated having to do it (PE in my knickers and vest)...I was embarrassed and ashamed because we were brought up with that feeling that you should hide your body...and there were boys in the class as well. I had those feelings' (p.29).

The respondents who reported the least positive experiences were those who met with teachers, who made no concessions to their strict education policy rules to wear a particular kit. Although there has been some change in the policy in some schools, in others, female teachers still see a traditional PE kit as important for maintaining standards and projecting a 'respectable' female image. A key finding from the research by Dagkas and Benn (2006), further confirmed by Garrett and Wrench (2006), related to teachers' understanding of the issues surrounding Muslim females. Although there has been some change in the policy in some schools, in others, female teachers still see a traditional PE kit as important for maintaining standards and projecting a 'respectable' female image.

Ramadan

Ritual fasting is an obligatory act during the month of Ramadan. All Muslims must abstain from food, drink, from dawn until dusk during this month. The fast is meant to allow Muslims to seek nearness to Allah, to express their gratitude to, and dependence on, him to atone for their past sins, and to remind them of the needy. An implication of Ramadan for participation in PE classes is that a child can become tired and strenuous physical exercise can cause discomfort and can be distressing (Carroll & Hollinshead 1993; Dagkas & Benn 2006). This problem is accentuated if Ramadan coincides with the activity area of Athletics, which can demand intense physical activity for short periods of time. Swimming is also a particular problem during Ramadan as water must not enter the mouth. Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) noted that 'the teachers commented on the strange sight of the children struggling to swim whilst at the same time trying to keep their heads well above the water to avoid getting it in their mouths' (p.161). There is a real dilemma faced by the children of wanting to do well in athletics/swimming whilst at the same time trying not to break their fast. They face another dilemma of not wanting to annoy their teachers or their parents: '... very often children are tempted to break their fast, particularly on games days, but then this will incur the anger of their parents if they find out' (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993 p.161).

Communal Showers

The communal nature of showers was identified by Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) as another area where there was a clash of values between teachers and pupils. Although

teachers felt strongly that pupils should shower for hygiene reasons, the Muslim pupils experienced a profound sense of guilt and shame at exposing their bodies even to another woman. They would also incur the wrath of their parents should they find out. Nevertheless, the teachers insisted that 'this embarrassment was usually overcome after a short while' (p.160). Furthermore, 'the teachers saw the same embarrassment in the Muslim children as in the white children and failed to see the deep feelings of shame and guilt' (p. 160). This is a further example of teachers viewing the Muslim pupils through the same lens as their white counterparts. A key finding from the research by Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) and Dagkas and Benn (2006) related to teachers' understanding of the issues surrounding Muslim females and this was further confirmed by Garrett and Wrench (2006). It is to this issue that I now turn.

Teachers' understanding.

Because of its centrality to the present study, it is worth briefly outlining what the literature to date has found in relation to teacher understanding of Muslim female pupils. In working with children of different ethnic backgrounds, problems stem from the narrow and stereotypical understandings about the activity profile of particular ethnic groups. This is particularly so for Muslim children who are often cast as 'problems' in PE settings (Carroll & Hollingshead, 1993; Tinning *et al*., 2001; Kahan, 2003).

From an Islamic point of view, the teacher is more important than the subject itself hence, teacher acceptance and motivation is a priority and a key feature if effective curriculum development is to take place (Sanjakdar, 2003). In researching the experience of Asian students in PE, Lewis (1979) and Lovell (1991) found that teachers generally believed that Asian girls were 'usually small and quite frail'. Adams (1997) suggests that schools, whether consciously or not, choose to enact a specific discourse of femininity and adolescence that often dismisses the lived experience of many of their female students. Verma *et al*., (1994) suggested that teacher assumptions that Muslim girls' lack of involvement in social activities outside school as indicative of a repressive home situation, is mistaken. They indicated that girls interviewed do not give this impression, often speaking positively about their preferences for involvement in home-based activities. This finding is echoed by Deem and Gilroy (1998) who point out that a great deal of women's leisure activity takes place outside

the home, thereby suggesting that home-based activity is not a particular feature of Asian or Muslim culture. Furthermore, De Knop *et al*.,(1996) suggested that the common assumption that Islam is obstructive towards female participation in sport is misplaced. This suggestion was endorsed by Muslim women interviewed by Benn (1996). This raises the question of how far differences are culturally specific rather than gender-based.

In an extensive study of girls' PE, Scraton (1992) showed how ideologies of femininity were produced and reproduced through PE practice. The study focused on teachers' attitudes and expectations related to girls' capabilities and interests. For example, teachers had clear ideas and appropriate expectations relating to girls' capabilities and interests such as appropriate activities for girls based on historical and traditional expectations of their physical capabilities. These expectations underpinned the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities made available to girls, but also influenced the teacher's expectations of girls' behaviour, their dress for PE and the teachers' pedagogical practice noted that powerful stereotypical attitudes exist among PE teachers. These tended to involve the location of perceptions within one of two frameworks. The first was a biological framework, which assumed that girls were less capable than boys and in general tend to exhibit specific feminine characteristics. The second suggested that social tradition or cultural determination was more significant in the creation of gender differences. Both could be equally discriminatory in their impact upon practice, for instance, the PE stereotypes of Asian girls and boys are damaging and constraining and crude ethnic categories such as 'white' or Asian can lead to misleading claims about educational success and failure and invisibility of key overlapping facets of identity. Bhachu (1993) questions the negative portrayal of ethnic minority women as powerless and passive, which fails to take account of the transformative powers of Asian women in generating and in manufacturing their cultural systems. She maintains that these often simplistic models deny their roles as the cultural entrepreneurs they are.

Additionally, Basit (1997) discovered that the indigenous teachers viewed the female adolescent Muslim pupils through the same lens as the English non- Muslim girls, without taking into account the subtle differences in the way of life of the ethnic minority and the ethnic majority. While the teachers are not racist, the image of a

Muslim home as an oppressive environment appears to be deeply embedded in the minds of some teachers. Indeed, few teachers are aware of the complexities that PE contexts present for the Muslim female (Carroll & Hollingshead, 1993). According to Basit (1995)

> '... Teachers frequently struggle to make sense of the social world of their ethnic minority pupils and are effective when they understand the dynamics of the ethnic minorities' religion and culture and teach within that framework to without exerting pressure for the ethnic minority pupils to conform to the majority norm' (p.80).

Basit (1997) also makes a very important point which is of relevance for the present research. She discovered that the stereotyping of Muslim females is reciprocal; she states:

> '... British Muslims hold negative stereotypes about the indigenous British population which are as deeply entrenched as are the stereotypes held by the indigenous group about them. Nevertheless, it is also evident that each group is struggling to make sense of the life of the other. In an effort to do so they produce misunderstandings which are based on a lack of knowledge about each other. While there is a need for educators to have an understanding of the social world of the young people they work with and the reason they choose to live their lives in certain ways, there is also a need for ethnic minorities to understand why the notion of freedom is sacrosanct to the majority group. Clearly, in order to avoid the perpetuation of stereotypes, more contact and dialogue between the ethnic majority and ethnic minority groups is crucial' (p.438).

However, Rattansi (1994) contends that not all teachers hold stereotypes; the stereotypes are often contradictory in their attribution of characteristics and are resisted by pupils through a varied repertoire of strategies. The high profile issue of integration has gone some way to improve the situation for Muslim pupils in PE. A statement in the national curriculum implemented in 2000 (Department for Education and Employment/Qualification and Curriculum Authority (DfEE/QCA, 1999) refers explicitly to the needs of Muslim students and requires teachers to remove barriers to learning, facilitate participation and, for example, to 'provide appropriate physical activity and opportunity for learning in times of fasting' (DfEE/QCA, 1999 p.136). However, in their study, Dagkas and Benn (2003) found that teacher understanding of the religious needs of Muslims varied. Schools have the capacity to collaborate, negotiate and build team work structures and plan for curriculum development which involves parents and the wider school community. Such an interactive nature of the

school curriculum is particularly important when serving the needs of the Muslim community.

A central tenet of Tajfel's (1981) early work was the power differentials between the majority group (PE teacher) and the minority group (Muslim female). This issue of power differentials is considered in relation to school-based PE. Cohen and Manion (1983) argue 'that teachers respond to individuals as members of a generic class with generalisable attributes and in the case of West Indian children these stereotypes are negative' (p.59). However, Cohen and Manion (1983) found that teachers' perceptions of Asian pupils were more positive in academic subjects as they were more supportive of school. This suggests that race has different meanings in different contexts. For example, West Indian pupils may be regarded more positively within the PE context than in the academic.

One issue to be considered is whether the experiences of Muslim females differ significantly from the well researched gender inequalities, which have been found to exist within school-based PE (Hargreaves, 1985, 1987; Lenskyj, 1986; Birrell, 1989; Scraton 1992; Talbot, 1993).

> '... British PE is gendered in ideology, content, and teaching methods, while teachers of PE may claim they espouse equality of opportunity for all children, their teaching behaviours and practices reveal entrenched sex stereotyping, based on 'common sense notions of what is suitable for girls and boys, both in single-sex and mixed sex groups and schools. The situation in PE is complicated by its content. Competitive activities embody the end of exclusive success-on the face of it, antithetical to the aim of equality of opportunity' (Talbot, 1993, p.74).

This commentary on the gendered nature of PE implores us to further consider the culture of PE. In particular, how and which particular groups have had the power to define the values and attitudes that matter in PE as well as to also consider the social implications for groups such as Muslim schoolgirls excluded form participation in school-based PE. Teacher philosophies are also examined and how teachers are by the pupils they teach drawing on Groves' (2001) research, which suggests that 'power to influence the classroom context is far from uni-directional (p.28).

Summary

Inclusion is not about assimilation, instead diversity rather than unity may be the way forward. The literature suggests that PE by its elitist nature has yet to demonstrate its inclusive nature in schools. Moreover, there exists a gap in educationalists' understanding of the PE experiences of Muslim pupils in mainstream PE lessons. Jha (2002) suggests that there are walls or barriers between schools and children before they enrol and they also face walls with curriculum and inside classrooms. It is further observed that '... Once walls within schools are broken, schools move out of their boundaries, end isolation and reach out to the communities' (Jha, 2002, pp.15-16).

This chapter has also elucidated how participation in PE and school sport may conflict with the Islamic requirement for modesty. The literature indicates that it was not the activity of PE *per se,* which was problematic for pupils but rather kit requirements, showers, Ramadan and extra-curricular activities. Teacher understanding and school ethos also are key factors. Teaching-learning processes are not culturally neutral but also value-laden (Verma, 1993). This has an important bearing on what is taught and how effectively it is taught. It is important that teachers understand more about how the cultural messages implicit in their teaching processes affect students from diverse backgrounds. In relation to school effectiveness, although individual teachers vary in their effectiveness, which is partly dependent on the curriculum, yet the school ethos determines whether the teachers will teach effectively. Further, the way teachers manage the classroom by maximising the amount of time the pupils are engaged in useful learning by engaging their attention, securing orderly behaviour and managing their own behavior, is crucial to effectiveness.

Chapter 4
Methodology

Introduction

The study's aims, identified in the introductory chapter, sought to explore the ethnic and religious identity of Muslim schoolgirls and how this identity might impact upon participation in school-based PE. The exploration of the experiences of Muslim pupils in PE lessons also embraced teachers' perceptions of the Muslim female identity and whether the PE teachers used inclusive practices in their lessons. The approach selected for this investigation into the experiences of Muslim schoolgirls and their teachers was interpretative, that is based on the belief that meanings and motives are made in social action and can only be understood by probing the perspectives of human beings involved in a direct and in-depth way. As Verma and Mallick (1999) write 'the interpretative approach is part of the qualitative...it relies on what it feels like to be a participant in the action under study' (p.29). Qualitative method, enabling the gathering of personal accounts of experiences, was selected as the only appropriate possibility. Since the instrument of research was the researcher, the human element, the strength of the researcher/respondent relationship was key to the success of this study.

The purpose of embedding an empirical study in a theoretical framework is to ensure clarity of focus and to sharpen insights that emerge from the data. The appropriateness of the theory might be judged by its adequacy in fulfilling that role. The plethora of social theories, even restricted to studies into social ethnic relations (Mason, 2002), offers wide-ranging perspectives. Every theory has limitations raising the question of adequacy with regard to any explanation: '... Theories are... selective in terms of their priorities and perspectives and the data they define as significant. As a result, they provide a particular and partial view of reality' (Haralambos & Holborn, 1991, p.765). Even the overarching paradigms debate is not without problems, having been described as a 'turbulent landscape' by Sparkes (1992), who goes on to observe that 'different paradigms often use the same words but give them different meanings so that different discourses produce different truths' (p.273). All interpretations of social phenomena are coloured by a particular view of the world. According to Silverman (2006)

scientists only observe 'facts' through the use of lenses made up of concepts and theories. But what are theories? O'Brien (1993) has used the example of a kaleidoscope to answer this question; he explains:

> '... A kaleidoscope [is] the child's toy, consisting of a tube, a number of lenses and fragments of transluscent coloured glass or plastic. When you turn the tube and look down the lens of the kaleidoscope the shapes and colours at the bottom, change. As the tube is turned different lenses come into play and the combinations of colour and shape shift from one pattern to another. In a similar way we can see a social theory as a sort of kaleidoscope – by shifting theoretical perspective the world under investigation changes shape' (pp.10-11).

O'Brien's analogy of a kaleidoscope suggests that research questions are theoretically informed and the theoretical perspective taken can provide an overall framework of how we look at reality. As O'Sullivan (2007) highlights, regardless of the type of research being carried out, there is the need to link it to some conceptual frame. This chapter builds upon the work of the literature review in order to discuss the methodological considerations for the study and its aims.

Choosing the right framework was important and as Crotty (1998) suggested this is unique to the research setting. According to O'Sullivan and Westerman (2007), educational researchers have responsibilities to 'inform important educational problems or issues; enrich the body of knowledge in our field; communicate their findings appropriately; and to contribute to the development of good social order (that is just, equitable)' (p.16). Therefore, from its inception, through the methodological phases and discussion to the final recommendations, appropriate design of research was pivotal in ensuring that the study was perceived as sound with justifiable findings (Francis, 1997). In order to address the aims of the study, a philosophical rationale for the research design that embraced the epistemological, theoretical and the methodological foundations of the study (Crotty, 1998, Goodwin, 2007) was adopted. In establishing an epistemological framework, other researchers' methodological strategies for the study were adopted and/or adapted (Vulliamy & Webb, 1992).

Research design

'...many arrows, loosed several ways.

Fly to one mark' (Shakespeare, Henry V).

Crotty (1999) suggests that four elements can help 'the soundness of the research and make the research convincing' (p.6). He observes that these four elements should inform one another. These four elements are represented below together with the research design adopted (see figure 3)
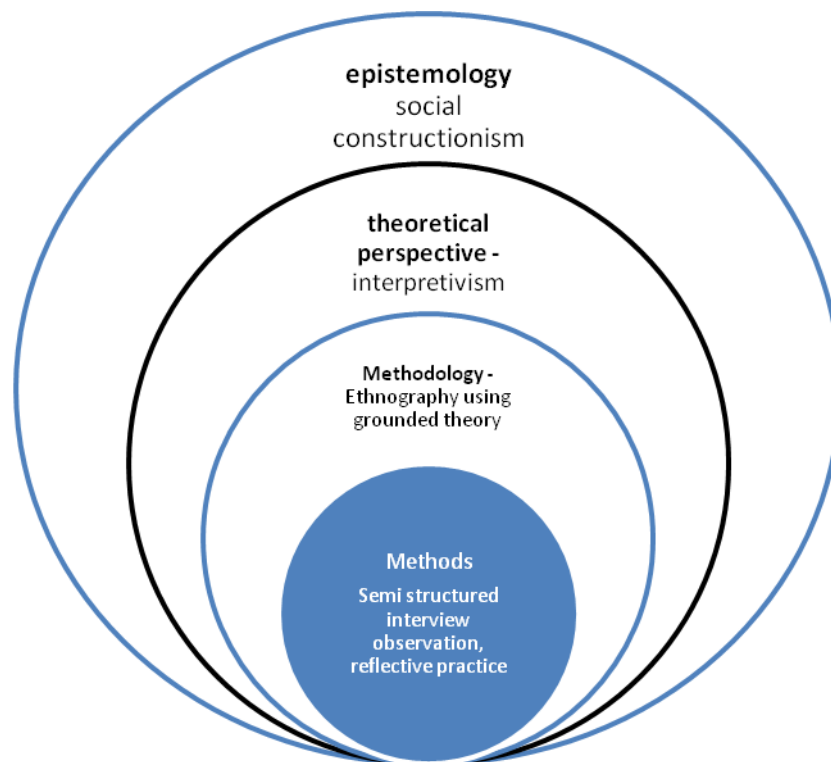
Figure 3: Diagrammatic representation of the research design (adapted from Crotty, 1999)

Epistemological basis for the study

Social constructionism provided the epistemological basis for the study. Social constructionist enquiry 'is principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live' (Gergen, 2002, p.266). The terms in which the world is understood are social artefacts, 'products of the historically situated interchanges between people' (Gergen, 1985, p.267). Bassey (1999) suggests that reality cannot

exist without the people for whom it was constructed. Using a social constructionist approach accepts that shared meanings can be observed among social groupings. This research explored the way in which gender and culture interact to impact upon PE experiences and reflected upon how differences in teacher and student perceptions affect the capability of the school to provide an equitable and inclusive PE programme. The social construction of physical activity has been discussed by a number of writers. Figueroa (1993) reminds us that cultural differences result in different concepts of leisure and beliefs about recreation. In relation to gender, Scraton (1992) suggests that understanding of cultural expectations is vital to an understanding of young women's experiences, attitudes and behaviours with respect to PE and physical activity. Research also indicates that such understanding is equally necessary in relation to cultural differences and that it requires considerable further development among many teachers (Basit, 1997; Abbas 2005; Dagkas & Benn, 2006).

Education, recognised as a process in which the school is a lived experience, (Merriman, 1998) formed the background to the research. Acceptance of the flexible and transient nature of the boundaries between groups seems consistent with Hall's (1992) view of the individual, whom he describes as occupying a range of identities at different times, thereby accommodating contradictory allegiances within frequently changing social contexts. The empirical research, therefore, starts from a perspective, which sees both gender and culture as situated in the context of the school. It is a view shared with Barth (1969), who suggests that ethnic groups are essentially social constructs; furthermore, Wallman (1978), believes that ethnicity can only happen when two or more cultural groupings come into contact. Wallman's perspective on the nature of ethnicity is paralleled by Hall's (1996) view of gender issues as relational rather than absolute, that is, analysis, which focuses upon relations between categories, in Hall's case between different gender groups, in Wallman's, between different cultural groups, is likely to be more fruitful than that which analyses categories in isolation.

This social constructivist approach seems to be particularly appropriate to a school-focused study. Schools create a typical settting for the interpretivist researcher. 'Although outwardly the same, each is rendered unique by individuals in a school's community and the meaning they give to actions' (Goodwin, 2007, p.78). Teachers and each new generation of pupils are absorbed into the culture of PE and this research

sought to make sense of participants' experiences of it. The key players in this research are those experiencing PE and those 'delivering' it. Thus, the research explored whether pupils and their teachers gave the same meaning to experience and how their understanding of identity and inclusive PE was generated and sustained. Recognition of cultural differences in the value and status attached to physical activity is important. A supportive learning environment is vital to any engagement of learners. The significance of the school as the only environment in which some young Muslim girls will experience such activity cannot be ignored (De Knop *et al.*, 1996).

Within all contemporary societies, there are groups that struggle to gain equality of opportunity and social justice in national education systems. As a Psychology Teacher, I am aware of the developments in the education system in which tolerance, diversity and equality are striven for. The State supported school system is multi-cultured and multi-ethnic, and contains a melting pot of dynamism that comes from the diverse environments in which pupils live and schools are situated. Inclusion and its practice is a political and ideological construct that needs to be interpreted through its demonstration in the real world of the classroom and the school, although it also depends on the 'creativity and ingenuity of everyone involved in the process of care and education of young people' (O'Hanlon, 2003, p.16).

Teaching in a predominantly all boys school has also made me aware of the importance of 'inclusion'. I teach in a highly selective Sixth Form environment, in which female pupils are in the minority and there is still a resistance to their presence from male pupils and staff alike. Furthermore, the 'house system' fosters competition but also in-group favouritism and out-group hostility. Some colleagues also perpetuate this process. My own personal position is to adopt a philosophy of acceptance of inevitable educational difference, regardless of race, gender or ability. This view is not shared by all staff. I am aware of colleagues who 'label' children as 'failures', who have 'favourites' and who stereotype by gender and race. This elitist, competitive environment reduces the potential for inclusion. This research, therefore, emerged from a belief that inclusion is not universally accepted. As a professional, my concern is with teachers' attitudes, which are a key ingredient in inclusive schooling. My attention then focused on a curriculum area, which may be problematic for inclusion.

The effect of teacher philosophies and stereotyping on pupils' performance has been discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 (Rattansi, 1994; Basit, 1997, p.436). A further issue to be considered is whether the experiences of Muslim females differ significantly from the well researched gender inequalities (outlined in Chapter 3), which have been found to exist within school-based PE (Hargreaves, 1986. 1994; Lenskyj, 1990; Scraton 1992; Talbot, 1993). In promoting inclusion, the National Curriculum (DfEE/QCA 1999) reinforced the perception that PE is integral to the development of social skills that enable pupils to become members of their cultural community (Skidmore, 2004). The literature indicates that PE is rooted in the traditions of motor elitism and participation (Hargreaves, 1985, 1987; Lenskyj, 1986; Scraton 1992; Talbot, 1993; Goodwin, 2007). The concept of hegemonic masculinity is used in PE studies to understand the dynamics of classroom life, including patterns of resistance and bullying among boys. It has been used to explore relations to the curriculum and the difficulties in gender-neutral pedagogy (Martino 1995), and also to understand teacher strategies and teacher identities among such groups as PE teachers (Skelton 1993).

Theoretical perspective

Since the study was based within the interpretive paradigm, it was important to formulate a detailed description and explanation of certain phenomena based on the data collected. This includes how people experience their own world, and how they express these experiences. Underpinning the rationale is a belief that to understand the subjective world of human experiences requires a personal and unique interpretation, which goes beyond that of the positivist researcher for as Layder (2006) observes:

> '... Human behaviour cannot be predicted with the precision that is possible in the natural sciences because it varies according to people's intentions, objectives, and the historically changing meanings which give them sense and context' (p.160).

Writing on objectivity, Haraway (1988) draws distinctions between the positivist scientific paradigm where 'universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims', and interpretivist/naturalistic positions on valuing partiality place ' claims on people's lives … politics and epistemologies of location, positioning and situating' (p.580). In a strong critique of objectivity, she makes the case for interpretive

accounts that engages, comes from somewhere, from embodiment, lived realities, with all the limits and contradictions of those realities.

Questions appropriate to interpretive inquiry allow researchers to link participants' meanings and actions in ways that may offer insightful explanations of events (Macdonald *et al*., 2002) and in ways, which are not possible through the use of alternative (positivist) methods. An interpretive methodology pays reference to the fact that the human sciences should be steeped in hermeneutics (interpretation) for the purpose of recognising the meanings and perspectives of the people being studied. Key questions in interpretive research relate to 'what is happening here' and 'what these events mean to the people engaged in them' (Erickson, 1986). This methodology is congruent with the fundamental epistemological and methodological characteristic that social organisations are constructed on purposeful actions of individuals as they negotiate their social roles and define status within a group. The rubric of such an approach is to aim for an understanding of another person's world through appreciating how others construct meanings of their world. Humans act (behave) in accordance with their individual and subjective understanding of their world (Pope, 2006), and, as such, the truths and associated meanings to which they make reference are deemed to be socially constructed. On such grounds, the interpretive orientation conceives multiple realities, each of which is relative to a particular individual context (Pope, 2006). Whereas

> '... Traditional positivist researchers are frequently working to find a single, testable truth. Interpretive researchers.....support the notion of multiple truths. That is, truth is seen as a social construction and inextricably linked to the meanings of the study's participants' (Pope, 2006, p.140).

The study of phenomena in their natural setting is vital to the justification of an interpretivist philosophy (Pope, 2006) and the methods, which are then employed. By exploring these individual contexts and truths, research within an interpretive framework most commonly involves an intensely interactive and personal process of engagement (Sparkes, 1994), which the methods of this study reflect. This is most effectively achieved through methods which afford the opportunity to watch, listen, empathise, learn about perspectives, make sense of experiences, and share understanding of meaningful interpretations. Goodley (1999) likened this research

approach to being concerned with, or getting to know, or seeking to understand the world view of participants, in this study, the Muslim schoolgirls and their teachers. Hence, aspects of ethnography were helpful to this research design.

Methodology

1. Ethnography

Ethnography is a cultural description; it shows how people describe and structure their world (Marshall and Rossman, 1991). The emphasis on ethnographic research is on documenting or portraying the everyday experiences of individuals by observing or interviewing them and relevant others. The researcher attempts to capture as much of what is going on as he/she can (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). According to Crotty (1998), ethnography is a *methodology* and furthermore, 'ethnography and constructivism need to be *related* to one another, rather than merely set side by side as comparable, perhaps even competing approaches' (p.3).

In order to achieve the aims of the present study, qualitative methodological procedures were used in an ethnographic case study of Muslim schoolgirls and their teachers. Ethnographic research lends itself well to topics, which are not easily quantified (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). Furthermore, the goal of researchers engaging in ethnographic research is to 'paint a portrait' of a social setting - for example a school or a classroom - in as thorough, accurate and vivid a manner as possible, so that others can truly 'see' the school and its participants and what they do (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). Likewise, an ethnographer studying any other culture endeavours to portray that culture in a realistic and enriching fashion in order to convey to the reader the authentic flavour of that culture. Thus, the present study endeavoured to paint a picture of two groups of Year 11 Muslim girls as a single case.

A case study examines a single instance, which could be a pupil, a class, a school, a group, community or profession, to illuminate the wider population to which that instance belongs. In this respect, it is similar to ethnography. Although researchers are inclined to label their research as either case study or ethnography, the two are not mutually exclusive. They have cognate features and here it would be appropriate to

refer to the present research as an Ethnographic Case Study as it combines features of the two qualitative strategies for methodological purposes.

Garrick (1999) noted that an 'individual's experience can best be understood from the standpoint of the social world of the individual' (p.112). The present study sought an understanding of the action that individuals take because of their interpretation of events. This informed the methodology, and it became clear that a case study research context would meet the objectives of the research. Although some critics label this methodology as 'unsophisticated' (Soecker, 1991) or 'soft' research (Ritchie & Spencer, 1993), in view of the interpretive nature of the research and the range of data, the ethnographic case study represented the most suitable approach for the particular questions being posed and is supported by researchers such as Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) Booth (1996) Fernandez (2000) and Vidovich and O'Donoghue (2003).

Their teachers were thought to be an important group who had guidance and advisory roles critical for moulding these aspirations. Hence, it was felt necessary to construct a research design that took into account not just the perceptions of the girls, but also those of their teachers. This not only illuminated the same issues from two different perspectives, but also manifested how the perceptions of the teachers encroached on the girls' aspirations. Furthermore, this strategy proved invaluable in checking the validity and reliability of the data. The study did not set out to check hypotheses or theories, but intended to generate theory grounded in the data.

2. Grounded theory

Grounded theory pertains to theory generated during the collection, inspection and analysis of data. This kind of theory evolves from themes and concepts, which emanate from qualitative data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) contend that a social scientist's job is not to provide a perfect description of an area but to develop a theory that accounts for much of the relevant behaviour. A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data, related to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Theory should follow

from research, not precede it (Cohen & Manion, 1989). The three basic elements of grounded theory are concepts, categories and propositions. Concepts are the basic units of analysis since it is from conceptualisation of data, not the actual data *per se*, that theory is developed. '... Theories can't be built with actual incidents or activities as observed or reported; that is, from 'raw data' Strauss and Corbin (1990, p.7).

The incidents, events, happenings are taken as, or analysed as, potential indicators of phenomena, which are, thereby, given conceptual labels. If a respondent says to the researcher, 'each day I spread my activities over the morning, resting between shaving and bathing', then the researcher might label this phenomenon as 'pacing'. As the researcher encounters other incidents, and when after comparison to the first, they appear to resemble the same phenomena, then these, too, can be labelled as 'pacing'. Only by comparing incidents and naming like phenomena with the same term can the theorist accumulate the basic units for theory. Only by comparing incidents and naming like phenomena with the same term can the theorist accumulate the basic units for theory.

The second element of grounded theory, 'Categories', are defined by Corbin and Strauss (1990):

> 'Categories are higher in level and more abstract than the concepts they represent. They are generated through the same analytic process of making comparisons to highlight similarities and differences that is used to produce lower level concepts' (p.7).

Categories are the 'cornerstones' of developing theory. They provide the means by which the theory can be integrated. In addition to the concept of 'pacing', the analyst might generate the concepts of 'self-medicating', 'resting', and 'watching one's diet'. While coding, the analyst may note that, although these concepts are different in form, they seem to represent activities directed toward a similar process: keeping an illness under control. They could be grouped under a more abstract heading, the category: 'Self Strategies for Controlling Illness'.

The third element of grounded theory is 'Propositions', which indicate generalised relationships between a category and its concepts and between discrete categories. This

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third element was originally termed 'hypotheses' by Glaser and Strauss (1967). It is felt that the term 'propositions' is more appropriate since, as Whetten (1989) correctly points out, 'propositions involve conceptual relationships whereas hypotheses require measured relationships' (p.492). Since the grounded approach produces conceptual and not measured relationships, the former term is preferred.

The generation and development of concepts, categories and propositions is an iterative process. Grounded theory is not generated *a priori* and then subsequently tested. Rather, it is *inductively* derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. The grounded approach advocates the use of multiple data sources converging on the same phenomenon and terms these 'slices of data.' Glaser and Strauss (1967) observe that in theoretical sampling, no one kind of data on a category nor technique for data collection is necessarily appropriate. Different kinds of data give the analyst different views or vantage points from which to understand a category and to develop its properties; these different views can be referred to as *slices of data*. While the [researcher] may use one technique of data collection primarily, theoretical sampling for saturation of a category allows a multi-faceted investigation, in which there are no limits to the techniques of data collection, the way they are used, or the types of data acquired. Similarly, Eisenhardt (1989) states: '... Case study research can involve qualitative data only, quantitative only, or both' (p.538). Moreover, the combination of data types can be highly synergistic.

The present study does not set out to prove a theory, but endeavours to ascertain a theory emerging from the research. Qualitative data can help understand the rationale of the theory and *underlying* relationships. The use of multiple data sources thus enhances construct validity and reliability. The latter is further enhanced through the preparation of a case study database, which is a formal assembly of evidence distinct from the case study report.

In summary, the research falls within the interpretive paradigm. Interpretive enquiry is based on the belief that the social world is full of multiple realities and interpretations of reality and cannot be understood in terms of broad generalizations. Social meaning is based in human action. People are not just 'acted on' by external influences but interact, interpret and create their own realities. The experiences of the research

participants are seen as been socially constructed over time. The researcher is the research instrument and seeks information about a person's perceptions, interpretations and understanding of behaviours, events and situations. There is a preference in this paradigm for qualitative methods. The methods adopted include interviews, diaries, participant observation, ethnography and case studies. Knowledge is perceived as a human construction: 'Knowledge is taken to be created in the course of human interaction. Of particular interest is the knowledge of the interpersonal rules that underlie social life' (Cornbleth, 2001, p.95).

The role of knowledge and, therefore, the purpose of research in the interpretive paradigm is to understand social meaning and everyday life. It is the social construction and interpretation of the experiences of the research participants on which the analysis in this study is framed. How the researcher interprets the research is inductive and subjective in nature. This confirms what Cornbleth (1990) asserted. In other words, every piece of research is underpinned with a particular view of social reality, knowledge and truth. There is no such thing as neutral value-free research underpinned by this view of social reality.

Methodological issues

1. **Generalisability**

Each ethnography is unique. It describes and analyses aspects of a particular social setting and social world. However the author may seek to generalise, to compare and to theorise on a grand scale, the work is necessarily grounded in the local. The present research studied pupils and teachers in two schools within the same Local Education Authority. The ethnography is bound in time and space (Atkinson, 1992); and generalisablity is almost non-existent since only a single situation, such as one classroom, school, or a small sample of schools are studied (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990).

Case study research involves the study of an instance in action (Adelman *et al.,* 1980). The present study involved the study of two schools. As Goodwin (2007) commented, in relation to schools, 'although outwardly the same, each is rendered unique by the individuals in a school's community and the meaning they give to actions' (p.78).

While themes emerge which could be investigated further by future researchers, the study is area specific and era specific. It illustrates a specimen of the population living at a particular time in a certain geographical region. Although an ethnographic case study offers suggestive evidence, the present study was not primarily intended to make claims of generalisability but rather identify patterns. However, notwithstanding theoretical anxieties, Erikson (1986) suggested that understanding and generalisablity could be applied to settings with similarities to the case study. Furthermore, knowledge acquired in some settings might act as a guide to further actions with the result that such awareness could generate wider understanding of other similar educational contexts. That being so, Stake (1980) suggests making assertions rather than generalisations, taking advantage of the particular nature of the case study. Thus, in placing the 'burden of proof' on the reader, as suggested by Gomm *et al*., (2001, p.100), the notion of generalisability became one of transferability.

2. Subjectivity

Traditionally, within any research, the need for the researcher to distance him/herself from the situation in hand to achieve objectivity (Sparkes, 1992, p.33) has meant that 'subjectivity' has come to be a derogative term indicating a study is invalid. However, such viewpoints pre-suppose that the researcher is actively constructing his/her own interpretation of events to the detriment of hearing the 'voice' of the subject involved. To overcome this 'problem', more recent research has advocated the 'manufacture of distance', between researcher and subject through 'active reflection' and 'bracketing'; in other words setting aside one's 'taken for granted' orientation to the situation being studied (McCracken, 1988, p.22: Holstein & Gubrium, 1994, p.263).

Groves (2001) believes that subjectivity is 'an inevitable part of social research where experience is being investigated…it is possible to treat subjectivity as the very topic of discussion rather than as a methodological taboo' (p.99). Since under interpretivism, 'social reality is mind dependent…there can be no 'brute data' out there on which to found knowledge or verify our positions' (Sparkes, 1992, p.35). Ball (1993), cited in Jacobson (1998), makes a similar point in relation to the position of the researcher within the interpretive paradigm where the data inevitably become a product of the skills and imagination of the researcher and of the interface between the researcher and the researched. In order to begin to appreciate my own standpoint and to place myself

in a position to understand and interpret other's voices, I need to acknowledge my own culture and reflect on it. Subjectivity in the consideration of Muslim schoolgirls and PE teachers in this study is compounded by the fact that not only are they recalling experience from a subjective point of view, but also they have their own interpretation as to the aims of the research and the perceptions of the researcher. Until recently, 'the child has been largely neglected within educational research' (Groves, 2001, p. 46). Although the fear of involving children in the research process 'appears to have been conquered…we are still falling short of being able to do so in a proactive capacity' (Groves, 2001, p.46). Initial involvement of children has largely been in a passive role as observed in relation to the actions of teachers. Also, the framing of children's contributions has been largely prescribed by the researcher. Many studies, which have attempted to give students voice, have stopped short of doing so because of the highly structured methods and methodologies used to obtain children's opinions. According to Groves (2001):

> 'using methods which tend to be highly structured by the researcher means that the researcher prescribes those factors of salience which may or may not coincide with the perceptions that students have of what is important in education or PE' (p.48).

Groves advocates the involvement of children in the research process and acknowledges the agency of children as a positive step towards their greater involvement in the process. Furthermore, Woodhouse (1996) recognises that 'young people are more than inanimate vessels…they are animate, thinking beings with developing beliefs and values' (p.41). Therefore, seeking access to the 'lifeworld' within PE of pupils and teachers is of paramount significance. One way in which to establish what the Muslim girls' experiences are, is to give those pupils 'voice'.

3. Giving Voice

In light of the complexities of issues of 'subjectivity', it is necessary to consider the real implications involved in the issues of whose voice is heard in research, particularly as researchers claim to give pupils voice. It is important initially to outline exactly what is meant by the term. On a superficial level affording a minority group the chance to speak may suffice (Groves, 2001). There has been a growing appreciation for

listening to the voice of the child ('student voice'), which Visser (2002) regards as being a positive development. At the systemic, school and subject level, the curriculum has tended to be something `planned for' and `done to' students (Klein 1989, p. 90). Erickson and Schultz (1992) claim that the `systematic silencing of the student voice' (p. 481) is consistent with traditional authority structures in schools and a consequence of methodological preferences for positivistic research techniques in formulating and implementing such procedures as those followed in this case. Their criticism can be understood by examining how different research paradigms (liberal, critical, feminist and post-structuralist) have considered student voice. Although student voices have the potential to make a unique contribution to curriculum making, the question of how to position those voices to ensure that they are heard remains unclear. There are issues of power and student choice to be considered (e.g. Ellsworth 1992; Gore 1992; and Orner 1992). There is also a broad chasm between speaking and being heard. Schratz (1993) has highlighted this danger particularly in light of the way in which educational research has been conducted in the UK.

Educational research based on quantitative measurement, variables, experimentation and operationalisation usually transfers the original voices of its research subjects into statistical data, mathematical relations or other abstract parameters. Therefore, very little is left of the social context in which educational practices occur. What is left over represents the 'noise' in the transmission of the data and is reduced to its minimal disturbance in the research process. Thus the original voices from the field become the disembodied voices in the discourse of quantitative research presented through reports and books (Schratz, 1993, p.1).

It is not just the quantification of data, which may lead to the mis-representation of the pupil's voice in educational research. The qualitative approach to research design raises issues where the factors of significance have already been determined. For example, in structured interviews the voice of the pupil is limited to opinion on certain matters, which the researcher considers important and, therefore, does not genuinely give voice. Ruddick (1993) further highlights the concept of voice by comparing it to the idea of being engaged in a dialogue of equally exchanged views:

> '... The word 'voices' suggests something different from the word 'dialogue'. Dialogue is part of a social convention where rules underwrite the possibility of speaking and being heard; turn-taking offers more promise of equality. Voices are more emotive disembodied, more disturbing, they can 'represent' individuals or groups who have been denied the right to contribute or have simply not been heard. Such voices speak to our conscience' (p.8).

The concept of voice immediately implies an imbalance between the researcher and the subject. Essentially this 'one-sidedness' should give an opportunity to marginalised groups. Even within itself, the concept of giving voice might be termed a dual imbalance. The researcher devotes a specific part of the work to the subjects concerned to give them the opportunity to be heard where they have been denied expression. It is, therefore, the researcher who chooses to give this opportunity and it is the researcher who decides on whose voice is to be heard. Very often there is the tendency to be drawn to those of the most articulate subject; however, such views are not necessarily representative of the larger population and may indeed be atypical (Kvale, 1996, p.144).

Within PE research, the student-experienced curriculum has been examined by studying student attitudes regarding particular school subjects (Pissanos & Allison, 1993, p.425). For example, when in 1995 a special edition of the *Journal of Teaching in PE* was devoted to student voice, the editor stated that its purpose was `to describe and analyse what students think, feel, and know about various aspects of their PE programs' (Graham, 1995, p.364). Graham went on to ask questions about the `kinds of things' teachers can learn from students about what they teach and how they teach that can `inform, and perhaps even change, the way teachers design and deliver' their programmes (p.365). By asking such questions, the focus was on how children viewed their programmes rather than how they contributed to the construction of those programmes. The contents of Graham's monograph included studies of students' perspectives of curriculum innovations (Dyson, 1995), authentic assessment procedures (Veal & Compagnone, 1995), and student attitudes and alienation (Carlson, 1995).

Current legislation is driving the increasingly popular practice of incorporating the voices of children for whom the research has connotations. It was noted by Lewis

(2002) that the shift towards the inclusion of children's views has been triggered by various legislative guidelines that have stressed the need to ascertain the views of the child. This is underpinned by inclusive education policy documents such as the *Convention on the Rights of a Child* (United Nations, 1989) and the *Right to Inclusion* (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 1994). The *Revised Code of Practice for SEN* (Department for Education and Skills, 2001) also highlights the need to ascertain the views of the child. Young people have a right to be consulted, heard, and listened to on any matters for which their views have resonance, and as such this is the focal ideology, which underpins this research.

The principles underpinning student voice centre upon facilitating the empowerment of those whose voices are often lost. Fielding (2004) recognises that the desire to encourage young people to articulate their opinions has the potential to offer an important contribution to the education of a civic society. Not only is the participation and voice of the child advocated within the many diagnostic processes in which children and young people are involved (Travell & Visser, 2006) but it is also embedded in the ideology that it enables participants to bring themselves, their interests, energies, hopes and experiences (Lensmire, 1998) to their work and also to the research in question. Children are not simply passive objects who are reliant on adults to be heard. They are in fact capable of diligent, insightful, and truthful explanations of their experiences.

The desire to encourage young people to articulate their opinions has the potential to offer an important contribution to the education of a civic society (Fielding, 2004). Nevertheless, it should be noted that Halsey *et al.,* (2006) have observed that the engagement of the voice of young people can have diverse impacts on the young people involved. Caution has been raised as to the dangers of simplistic 'surface compliance', which has arisen from the rapid popularisation of student voice (Rudduck & Fielding, 2006). Equally, as part of her conceptualisation of the aforementioned United Nations Convention, Lundy (2007) highlighted a Report of the *United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) which, in 2002, cited that the UK Government should, 'take further steps to promote, facilitate and monitor systematic, meaningful, and effective participation of all groups of children in society, including in school' (p.7). Only by accessing student voice can the implications of these

connections for teaching and learning be understood and incorporated into a curriculum.

In turn, many critical and feminist arguments surrounding 'voice' have been subjected to scrutiny from post-structuralist perspectives on power (e.g. Ellsworth 1992; Gore 1992; Orner 1992; and White 1994). These perspectives raise such questions as to why must students speak? For whose benefit? What use will be made of the speech after it is heard? Who gives voice to whom? Is it safe for students to speak? Can the outcomes be liberatory? (Gore 1992 & Orner 1992). Underpinning these questions are challenges to the dualistic acceptance of 'teacher' and 'student' and to the assumption that educators stand above their students and guide them in their struggle for 'personal empowerment' and 'voice' (Orner 1992 p.87). Gore (1992), however, cautions researchers that these critical perspectives over-optimistically `attribute extraordinary abilities to the teacher' (p. 57) with little cognizance of either the teacher's context or power to put into effect desired changes. Furthermore, Bates (1994) maintains that students' chaotic lifestyles and learning environments undermine the authenticity of their voices in what is idealized as linear curriculum making. Foucaultian theory suggests that power forms, rather than being linear (e.g. teachers giving power to the students), are pervasive and complex. Thus Orner (1992) advises educators to 'discard monarchical conceptions of power and shift focus to notions of power as productive and present in all contexts, regulating all discourses and social interactions' (p.83). Unless they do so, student voice is unlikely to inform curriculum making in particular instances in any thoughtful way.

As the post-modern condition includes a proliferation of communication methods accessed individually but shared globally, a study of student voice needs to take account of those new (learning) technologies changing the means of knowledge production and distribution (Hinkson 1992; Evans & Davies 1993; Rovengo & Kirk 1995). White (1994) contends that children possessing skills derived from their interactions with technology and media, have a 'new orientation to the world' in which new relations are possible. As a consequence of 'new electronic communication' (p. 87) White goes on to claim, schools should reduce their reliance on print and rethink their conceptions of teacher authority. Given the pervasive influence of the media, Tinning and Fitzclarence (1992) maintain post-modern youth label school PE as

boring. It is essential that physical educators not only take account of students' shifting understandings of physical activity, lifestyle and the body, but also adopt teaching approaches that heighten students' critical capacities and foreground 'individual sensitivity, which is supportive, nurturing and accepting' (Tinning, 1994 p.84).

Post-structuralist analyses have also drawn attention to the complexity of multi-layered and contextually reflective identity. What might this complexity mean for acting or representing the 'real me' (Giddens 1991; Ellsworth 1992; and McRobbie 1994)? As Orner (1992) comments, 'when Anglo-American feminist and critical pedagogues call for students to sound and articulate their voice, they presume singular, essential, authentic, and stable notions of identity' (p. 86). Although those researchers are also said to presume an equality of voice, `all voices within the classroom are not and cannot carry equal legitimacy, safety, and power in dialogue at this historical moment' (Ellsworth, 1992, p.108). Nor can it be assumed, given the mediating effect of language, that the voice of another is transparent and can be interpreted 'correctly' (Orner 1992, p.86). Therefore, according to post-structuralist critique, the notion of securing and understanding all students' consistent voices across time and contexts is flawed.

Across several research traditions (liberal, critical, feminist and post-structuralist), the issue of student voice has been a concern in both education and PE literature. Emphases within that literature have varied according to the kind of the information sought from the students, the means by which students might have input, the breadth of voices that are 'heard', the proposed outcomes of seeking student voice, and the concerns of teachers or researchers that voice may indeed be `heard'. It is interesting to note that despite movement being the key medium for expression in PE, `voice' has always been positioned as oral communication. There is, however, across the traditions, little criticism and few empirical data that attend to student voice within curriculum making. Rather, the emphases have been on the more passive role of student experience and responses and 'the institutional barriers that operate against an emancipatory view of students as active curriculum makers' (Mac an Ghaill, 1992, p.231).

The issue, which remains, however, is whether pupils be given the option of respond or not to respond. As important stakeholders, it was traditional practice in an evaluation that pupils be given an opportunity to contribute their opinions. But in the case of the present research, the issue of giving students the option of whether to participate was raised. Those students selected by teachers to participate in group interviews as representatives of all voices in their class had a right of refusal. Indeed, one pupil did exercise this right and paradoxically she was a pupil whose voice would have been interesting to hear as she was a frequent non-participant in PE. Nevertheless, the power relationships between researchers and pupils through the intermediary action of teachers remain an important consideration.

In light of the above, I suggest that the general principle of giving voice is a willingness on the part of the researcher to empower the subject. The participants should have the right to rectify any mis-interpretations and there is an onus upon the researcher to ensure that they actively listen and to achieve a critical distance to ensure that they truly listen even when evidence becomes contrary to expectations. Also the researcher should not exercise illegitimate power over students by failing to offer them an opportunity to withhold their voice and the right to remain silent rather than being required to act in some way as representatives of their class group or sub-groups? The voices of these females must be heard and better understood (Millen, 1997). Indeed, it is true that women *per se* are now performing better than men in education, however, in PE, males often outperform females. Nevertheless, it is argued that because of religio-cultural practices on the part of certain Muslims, educational experiences for some young women are negatively impacted. This study sought to determine the experiences of school-based PE and identity issues which were in conflict with their experiences of adolescent British Muslim girls and to ascertain how these aspirations were being shaped.

Muslim schoolgirls were given the opportunity to 'voice' their opinions on issues of kit and other issues considered pertinent for their religious requirements. If any of the Muslim schoolgirls expressed dissatisfaction with the PE kit then this may well have implications for the school policy of inclusion.

Methods

The overall purpose and aims of exploring the ethnic, national and religious identities of Muslim schoolgirls requires the use of qualitative methods. These methods are more appropriate where a researcher intends to acquire insights into the subtle and complex meanings held by social actors. Qualitative methods also tend to be associated with the kind of open-ended or 'theory building' approach to the data collection that I wished to undertake: that is, I planned to develop analytic categories on the basis of whatever empirical material was collected rather than impose pre-formulated concepts on that material. A qualitative study can be presented in the form of selective quotations to the reader. This would not be possible if the research were to be undertaken within a statistical paradigm.

Research paradigms chosen for educational studies of this nature fall into two main categories: the statistical approach (quantitative) and the case study (qualitative). While both of these methods were considered for the present study, a qualitative method of research within the case study paradigm appeared to be a suitable method of investigation. Although a quantitative method would be appropriate for measuring behaviour and looking at a large number of issues superficially, it would not have been useful for ascertaining attitudes or opinions. As opposed to the quantitative researcher, the qualitative researcher uses a 'lens' that permits a much less precise vision of a much broader strip (MacCracken, 1997). However, this does not imply that qualitative research lacks profundity and substance. On the contrary, the depth required to conduct a study of this nature makes it a valuable research technique. Furthermore, as Gratton and Jones (2004) note:

> 'the key argument for rejecting the positivist approach is that sport is a social phenomenon, that is those who participate in it.. are acted upon by a number of external social forces, but also have free will to respond to such forces in an active way and are not inanimate objects whose behaviour can be understood in terms of causal relationships. When examining sport we cannot predict whether X always causes Y…' (p. 19).

Although the term 'Sport' is not synonymous with 'PE' (Bailey, 2005), the two can be regarded as complementary. The current term used by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is "PE and

School Sport". This is indicative of their complementary relationship and hence, brings a degree of pertinence to PE of Gratton and Jones's references to 'sport'. Human beings, therefore, attach meanings and interpret the world according to both the context in which they view the object and as a result of their own culture and experiences. Underpinning the rationale is a belief that to understand the subjective world of human experience requires a personal and unique interpretation, which goes beyond that of the positivist researcher.

Kirk and Miller (1986) place qualitative research within a particular tradition in social science that fundamentally depends on watching people in their own territory and interacting with them in their own language and on their own terms. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990), argue that qualitative researchers want to know what the participants in a study are thinking and why they think what they do. Assumptions, motives, reasons, goals and values are all of interest and likely to be the focus of researchers' questions.

The limitations of qualitative research embracing:

> 'labour-intensiveness (and extensiveness over months or years) of data collection, frequent data overload, the distinct possibility of researcher bias, the time demands of processing and coding data, the adequacy of sampling when only a few cases can be managed, the generalizability of findings, the credibility and quality of conclusions…' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.2)

must be balanced against its strengths. Qualitative research enables insight and understanding of ordinary events in natural settings embedded in particular contexts. The sustained nature of such studies offers insights into processes rather than snapshot scenarios. Researchers deal directly with the researched and data can reveal a rich, complex, vivid sense of people's reality, a location of 'meanings' people place on their experiences 'perceptions, assumptions, prejudgements, presuppositions' (Van Manen, 1990, p.10) and their social context. It is with this acknowledgement of the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research that the analysis of data collected in this study into the experience of school girl Muslims and their teachers was undertaken.

Triangulation

Methodological triangulation is of two types: collecting data by means of multiple methods of data collection, or by gathering data from multiple respondents. The present study uses the former method. Whilst interviewing was the principal method of data collection, additional information was gained through structured observation. By adopting a range of methods, the understanding of the school context can be enhanced. This also reflected the multi-form approaches proposed by theorists such as Lloyd-Jones (2003). Brannen's (2004) exploration of research designs that combined qualitative and quantitative paradigms gives strength to the appropriateness of the multi-method approach. Furthermore, Creswell *et al*., (2003) argue that the multi-method approach conveys a sense of rigour of the research. However, while accepting the sustainability of the multi-method approach, linking the data derived from these different methodological approaches was viewed as 'complementary' rather than 'compatible' (Greene *et al.*, 1989). It was apparent that in addressing the research questions, this study would require an approach that superseded the traditions of historically divergent theoretical perspectives. Brannen's (2004) exploration of research designs that combined qualitative and quantitative paradigms gave strength to the appropriateness of the multi-method approach.

Additional information was gathered through attendance registers, informal conversations with the pupils and teachers in the sample and schools' prospectuses. This information was recorded in a research diary, which provided an opportunity to record personal feelings and interpretations as the research progressed. It documented important events as they occurred and also afforded the opportunity to record thoughts and reflections which were used to supplement the analysis of interview data. These observations were not taken in an intrusive or obvious manner; instead they were recorded at the first opportunity possible and recorded out of view of participants.

Data Collection

1. **Interviews**

The methods of data collection have to be considered carefully, as they determine the shape of the finished product to a large extent. From its inception, through the methodological phases and discussion to the final recommendations, appropriate design of research was important in order to ensure the study was perceived as sound, with justifiable findings (Francis, 1997). Interviews and systematic observation were contemplated for gathering data for the present study. Interviewing seemed to be the most appropriate method for gathering data for an ethnographic study of this nature. During an interview, a researcher can empower the respondents to think, deliberate and clarify points and provide opinion, even about issues they have not thought about before. This can be achieved by providing prompts and cues, repeating a question differently, repeating parts of the question, or even by making encouraging sounds.

The volumes of data accumulated during interviews can be manipulated skilfully by a dextrous researcher to show their relevance to the study. The abundant data should not be perceived as a nuisance, but rather as an asset, the ingenious management of which could illuminate complex phenomena. As far as bias is concerned, it is not confined to interviews. Every researcher regardless of the methods of data collection brings his/her experience to bear on the study they undertake. This subjective input should be seen as an enriching resource rather than as a weakness. It is generally accepted in this type of research that issues can be dealt with by recognising the possibility of bias and by making explicit any value assumptions of the researcher. In this case, the belief that inclusive lessons and inclusive schooling were more important than traditional PE uniform policies.

As previously stated, the study does not endeavour to test hypotheses based on pre-existing theories (Glaser & Straus, 1967). Unlike a quantitative researcher, a qualitative researcher does not have a precise or definitive set of categories before the commencement of the study. Instead, categories are determined and defined during the process of research (MacCracken 1997). Ethnographic researchers attempt to understand an on-going situation or set of activities that cannot be predicted in advance

(Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). Moreover, the qualitative researcher expects the nature and definition of analytic categories to change in the course of a project (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

2. Semi structured interviews

For consistency with methodological issues, interviewing was considered to be the most suitable method of data collection. I decided to gather data by means of in-depth interviewing, using semi-structured interview schedules. The questions initially formulated for the two interview schedules with the Muslim schoolgirls were based on the literature review and pertinent aims of the study. It was envisaged that the interviewing of the two types of respondents for the main study would be undertaken in two phases. This was necessary because after the first phase, a preliminary analysis was carried out and the responses of the interviewees were used to formulate questions for the second phase interviews. A number of issues were investigated including identity and school ethos. Because of timetable constraints of both teachers and pupils, it was considered best to interview all the respondents once and then return to interview them a second time to probe deeper into the issues, which needed further attention. A determining factor of the success of this research is the ability to interpret the lived experiences of participants. The importance is guided by the recognition that interview responses, are not simply seen as true or false reports on reality; instead they are treated as 'displays of perspectives, which draw upon available cultural resources' (Silverman, 2006, p.144). Embracing the interpretive paradigm recognises the role of the researcher as Blaikie (1993) observes, the cultural background of the researcher is part of this evidence, in so far as he/she places him/herself in the same critical plane as the subject matter. The position of the researcher in the interview process is, therefore, worthy of mention.

3. Interview Dynamics: gender and shared ethnicity

It is important to elaborate upon the gender and the ethnicity of the researcher as the position of the researcher may raise issues of trust and representation in the present research. A white non-Muslim female studying the educational experiences of young Muslim females potentially constitutes a dilemma for social science research. There is

no consensus in the literature, for example, on whether differences in race should determine the feasibility of research. In this connection, Haw (1996) titled a paper '... should the white researcher stay at home?' and concluded it was better to travel 'sensitively, judiciously, continually being aware of your limitations, reflecting critically, making your limitations explicit and admitting when you are wrong' (p.329). In my view, this is the only way to open possibilities for increasing understanding through research. Others' experiences of 'same' and 'different race' research have been both positive and negative (Essed 1991; Rhodes 1994). In particular, Mennell (1994) indicates that '...The individual's image of other people ... becomes more permeated by observation and experience. Perceptions of others become richer in nuances, and freer from the instant response of spontaneous emotion' (p.185).

Similarly 'representation of others', particularly from minority groups, is also problematic when considering power differentials and responsibilities in making the private, public (Sparkes 1995; Fine *et al.,* 2000). To eliminate the potential for disparity, extra care was taken during the data gathering process to remain aware of the power dynamics inherent in the interchange of information, to remain sensitive to exploring religio-cultural issues when respondents felt it too difficult to discuss, and to not use the process itself as an act of politicising, problematising or sensationalising the research question. As such, by concentrating on a phenomenological methodological approach, to ensure that the voices of Muslim schoolgirls are used to disclose their own stories impartially and perceptibly, participants are encouraged to present accounts of their life histories incorporating a range of perspectives and aspirations that help to inform impartial research on the nature of experience for Muslim schoolgirls. Although there are important factors to take into account in the dynamics between the researcher and the researched because of different religions, there are positives that can be taken into consideration based on shared gender. As an important aside, I gained the impression, that generally the Muslim schoolgirls were at ease talking to me about their PE experiences. They seemed to like having the opportunity to talk about aspects of the minority culture and religion and felt valued that I was taking the time to research their experiences. This confirms Tinker and Armstrong's (2009) suggestion that outsider status 'can have the benefit of empowering the interviewee by putting him/her in the position of authority about the topic in question' (p.56)

That a researcher investigating topics as complex as identity will misunderstand, overlook and fail to appreciate much of what she sees and hears is inevitable. It is argued that a researcher with shared ethnic characteristics is less likely to pathologise or stereotype and more likely to remain 'ethically correct' (Brar, 1992, p.195). Undoubtedly, the risks are greater for a researcher who is situated outside the community with which she is concerned. This relates both to the Muslim community and the community of the PE teacher (the fact that I am myself a teacher gave me the advantage of insight into the school community). From a personal perspective, there was no doubt that being female was the most important facet of researcher/researched relations in this instance. A male researcher entering a qualitative long-term project with Muslim women would have been untenable for some of my respondents. Being non-Muslim was an advantage since the female pupils felt able to 'disclose' issues of their religious values, beliefs and practices, which they might not have shared with a Muslim researcher: for example, personal decisions they took when they found no conducive facilities for prayer or private ablutions in their school situations. Tinker and Armstrong (2008) explain that this outsider status may 'enable interviewees to share their views without fear of judgement' (p.56). Not being 'black' or inside the Asian culture meant I would always be 'an outsider', the Muslim women's constant willingness to converse about their experiences and 'try to help me understand' reflects the empathy and shared 'mutual interests' in the research.

Who am I to be pondering these problems, asking these questions was a constant refrain in my head as I arranged meetings, held interviews but I persisted with my task, in the belief that it is short-sighted to expect social scientists to investigate only those social groups of which they are a part and the best way to begin to understand the research aims is to take the time to listen to the people in whom one is interested. The nature of the investigation also necessitated developing a rapport with the respondents before they were asked questions about various important issues concerning identity. Also during the interview a researcher can empower the respondents to think, deliberate and clarify points and provide opinion even about issues, which they have not thought of before. This can be done by providing cues and prompts, repeating a question, wording a question differently, repeating parts of the respondents' answer or

making encouraging sounds. Furthermore, I recognised that I had to distance myself from my sample, to stand back and to examine the data from a researchers' perspective. Tinker and Armstrong (2008) acknowledge that outsider status can potentially limit a researcher's understanding of the material but being conscious of one's outsider status can 'encourage thorough and rigorous analysis by enabling the researcher to maintain a critical distance form the data' (p.53).

The in-depth interview is a powerful way to elicit research data. To maximise results, the researcher has to 'actively listen', to keep the interview 'focused', 'infilling and explicating' where data is lacking and identifying clues from respondents. As one group of educational researchers put it:

> '... The interview, therefore, is not just a device for gathering information. It is a process of constructing reality to which both parties contribute and by which both are affected. Interviewers put something of themselves into an interview. It may be some contrasting or complementary experiences perhaps, or some indications of their own personae, or at the very least they act as a sounding board. They come out reflecting on how the interview has affected their thoughts, ideas, viewpoints, theories. The researcher is, however already looking to the next chain at a different time, or with a different person; or be it observation, study of documents, questionnaire, or whatever' (Hammersley 1996, p.60).

Furthermore, when interviewing pupils, the researcher had to demonstrate that she had the necessary qualities to engage with respondents, and yet still remain detached. Similarly, with teachers, the researcher had to be considered a professional with genuine interests in PE, ensuring all ethical standards of research were adhered to. In addition, care was taken so as not to be drawn into politically or religiously charged conversation. Each experience was achieved through the management of impressions (Goffman, 1990), as well as through the utilisation of appropriate social science methods. At each school, the teachers were interviewed first. I envisaged that the teachers might raise issues that could be useful in formulating questions for the pupils.

Interviewing as the sole method of data collection has been criticised (Marshall & Rossman 1989). Whilst interviewing was the principal method of data collection in the

present study, additional information was obtained through attendance registers as one teacher reported that Muslim females were more likely to give excuses to absent themselves from PE than their non-Muslim counterparts. This was not evident from the attendance registers. Informal conversations with teachers and observations of registration before lessons and systematic observations were also employed.

4. Systematic observation.

According to Croll (1986), systematic observation is 'the process, whereby an observer or a group of observers devise a systematic set of rules for recording and classifying classroom events' (p.1). There has been considerable controversy about the appropriateness and methodological adequacy of this approach.

Maykut and Morehouse (1995) suggest that human settings and people are 'too complex to be captured by a static one dimensional approach'. Furthermore, Bryman (1998) outlined the advantages of combining methods. Hence, in order to facilitate aim 2, (to investigate of whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE), aim 3 (PE teachers' perception of the Muslim female identity and how they meet the needs of female Muslim pupils in PE and school sport) and aim 4 (whether the PE teachers use inclusive practices in their lessons), systematic classroom observation was carried out. As well as being used to monitor aspects of whole class behaviour, systematic observation can be used to monitor those of specific individuals, in particular, for the purposes of this present study, whether the Muslim female identity impacts on their participation on school-based PE, or not and also, whether the teachers use inclusive practices in their lessons. Thus, both teacher and pupil behaviour in the 'classroom' were observed. An example of the Observation Sheet is appended (Appendix 7). Observation was necessary to look beyond the sanitised views of events, not because teachers and pupils would deliberately obscure the truth, but to recognise that they may genuinely have been unaware of the complexities of the setting (Paterson, Bottorff &

Hewat 2003). Observation can also enrich and supplement data gathered by other techniques (Simpson & Tuson, 1995, p.17).

If anyone was asked to spend a period of time observing a classroom and then asked to describe what they have seen, we would inevitably find that the content of our descriptions was heavily influenced by the purpose for which we were asked to carry out the observation. Traditionally, within any research, there is a need for researchers to dissociate themselves from the particulars of the situation at hand in order to achieve objectivity (Sparkes, 1992). After deciding on the pupils to be observed and the procedure for organizing the observation, it is necessary to decide on the variables and categories to be used in classifying children's activities in the classroom. These are determined by the research questions, which the observations are designed to answer. Aims 2 and 4 address whether Muslim pupils have the same classroom experiences as their non-Muslim peers. Second, the observation was intended to show if Muslim schoolgirls had different levels of engagement with their work and different types of interaction with their teachers than non- Muslim pupils. This means that the variables had to describe pupils' work activities and types of pupil-teacher interaction. The set of categories provides a simple description of child activity and pupil inter-action.

The teachers' inter-action was adapted from Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) (1970). According to Croll (1986) 'this system can provide a wealth of information about teaching processes' (p.40). The most commonly used procedure for conducting systematic observation in classrooms is that of *Live Observation* by a researcher using a simple paper and pencil recording device, often together with a simple timekeeping device. In this approach the observation is truly 'live'. I did not have mechanical aids such as a video camera and I did not rely on memory but the process of observing and recording was simultaneous.

The advantage of this procedure is that it is relatively unobtrusive in the classroom and that it takes advantage of the flexibility of a human observer. A single observer can avoid becoming intrusive in most classroom situations and can easily switch attention between different individuals or different aspects of events and can readily adapt to respond to what is going on. A limitation of live observation is that it must be possible for the observer to record and observe simultaneously. An alternative approach to live observations in the classroom is that of video-recording and can be subject to a more complex and flexible analysis than is possible in any live observation. The observer can play and replay the tape and can stop while making notes and coding decisions and

can replay particular events if the appropriate coding is in doubt. The other advantages of video tape recordings are that a large number of observers can view the same material. This may also facilitate a multi-faceted approach to the same research problem. Furthermore, the researcher can also change and develop the observation system during the period of analysis. Despite these advantages there are a number of limitations with video recording. Video recording is relatively expensive and recording in classrooms requires considerably more organisation and is more obtrusive than a single researcher recording their observations. The intrusiveness of the equipment as well as the association of being 'on television' make it more difficult for the researcher using a video recording than for the live observer to overcome the danger of influencing the situation being observed.

Ethical considerations

I was acutely aware of the ethical issues embedded in a study of this nature. In considering the ethics of the various research approaches used in this study, I was aware of the ethical guidelines and established regulations such as those produced by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004). As Greig and Taylor (1999) explained, 'the practical difficulties of gaining access to settings' (p.92) could have limited the research. Top down access to schools was obtained in that permission to access the staff, pupils and data in each school was initially sought from Headteachers (Appendix 2). One school, High Clare [pseudonym] declined permission to participate because the Headteacher did not 'consider the research study a priority at the present time'.

Entry to the PE setting was negotiated first with the Head of Department and then with the individual staff to whom the research was outlined, both verbally and in writing. No staff declined to take part at any time and all were supportive and co-operative. As my research also involved direct contact with individual children, parental and child permission was sought (see appendices 3 and 4). The Headteachers assisted in forwarding letters to parents and collaborating in gaining permission. All the children were of secondary school age, which, David *et al*., (2001) argue, is an appropriate level of child competence to make informed decisions. Even though parents and teachers

had given their permission, further conversations and explanations explored the nature and purpose of the research with the Muslim schoolgirls.

McNiff (2000) emphasised the importance of the right to withdraw from the research, a feature, which was drawn to the attention of staff and pupils as the study progressed. Moreover, an integral part of this environment was the need to be explicit in the format and purpose of the organised interview. Consent was sought to tape-record the interviews on the assurance that all data would remain confidential. It is interesting to note here that the participants in the pilot and main study did not object to the actual name being used. Nevertheless, it is a research convention not to reveal actual names and it is important to respect individuals' values and sense of privacy. However, rather than assigning a number to each respondent in a dehumanising fashion, their names were replaced by pseudonyms, thus ensuring their anonymity, yet retaining the essence of the thesis. This code of confidentiality was extended to the schools and pseudonyms were ascribed to them. Moreover, the town in which these schools are situated has not been named, otherwise because of the nature of their intake the schools would have been easily identifiable. Denscombe and Aubrook (1992) also make a valid point about the avoidance of undue intrusion. Data pertaining to specific individuals remained available to them and only the researcher had access to their data in this raw form. Researcher and participants agreed that tapes would not be publicly placed, since this would deprive participants of their anonymity.

The most important aspect of the interviewer's approach involves conveying the idea that the participant's information is acceptable and valuable (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). It is better to appear slightly naive and agreeable than to give any sign of a critical or sardonic attitude (McCracken, 1988). During the interviews, I listened with an open mind to the perspectives of the pupils and teachers as regards the various issues under investigation. David *et al*., (2001) suggest that ethical considerations such as informed consent change over time and that access may need to be renegotiated. At different stages of the research, different levels of involvement may be required and it is, therefore, important to negotiate consent at each stage. A change may also occur within the school such as a new member of staff, Head of Department etc., and this will also require renegotiation of permission to research. Permission was sought from teachers and pupils for tape-recording the interviews. They may not have expressed

their views on tape with such candour had I not been able to establish some form of trust and credibility.

McCracken (1988) maintains that time scarcity and concern for privacy stand as important impediments to the qualitative study of modern life and it is precisely these impediments that make the long interview so valuable as a means of enquiry. This research strategy gives access to individuals without violating their privacy, or testing their patience, and without prolonged contact within a manageable methodological context. Finch (1993), discussing research by women on women, observes that a crucial point, often overlooked in arguments on research ethics, is that collective, not merely individual interests are at stake. The latter may be relatively easily secured with guarantees of confidentiality, anonymity, codes of ethics and so on. It is far more difficult to devise ways of ensuring that information given so readily in interviews will not be used ultimately against the collective interests of female Muslims or PE teachers.

It is indeed impossible to ensure that the data laid open for a reader's perusal would not be used in unfavourable ways. While every researcher undertakes a research study with the intention of helping rather than damaging the subjects and their counterparts in the wider world, the researcher's accountability ends by ensuring the anonymity of individual subjects. The present study has elucidated such a culture. The ultimate responsibility lies with the readers, policy-makers to use the data in ways, which assure the collective benefits of the wider population.

Pilot study

The use of a pilot study is seen as advantageous as it can lend credence to the researcher's claim, and to illustrate the ability to conduct and manage a qualitative study. An extensive literature review was carried out prior to the pilot study to establish significant factors and issues that may contribute to some Muslim girls' negative perceptions and experiences of PE and also PE teachers' philosophies and attitudes to inclusion (Green 1994; Groves, 2007). Awareness of the main aims of the research was also a significant feature when designing the key questions for the semi-structured interviews. It was important to conduct a pilot study prior to the main

research to establish appropriate questions for the semi-structured interviews and also for the systematic observation sheets. Black's (1999) advice to avoid over-complicated questions was also useful when reviewing feedback and in ensuring that participants understood the questions. Where appropriate the wording was simplified as the pilot study progressed. Due consideration was also given to politically correct language.

I was aware of the potential problem of power differentials interfering with the research particularly on school experience (Sparkes & Mackay 1996). I realised that my position as a teacher might affect the students' ability to be entirely open and honest with me about their experiences and reflections. Therefore, a process of familiarisation of a month was spent in the pilot study school, which consisted of one visit per week. Time spent in the pilot school in this research enabled an objective exploration of engagement with students and their teachers, observing PE classes and an opportunity to talk informally with staff and students. This process helped to develop a rapport prior to the administering of semi-structured interviews.

The interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondents. A short time at the beginning of the interview was spent explaining the project to the respondents, telling them about the possibility of another interview and assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity. The interviewees were also given the opportunity to ask about my background, education and experience and the reason for undertaking this project. This part was not recorded. The recorded part of the interview involved the use of semi-structured interview schedules. Additionally, appropriate extemporaneous supplementary questions were formulated and asked during the pilot interviews depending on the interviewee's answer to the initial question. The interview schedules started with some biographical data, which were deemed appropriate to develop a rapport and to put the interviewees at ease, before progressing into the desired more focused area of the investigation. This worked successfully with the teachers who welcomed the opportunity to talk at length about why they wished to teach PE, the girls were less comfortable with this schedule.

In light of the pilot study, the interview schedules were changed for the Muslim schoolgirls who seemed more comfortable with questions that dealt with attitudes to

school first and more biographical data later in the schedules whereas the opposite was true for PE teachers. The interview schedules were, therefore, tailored accordingly.

Selecting the sample for the pilot study

The school selected for the pilot study was 'Birchincliffe School', (pseudonym) which is part of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC). Details of the school are provided in the sample school details on page 196.

Two schoolgirl Muslim females and one teacher were interviewed as part of the pilot study. A brief summary of the girls and teacher's pilot is provided in the immediately following section, which focuses on the main issues arising from the pilot study including items, which needed clarification.

Girl's pilot

For the pilot study, the Muslim schoolgirls were interviewed first. I envisaged that the girls would raise issues, which could be useful in formulating questions for the teachers. The data generated in the pilot study were of clarificatory nature and not to be used in the main study**.** This was a selective sample and their PE teacher indicated that they would not be available for the main stage of the research as they were leaving the school in a months' time and so it would be beneficial to interview them as part of the pilot. The two girls selected for the pilot study were interviewed together at their request. However, it became evident that one of the interviewees did try to dominate the interview process but as an interviewer I had to encourage equality of participation. It was important to avoid over complicated terminology with the Muslim schoolgirls. Asking about abstract concepts such as *identity* and *school ethos* was avoided. Instead these concepts had to be framed in more meaningful terms. I also had to avoid leading questions and direct the respondents to opinions and expressions not of their own construction. Similarly, I had to be careful not to coerce interviewees into expressing an opinion more closely aligned with the literature or contrary to the literature. Previous studies (Afshar 1989; Basit 1997; Abbas 2001) into Muslim girls and their attitude to school used the question: '*Were you born in this country?*' I removed this question following the pilot study as it had little relevance to my research. The

interviews were transcribed verbatim. The experience of transcribing the interviews helped me to place the data into categories.

Teacher's pilot

The pilot study gave me the opportunity to check clarity of questions and where appropriate to re-order the questions. The pilot interview with the teacher was selected for convenience to fit in with timetable obligations. Burgess (1984) points out that researchers need to take note of the three-term cycle and its influence upon time-tables and related activities. The teacher involved in the pilot study was interviewed separately. One of the questions posed to the PE teacher asked: *'Do you think that Muslim girls enjoy PE?'* was considered too vague and the teacher involved in the pilot study struggled to make sense of it. It was, therefore, removed from the main study. Unnecessary jargon/abbreviations were also avoided; I assumed that all teachers would be aware of the term 'NCPE' but the pilot teacher at Birchincliffe School was unaware of this abbreviation. I, therefore, asked the term in full in subsequent interviews. In order to meet with the overall purpose/aims of the study various issues were pursued through appropriately framed and follow-up questions. The pilot questionnaires are presented in Appendix 5.

Sampling

The groups of pupils and teachers selected were not intended to represent some part of the larger world but to offer instead an opportunity to glimpse the complicated character, organisation and logic of culture. The issue is to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which one culture construes the world. MacCracken (1997) contends that the first principle for the selection of participants in qualitative research is *less is more.* It is important to work longer and with greater care with a few people than more superficially with many. This group was not chosen to represent some part of the larger world but offers, instead, an opportunity to glimpse the complicated character, organisation and logic of culture. The issue was to gain access to the cultural categories and assumptions according to which culture construes the world.

The present study was confined to a study of ten Muslim girls in two schools in year 11 and their PE teachers. The sample of girls selected consisted of all of the Muslim pupils in that year group. The sample of Muslim girls in Chamberlain school consisted of 5 Year 11 pupils. Only one Muslim girl refused to take part. The Year 11 Muslim girls were thought to represent a crystallisation of the values inculcated by the school and an end result of the educative process. They were also assumed to be reasonably articulate at this age (Basit, 1997). It seemed appropriate to choose the sample in those areas, which had a high proportion of Muslim settlement. Two towns in the 'black country' were selected for this purpose. The majority of the Muslim population inhabiting these two urban, industrialised areas originates from the rural parts of Pakistan and some are from Bangladesh. The bulk of research on British Muslims has so far been undertaken in the Midlands (Basit, 1995; Abbas, 2003; and Benn & Webb, 2008). Ideally, it might have been more beneficial to investigate the experiences of Muslims in another area of Muslim settlement. This would have enhanced the findings and perhaps have provided a clearer picture of the life of Muslim girls. However, the profundity demanded by research of this nature means that this was neither within the scope of this study, nor within the ability of a single researcher. The limited time–structure in which to complete a doctoral thesis, along with practicalities in terms of a full time teaching job meant that realistically the choice of the sample and the location became not only a convenient choice for this research but a necessity. Birchincliffe School and Chamberlain School were located in the same Local Education Authority where the researcher was based and, therefore, represented a convenience sample. The sample of teachers selected for the present research represented all of the PE teachers who have contact with the Muslim schoolgirls.

Geo-demographic settings of the schools

The Borough of Dudley was chosen as the area for the research. Dudley, part of the West Midlands conurbation is located south of Wolverhampton and is the largest town in the 'black' country. The city of Birmingham is located approximately 10 miles away and has had many ethnic minorities settling within it during the post-world war II period and remains an important 'test case' on the state of British race relations (Back and Solomos, 1992). Birmingham is historically significant as it is the place where the

late Enoch Powell[4] made his 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech. The West Midlands has the third largest Muslim population in the country with Dudley's Muslim population being 2.45% of the total population 305,155. As identified from the 2001 Census, Pakistanis are the largest single ethnic minority in the borough and almost exclusively originate from the Mirpur district of Azad (Free) Kashmir (which is annexed to Pakistan). A number of British Pakistanis also originate from the Punjab region of Pakistan but have settled largely in the industrialised inner cities of the North of England (Anwar, 1979; and Werbner, 1997), or in the South-East of England.

Bangladeshis in Dudley form a group almost exclusively originating from the Sylhet region of North West Bangladesh. The largest British concentration is found in the deprived neighbourhoods of the East End of London (Eade,1989). Birmingham contains Britain's second largest Bangladeshi community. As with Pakistanis, Bangladeshis live in close-knit communities, with strong local community structures. Bangladeshis also share with Pakistanis a desire for the Islamisation of second and third generations (Eade, 1990). Present-day second-generation South Asian Muslims (Bangladeshi and Pakistanis) are increasingly questioning their ethnic and religious identity (Jacobson, 1997). The nature of Islam among groups is questioned and re-examined in the light of generational development (Modood, 1990; Samad, 1998). Young Bangladeshis experience a similar reality to Pakistanis as the re-evaluation of their individual identity has necessarily involved a return to more literal Islam (Beckerlegge,1989; Gardner & Shukur, 1994). Controversially amongst local residents, there has been a well publicised attempt by the 'Dudley Muslim Association' to build a Mosque and Community Centre, which caused controversy amongst local residents. The local press (*Express & Star*) portrays Muslim culture and British culture as poles apart. Any binary portrayal would place them as opposites, for example in power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and masculinity (Hofstede 1984).

In 2005, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council made headlines when a Muslim Council member, Mahbubur Rahman, decided that images of pigs in the local council's benefit offices offended his religious sensitivities. Items which caused offence included a box of tissues carrying an image of 'Winnie the Pooh' and 'Piglet'. This led

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[4] The late Enoch Powell held the Wolverhampton South West seat from 1950-1974.

to a ban of all images of pigs in the department. Following international ridicule, the ban was subsequently lifted. Simon Derby represented the British National Party on Dudley Council but lost the seat in 2005. Dudley LEA has been committed to a 'strong multi-cultural/anti-racist/equal opportunity perspective', with equality of education given high priority. It is important, therefore, to consider the experiences of young Muslim females within this wider race relations framework, and the Dudley LEA provides a useful opportunity in which to situate this study.

Main sample school details

School 1 – Birchincliffe School (pseudonym)

This is a slightly larger than average 11-16 comprehensive school with 1177 pupils on the school roll. The school is non-denominational. Approximately 8% of pupils are of Muslim faith. The 2007 Ofsted Inspection Report rates the school as a very good school 'which achieves significant value-added education for its pupils'. Additionally, it states '….Pupils start at Birchincliffe School with high expectations and are not disappointed. It is a good school with outstanding features that is highly respected in the local community'. High quality educational provision is central to the ethos of Birchincliffe School. The mission statement reads:

> 'Our mission is to significantly increase access to high quality educational experiences for Birchtown (pseudonym) children. We are totally committed to ensure that all barriers to success are removed so that every member of the community can have access to the best possible educational opportunities. As a partner in the learning pathway provided in Birchtown we hold a pivotal position in the process and as such promote diversity as well as excellence and innovation. Care is at the heart of all that we do. We are committed to excellence; we embrace change and aim to give all young people the best possible start to their working lives' (February 2008, Headmaster's message School portal).

The school does not have a policy on 'inclusion' but does have an equal opportunities policy, which according to the Headteacher, is 'effectively the same thing, but has to be read against other policies such as Individual needs' (Headteacher, Bircincliffe School, February 2008)

The 2007 Ofsted Inspection Report does specifically refer to inclusion:

> 'The school is inclusive, welcoming a wide range of pupils including a small but very well integrated minority with physical, behavioural and learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The overall ability of pupils on entry is above average. The vast majority make good progress, achieve above average standards across a wide range of subjects and demonstrate good personal development and well-being. Outstanding curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities contribute to the good motivation, achievement and personal development of pupils. The extensive range of courses is enhanced by strong partnerships with other educational settings'.

The school was graded 1 for 'care guidance and support' and pupils 'say that the school listens to and responds to their views'. The latest Report is generic and does not provide subject specific detail but it is positive on the inclusive nature of the school. The positive Ofsted Report was also echoed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which rated Birchincliffe School:

> 'a very successful school with good results. The challenge for the school, however, has been to introduce systems that sustain an ethos where pupils are expected to give their best. This helps the school by motivating pupils through challenging but realistic targets and making sure that individual pupil underperformance does not go unnoticed'. (2007)

At Birchincliffe School, all of the teachers who have contact with the Muslim girls were interviewed together with a sample of 6 Muslim girls in year 11. Notably, the Birchincliffe School sample comprised all of the Muslim girls in that year group.

School 2 – Chamberlain School (pseudonym)

For additional data and comparison(s), a second school, also in Dudley MBC (Chamberlain School (pseudonym), a community school) was selected as a replacement for the original choice (High Clare, pseudonym), which as indicated earlier in the chapter declined to participate in the study. The school with 1366 pupils in the age range 11-16 is classed as a community school the majority of whom are from socially deprived areas. A smaller percentage of students (than the national figures) take free school meals and the percentage from minority ethnic groups is also far smaller than national figures. The percentage of students with learning difficulties

and/or disabilities is *lower* than that found nationally, as is the number of students whose first language is not English. The total number of Muslim pupils in the school is 20.

> 'The ethos of the school is 'to recognise that each child is an individual, that all children are creative, that all children want to succeed. [Furthermore], the school respects the individual needs of children; fosters a caring and ordered environment; and emphasises the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child'. The motto of the school is 'celebrating success, celebrating the Arts' (OfSted, 2008).

The 2008 Ofsted Report rates the overall effectiveness of the school as Grade 2 and stated that:

> 'this is a good school because it ensures all students make impressive progress academically and in their personal development. The school's leadership has successfully established a shared vision that has at its heart the development of rounded individuals'.

The school has a long record of high achievement. In the past, students have entered the school with below average attainment but current year groups are generally average. The 2007 examination results were close to the national average with good achievement and above average standards. An array of support is available that includes student mentors and a School counsellor. The School students have a range of people they may talk to if they need support. Work with outside agencies ensures vulnerable students and those with a statement of special educational needs are well catered for. Although, the 2008 Ofsted Report does not specifically refer to inclusion, the School Prospectus makes detailed reference to this issue maintaining that:

> 'Chamberlain School (pseudonym) is committed to inclusion. We admit students from our community regardless of ability and provide support from students in a variety of ways…At Chamberlain School [sic.] we believe in treating students as individuals and we do our utmost to cater for all students' individual needs. We have an open door policy'.

The ways in which the School aims to cater for individual needs are largely through SEN classroom support; there is also reference to school facilities such as wheelchair access.

Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data is ofted cited as demanding and complex (Miles, 1979: Valli, 1986). Delamont (1992) warns that there are no short cuts and one must allow plenty of time and energy for the tasks. Further, the analysis of qualitative data continues throughout the research and is not a separate self-contained phase.

The interviews were conducted in two phases. A preliminary analysis of data collected by first phase interviews was undertaken to identify the issues addressed. At the conclusion of the first-phase interviews, two matrices were devised on one each for the pupils' and the teachers' interviews. On each matrix, the interviewees' pseudonyms were inscribed vertically, and the questions asked in the interview were inscribed horizontally in a condensed form. An abbreviated version of the interviewees' answers to the questions was recorded in the corresponding squares. This provided an anatomic framework of the data permitting instantaneous inter-interviewee and intra-interviewee comparisons and contrasts. The second-phase interviews were managed and interpreted in the same way as the first-phase interviews. Thus, a total of four matrices were produced. The two matrices classifying data from pupil interviews in the two phases were examined together. Similarly, the teachers' interviews were studied. Together, from the girls' interviews issues classified emerged and the teachers' matrices recorded issues. From the four matrices collectively, a number of themes were identified, and were then found to be linked with one another; broad categories were detected. The transcripts, summaries and the matrices were further studied and additional links were found between the categories, thus consolidated to result in eighteen categories, embracing:

- the shaping of identity
- identity definitions,
- the concept of embodied faith
- culture and identity
- the importance of religion
- relationships with parents
- relationships with friends

- tensions beyween religious identity and school-based PE

- dress code/kit issues

- Ramadan

- extra-curricular activities

- relationships with teachers

- teachers' view of Ramadan

- teacher philosophies

- inclusive PE

- teachers and Inclusive practice

- social inclusion.

- NCPE

A 'spider' diagram was produced at this stage to make sense of the links between the themes (refer appendix 6). At this point, the transcripts were perused one more time. Illuminative quotations were highlighted and coded using the eighteen categories that had been identified. Pertinent quotations were chosen to be used in subsequent writings. The emergent themes were contemplated again and these categories were, again, found to be connected with one another and were further condensed, culminating in definitive themes. The analyses facilitated the generation of theory grounded in the data.

Summary

This chapter has identified the theoretical basis for the research and the rationale for the choice of methods and sample. Selection of a paradigm reflects a particular ontological and epistemological position; it indicates certain underlying beliefs about the nature of knowledge. This world view has implications for the kind of questions and answers researchers seek, the truths they seek as well as the methodology they adopt (Sparkes, 1992). The research design was rooted in social constructionism, which facilitates the understanding of how the meaning given to cultural episodes defined participants' views of the world and how they interpreted their PE experiences. As ethnic and religious identity is a key focus of this study this exploration of how Muslim girls and their PE teachers constructed their understanding and experiences of

PE was important if PE is to become as inclusive as educational theory suggests it should. The theoretical perspective taken is within the interpretive paradigm. The essence of this study was to capture the experience of Muslim schoolgirls at two secondary schools and their teachers. The interpretive perspective of a view of multiple realities, and of social realities recreated through human interaction was entirely appropriate. To be useful for this research a theory had to be flexible and open to enable ideas and themes to emerge in the process of research. The perspective could not be deterministic. However, the main intention here is to produce a theoretically informed study not to attempt a treatise of theoretical innovation.

Qualitative methods are associated with the 'theory building' approach, which I wished to undertake and the interview method was selected as a data source which offered insights into the perceptions of Muslim schoolgirls and their teachers. Silverman (1993) views interviewees as 'experiencing subjects who actively construct their social worlds; the primary issue is to generate data which gives an authentic insight into people's experiences…'(p.91). Systematic observation was also carried out (refer appendix 7), which would allow reflection of emergent features of PE lessons together with the lived PE experience of the pupils.

This chapter has also outlined the techniques of data collection used in this study as well as the methodologies that underpin the research. It suggests that the positivist tradition of social scientific inquiry is limited in its application to   understanding the dynamics of culture, identity and symbolic   boundary construction. In contrast an argument for   the necessity and value of ethnography is presented. The following chapters respectively explore the findings of the semi-structured interviews, discussions of findings and their implications, conclusions and recommendations for further study.

Chapter 5
Analysis of findings

Introduction

Indicative scrutiny of the interview transcripts revealed the ways in which the participants made sense of their experiences. The interview, observation and field notes were scrutinised for:

> 'any interesting patterns ... (searching for) whether anything stands out as surprising or puzzling; how the data relate to what one might have expected on the basis of common-sense knowledge, official accounts, or previous theory; and whether there are any apparent inconsistencies or contradictions among the groups or individuals, or between people's expressed beliefs or attitudes and what they do' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p.178).

The analysis involved recognising patterns or themes arising in the data. Recognition of emerging patterns influenced the direction of research, for example facilitating the structuring of subsequent interviews, ordering and re-ordering of data. This involved identifying salient, grounded categories of meaning held by the participants in their particular setting (Marshall & Rossman, 2006) with a focus on discovering patterns, themes and categories in data that were not pre-determined by experimental hypotheses prior to data collection. As Patton, 2002 noted

> '... The qualitative analyst seeks to understand the multiple interrelationships among dimensions that emerge from the data without making prior assumptions or specifying hypotheses about linear or correlative relationships amongst narrowly defined, operationalised *(sic.)* variables' (p.56).

Silverman (2006) suggests that, 'the world never speaks directly to us, but is always encoded via recording instruments like field notes and transcripts' (p.113). What we hear and see is mediated by such processes. The inductive analysis and coding of interview texts was triangulated through constant comparison of multiple data sources.

Constant comparison combines the elements of inductive category coding, by simultaneously comparing these with other events and social incidents that have been observed and coded over time and location (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). As well as re-visiting previous interview transcripts, the auxiliary sources of data such as field notes and notes on informal discussions with participants helped to expand upon concepts requiring further interpretation. In 'constant comparison', data are compared across a range of situations, times, groups of people, and through a range of methods (Cohen et al., 2000).

> 'Still dependent on the skills and sensitivities of the analyst, the constant comparative method is not designed (as methods of quantitative analysis are) to guarantee that two analysts working independently with the same data will achieve the same results; it is designed to allow, with discipline, for some of the vagueness and flexibility that aid the creative generation of theory' (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.103).

It is at this time where the voice of participants is supplemented by the interpretations of the researcher. Interpretation brings meaning and coherence to themes, patterns, and categories (Marshall & Rossman, 2006), attaching significance to what was found through imposing order in the offering of inferences, meanings, and explanation (Patton, 2002).

Re-visiting themes and tracing developments of respondents' experiences and perceptions resulted in gradually elaborating a small set of generalizations that cover the consistencies discerned in the database (Miles & Hubnerman, 1994, p.9). In analysing the school-based PE experiences of the Muslim schoolgirls, these themes or generalizations were illustrated with data examples from across respondents. The same method was applied to their teachers. This section presents themes that emerged through the interview transcripts and data collected from the 10 school-girl Muslims and their teachers. Themes drawn from analysis of data constituted common experiences that were shared by the sample of respondents across the sample and are illustrated with particular examples.

There were a number of noteworthy issues which were discussed in the interviews and, consequently, a number of core themes emerged. These core themes are set against the

backdrop of the aims of the study, the first of which related to the identity of Muslim schoolgirls.

Aim 1 *to investigate the identity of Muslim schoolgirls.* By enquiring about a range of aspects of the participants' day-to-day lives, I aimed to address the following key themes which related to aim 1:

 i) How the respondents define their own identities

ii) What being British or Pakistani means to them

iii) Ways in which Islam acted as a source of identity

iv) The importance of religion in the shaping of identity

vi) Relationships with parents as influencing identity formation

vii) Relationships with friends in the shaping of identity

Human identity formation is a necessary and central function of religion (Bellah, 1968; Mol, 1976). Religion has been defined as a sacred cosmos that bestows the ultimate valid identity on humans: the name by which they are known to God (Berger, 1967). Authors have interpreted the relationship between identity and religion in various contemporary societies (Mol, 1978). This line of reflection takes the identity religion link beyond the context of modernised societies and argues that religion serves the essential function of stabilising individual identity in any society (Weigert et al., 1986). The Muslim population of Britain also exemplifies such a paradigm of religious identity. It is clear that parental views shape the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of these adolescent girls. Relationships with friends and the concept of embodied faith were also considered under the category of identity.

Almost all the families in the present study's sample in Birchincliffe School appeared to be of a working class background. The only quasi-middle class families in the sample were those families who owned a shop or a small business. When the girls' were asked about the kind of work of their parents, it was evident that most worked mainly in manual occupations. Only one father worked in professional or white-collar occupations: a GP doctor. The fathers who had jobs were in semi-skilled or un-skilled occupations and were taxi-drivers, mechanics, factory or railway workers; one father managed his own shop. The fathers who were unemployed at the time of the fieldwork

had worked as factory workers but had recently been made redundant. One father used to be a restauranteur, but had to sell his restaurant as it was running at a loss. Further, one father, had a small textile business in which he manufactured goods, stitched by himself, his wife and her daughter-in-law - and supplied to retailers. Some of the mothers who were not employed at the time of the interview had worked part-time at home occasionally in the past as machinists or making small items, such as Christmas crackers. A few mothers still worked for an hour or two every day, teaching the children in the neighbourhood to read the Qur'an. If the father was unemployed the desire to improve their standard of living had motivated the mothers even with no formal qualifications to contribute to the family income. The profiles of the Muslim females sampled are outlined in table 7 below.

Table 7: Profile of Muslim sample

Student	Identity definition	Religion	School	Generation	Ethnic Origin
Madhia	***British Muslim***	Islam	Birchincliffe	First	Pakistan
Safath	***Pakistani Muslim***	Islam		Second	Pakistani
Soraya	***British Pakistani***	Islam		Second	Pakistani
Laila	***British Pakistani***	Islam		Second	Pakistani
Abia	***British Muslim***	Islam		Second	Pakistani
Munira	***British Pakistani***	Islam	Chamberlain	Second	Pakistani
Lafiza	***British Muslim***	Islam		First	Pakistani
Pardaj and Rabiya	***Pakistani Muslim***	Islam		Second	Pakistani
Hafsa	***British Muslim***	Islam		Second	Pakistani

The time spent observing and interviewing participants differed (refer appendix 8). The raw experiences of each participant are presented here in relation to the aims. Therefore, this chapter is divided into four consecutive sections. Subsequently, the length of the each sub-sections below, varies according to the extent of the core themes which emerged relating to each aim.

Identity

The distinctive attribute of the Muslim females interviewed was not necessarily their physical appearance, although this was a significant part, but also cultural values: a collective pool of values, customs and behaviour (Verma and Ashworh, 1986). The interview process was a challenging one for some of the girls to adapt to, especially for Lafiza and identical twins, Pardaj and Rabina. With the benefit of time, these girls seemed to become enthused about the interest shown in them and were more open and relaxed. Madiha and Safath wished to be interviewed together. Madia was loquacious and opinionated and and Safath was more reticent; however, as the course of the research progressed Safath expressed her views more fluently. Both of the girls stated that they looked forward to the interviews and were open about their experiences. They were both relatively new to Birchincliffe School and transferred when their previous school Darras Hall had closed due to falling roll numbers. They were close friends related to their shared ethnicity and also they had known each other from their previous school, Darras Hall.

Madiha described her identity as British Muslim and Safath as Pakistani Muslim. Madhia was literally an indigenous, second-generation British Muslim and would have preferred to call herself so. She, however, felt that her brown skin made it impossible for her to be accepted as a British by the population at large. The Islamic feature of modesty was important to Madhia not just in PE but in general; she spoke about issues of modesty and was critical about how the non-Muslim girls would dress for school and the school policy on this:

> *A girl who wears a short skirt and showing too much of herself has no self respect. The school should do more to stop them, like say skirts have to be a certain length but they don't do anything.*

Madhia seemed dismayed that the school policy on dress code was so *laissez-faire*. Verma and Ashworth (1986) observe that one individual can be more 'ethnic' than another in that various individuals draw on their cultural identity to differing degrees when determining their own identity. Lafiza, a quietly spoken pupil from Chamberlain School, embodied her faith more so than Madhia and Safath, who had chosen not to wear the headscarf. In contrast Lafiza from Chamberlain School stated:

> *Wearing the headscarf goes down the family generation and my family are very strict and so I follow what they say. I just stay in after school and help out I'm not allowed to go out.*

Munira, in contrast, a close friend of Lafiza, chose not to wear the headscarf with her parents' approval:

> *Like she wears a scarf (pointing to Lafiza) and I don't; my Dad goes to me like it's your choice and my Mum, like if you don't wonna wear it you don't 'ave to. Well if you go to the Mosque then obviously you have to wear it.*

Identical twins, Pardaj and Rabiya, from Chamberlain School, wore traditional Muslim dress with the headscarf; they described their nationality as 'Pakistani Muslim'. They believed that the non-Muslim girls in their school did not understand or try to understand their religion. They declared that their friendships were with other Muslim girls and the reasons given for this were a similitude of circumstances, in particular linguistic repertoire. As previously indicated, in Chapter 2, the literature suggests that language and identity are closely intermeshed. Retaining the language spoken in the country of origin is one of the ways in which immigrants create a positive social identity for themselves. Language can mark ethnic solidarity: on the one hand, it can serve to show the speaker's desire to identify with Islamic culture and values; on the other, its use can indicate that the person being addressed is felt to be a member of the group. A variety of languages were spoken in the homes of the girls in the sample in the present study. The heritage languages of the families were Bengali, Punjabi or Urdu; the dialects, however, varied according to the regions the families originated from. Most families from Pakistan had their origins in rural Mirpur and other rural areas of Pakistan. The girls reported that some English was spoken in the homes, albeit, by the children rather than the parents. The discourse pattern varied depending on with whom the girls were communicating. Most of the girls spoke to their parents in their heritage language.

Rabiya reported this ethnic solidarity of being able to feel more at ease with other Muslims because

... you can talk in our own language and just have fun you can't do that with English people, white people.

Moreover, when asked how they spend their free time at school Pardaj stated that they did not 'hang out' with white girls because they would prefer to spend time with friends who shared their way of life. On the other hand, Hafsa stated that she had both Muslim and non-Muslim friends with whom she would socialise in and out of school. Pardaj and Rabiya expressed a strong ethnocentric bias towards their own culture but, nevertheless, they did like the 'hip hop' music and the fashion. Their preferences for British music and fashion were also shared by other girls, for example Laila:

You know the 'Goth' fashion. I have got mostly red and black in my wardrobe. My parents think I am into in Devil worship! But they were only joking 'cos they know I'm not. We like Asian Music but it can become a bit cheesy, hip hop is better!

Soraya and Laila were both indigenous, second-generation British and both described themselves as British Pakistani they were loquacious and were open about their experiences. Laila spoke of the English culture being also her culture and this view was shared by the majority of the girls interviewed, with the exceptions of Pardaj and Rabiya who described their ethnic identity as Pakistani Muslim without any reference to a British component. The girls defined their identity by looking at Asian and British components and adopting and adapting both aspects from both cultures to construct their identity. Both Laila and Soraya had non-Muslim friends and explained that this was not problematic. Laila suggested that her friends did attempt to understand her religion and culture:

Friends understand, or try to understand our religion and culture like they don't eat in front of me when I'm fasting and try and force me into bars. If they were my friends they would not force me into bars when I was older anyway and most people's perceptions of Muslims is right that we can't do things cos we are Muslim. Well we don't drink, but there are lots of other ways to enjoy yourself. Getting drunk and not being able to remember is not my idea of a good night out.

Although Laila expressed positive sentiments to fashion, music and dance, she did not like the permissiveness in Britain such as drunkenness. She stated:

Yeah, like it's not my idea of having a good time if you can't remember what you did 'cos you got drunk. Most think it's cool to drink as much as you can but what's cool about that?. I can't see the point.

Religion

The literature has confirmed that human identity formation is a necessary and central function of religion (Bellah, 1968; Mol, 1976) and this was discussed in detail in chapter 2. According to Basit, 'it is very rare for a Muslim to become a non-believer or even non-practising' (p.281). This was confirmed in the interviews. Soraya and Laila both stressed the importance of their religion. For Laila, Islam was not just a religion but a way of life:

How long have you got? (laughs) Well, yes it's my whole life! It's fasting during Ramadan, praying and reading the Qur'an. My parents sometimes have to remind me to pray but I don't mind 'cos I think it's important.

Several other girls expressed similar views about religion:

*Religion is important such as Ramadan I am really interested in that (*Abia, Birchincliffe School*).*

*Religion is important to me (*Munira, Chamberlain School*).*

The girls spoke of religion as a guide that tells them what to do. Laila and Abia both spoke of religion as giving life meaning and something to live by and many practised religion in the same way.

*In the morning, I read my Namaz and read the Qur'an. Then in the afternoon, when I come back from school, I pray again and I teach my brothers and sisters to read the Qur'an. (*Abia, Birchincliffe School*).*

Another girl expressed similar sentiments:

*Religion! I don't know. I just follow my parents. I always fast in Ramadan. I sometimes pray, but I don't cover my head. I used to read the Qur'an every weekend but I've stopped now; I've got to do all my coursework this year (*Madhia, Chamberlain School*).*

Both Soraya and Laila stated that parental pressure to pray was moderate but they did not mind being reminded as religion was really important to them.

Relationships with parents

The literature also describes relationships with parents as an important factor in the shaping of identity. The majority of girls came from large families. None of the girls was an only child or one of two children. The smallest families had three children; two girls belonged to families with 10 children. The ordinal position of the girls varied enormously. Six girls were the eldest amongst their siblings, three were the youngest and the rest were somewhere in between. Although, most of the girls in the sample in the present research lived in ostensibly nuclear families, several had relatives living in the same street or within walking distance from their homes. Thus, while the families had their privacy due to personal preference or smaller housing, they still had the support of the extended family nearby, if needed. One family had the paternal grandmother living with them, whereas two had a married son, his wife and young child living in the same house. Relationships with parents were described as constructive. Madhia expressed pleasure in having a harmonious relationship with her parents. She described her parents as understanding but was also aware that some parents were more strict with their offspring.

> *I think my parents are quite well understanding, er they do understand from my point of view and they are OK with it and I often normally stay at home and I rather stay in home with my family and my cousins and I do have quite fun staying at home with my cousins all around me and what's the point of going out at night at that time and you don't do anything, you don't have much to talk about and nothing to do you know I'd rather stay at home at night with my family who care about me.*

Other girls reported few disagreements with parents, that they knew the boundaries, and they respected the limits imposed by parents.

> *I wouldn't say I had disagreements really because my parents understand things from my point of view and they do allow me to do things* (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

Some expressed relief that their parents were less strict than some of their other friends. Madhia's comments exemplify that some parents are really strict:

> *I seen some parents who don't allow their children to go out.*

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Safath expressed similar sentiments about her close relationship with her parents and was given the choice of whether to wear the headscarf. She stated that her parents worry too much about her welfare. She did not consider her parents as over-protective but rather she did not equate this with them being over-protective. She justified this as her parents being concerned for her safety and welfare. She also believed that her parents were understanding:

> *I am so happy that I get along with my parents so well I suppose it is about bonding when you are small I mean I was really close to my Mum and my Dad and I bonded with them so well and they are both understanding parents and some parents are not like that* (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

Laila also expressed a similar outlook in that her parents were concerned about her choice of clothes and she joked that they thought that she was into 'Devil worship' due to the predominance of red and black in her wardrobe.

Some expressed relief that their parents were less strict than some of their other friends. Madhia's comments exemplify this:

> *I am so happy that my Dad and Mum are more understanding I have seen some parents say you can't do this you can't do that and I feel so sorry for them people because I think you should let them live their life as well.*

Madhia also believed that some latitude of acceptance is also required where parents should not be too oppressive or too permissive either. Parental guidance and control also appeared to influence and mould the leisure activities of the girls. Since none of the girls in the sample had the freedom to go out unaccompanied in the evenings, they tended to spend all or most of their free time at home. They seemed to indulge in a variety of activities in their spare time.

Relationships with friends

Although some girls mentioned seeing friends at home, very few admitted going out with them. Reading fiction seemed to be a favourite pastime for most of them. Other popular recreations were watching television and videos or listening to music. A few

girls liked to phone or send text messages to friends, while others enjoyed cooking in their free time. Other activities mentioned were playing basketball or cricket with their siblings; relaxing with needlework, knitting or gardening; writing poems or stories; playing cards and computer games and solving puzzles. Hence, far from being the recluses that some teachers seemed to think they were, the girls were able to find pleasurable exercises within the home. Their leisure activities stayed within the limits set by their culture and religion and were largely congruent with those of their parents. The girls themselves, while ostensibly impressed with the freedom that their non-Muslim contemporaries have, reject that kind of freedom with a degree of equanimity. They recognise that their freedom is restricted by religio-cultural ethos. This is evident in Safath's statement:

> *I don't normally go out anyway. When I do I go out it's with with my family and so normally I stay at home and help my Mum out and I have little brothers and sisters and I help my Mum out with that. I used to wear a scarf at my old school but since I came here I don't. I do wear trousers my Mum she does understand why I do that and I try to get involved with others but my Mum doesn't understand that [not wearing a scarf] and sometimes says why don't you wear a scarf on your head? Mostly she does understand and my parents are quite understanding but sometimes she says I am out of control! They don't really trust me my parents, they think I'm a bad girl but I'm not!*

The majority of girls in the sample had friends who were Muslim; however, Laila, Soraya, Abia and Hafsa all admitted to having friends who were non-Muslim.

Aim 2: *To investigate whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE*

The majority of the girls interviewed reported that they enjoyed PE. The notion of it being a subject where they had a 'time out' from other lessons is shown in comments where girls did not think of PE in the same light as their other lessons. It meant something different to them. In particular, Hafsa conceptualised PE as a lesson, which was very different from any other.

> *I like PE, cos it is bit of a 'doss' like, you can have a laugh and it is a break from doing work like in Maths and English.*

The opportunities, as she saw them, were unlike those in other lessons. Despite the opportunities to 'have a laugh', she saw PE as one which, through the learning environment, could offer far greater potential. Enjoyment of lessons was paramount to their experience and behaviour. Munira described how PE was a subject, which she observed as being a time and place when such enjoyment was a plausible outcome.

> *I actually like PE 'cos you can do anything you like. So I like it, it's like spending you own time, like you can do sports wherever you want to. You can be sporty, there's no writing and there's no exams instead of doing writing. It's like a 'doss' in some ways.*

Similar opinions were expressed by Pardaj and Rabina who both stated that they liked PE as it was a welcome break from subjects such as English where there 'was too much writing'. The enjoyment of lessons was further confirmed by lesson observations. The girls varied in ability and this did have some relationship to their enjoyment of lessons. The enjoyment of PE was also, dependent on the activity in question. Few girls expressed positive attitudes to weightlifting as opposed to netball or badminton. Soraya who was a keen performer in PE and an excellent role model to her peers reported positive attitudes to PE, but she drew the line at weightlifting!

> *I enjoy PE except weightlifting which is hard.*

Safath and Lafiza were the most reluctant participants in PE but for entirely different reasons. Safath explained that she did not like PE because she did not feel confident in her ability. This had been exacerbated by the move from Darras Hall to Birchincliffe. They reported feeling more 'on show' and more visible at Birchincliffe School in comparison to Darras Hall, this was due to a smaller minority of Muslim pupils at Birchincliffe. At Darras Hall there was a ratio of 50:50 Muslims to non-Muslims. She explained that in her previous school the higher proportion of Muslim pupils meant that she could blend in more effectively and her awkwardness and lack of co-ordination mattered less. She also believed that the teachers gave her more encouragement despite her lack of ability, which she appreciated. She did not feel that the teachers at Birchincliffe were as encouraging as her teachers at Darras Hall, with the exception of Miss Blanchard.

There were more Muslim girls and so there was less of a difference.They [i.e. **the pupils at the old school**] *used to cooperate more; yes because it was different - they would encourage you to do well even if you were crap and so you felt more involved. Miss Blanchard is really good though she does encourage me*

Safath was self-effacing about her ability in PE which she described as 'crap' but notwithstanding this, she did feel more involved at Darras Hall. Safath and Mahia's PE experiences at, Darras Hall, had been more positive. They both enthused about their PE experiences at Darras Hall. They both recalled these memories as positive ones. Madiha also reported that did enjoy PE but not as much as at Darras Hall this was explained by relationships with teachers and more supportive peer relationships. Group interaction between the Muslim and non-Muslim students was also strained on occasions affecting the confidence of the respondents in PE which was already low

In all cases there were a number of key factors that caused tensions for the girls' religious identity; these related to kit, teacher understanding and changing facilities.

We discussed a hypothetical lesson. It was this discussion that demonstrated PE kit, Ramadan and teacher understanding were significant issues for both pupils. Safath spoke about how the nature of her ablity was a tapering factor with PE. She admitted to a lack of co-ordination and agility but this had not been an issue at Darras Hall as teachers had included her more and she felt less conspicuous due to a greater prevalence of Muslim pupils which for her created a ethos of solidarity. Madhia also expressed a preference for the ethos at Darras Hall.

Yes there were more there but in our class not as many as now but we still used to relate to them and as a group we felt more involved a lot involved and they would cheer for us and talk to us when were in a group but at this school they leave you out.

Their subjective perceptions of the ethos of their new School Birchincliffe were not positive. They did not feel welcome by either the teachers or the other pupils (non-Muslim and Muslim); their friendship and close alliance was also confirmed by the PE lesson observations (refer appendix 7), where they would stand in close proximity to each other and did not tend to affiliate with the other girls.

Pardaj and Rabina also moved to Chamberlain School from Darras Hall and echoed the above statements. At Chamberlain there are 20 Muslims in the whole school out of a total of 1,366 pupils, a feature causing them to report feeling more prominent.

Changing facilities

Privacy is paramount to Muslim pupils. The changing facilities at Birchincliffe and Chamberlain School were both open plan and all of the girls in the study reported changing in the toilets either on a regular basis, or for every session. Munira and Laila were the only girls who stated that they frequently changed in the communal area. Hafsa described her friend Iffat (Iffat was the girl who did not wish to participate in the study) who did not participate in PE due to issues of modesty.

> *Iffat doe like doin' PE 'cos she wears that Scarf on her head and every Friday she doe[5], like come to school.*

Showering was not a salient issue as showers were no longer compulsory due to timetable constraints. Although teachers recognised that communal changing facilities presented a problem for the Muslim pupils the question of achieving greater privacy was difficult to overcome due to the design of the changing rooms. Mark Thackery, Director of Sport at Birchincliffe stated that the privacy issue was not exclusive to Muslim pupils but was just as much of an issue for the non-Muslim boys as it was for the girls.

> *In the girls' changing room you will find the individual cubicles but the boys have a run through arrangement, but boys should have individual showers as well. It worried the hell out of me when I was a kid, I didn't like it at all. Boys do mind, but it's how its been built and it will cost money to change it.*

The above statement also illustrates that there are ergonomic implications of individual changing cubicles. Designing changing facilities to include more individual spaces would take more space and would not be economically viable according to Mark Thackery.

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5   'Doe' is a colloquial term for 'does not'

Patricia Blanchard presented a different perspective on the open plan arrangement and said that the design of the existing girls' changing rooms at Birchincliffe was an improvement on the old style changing facilities.

> *It's an open plan changing room with two toilets and beyond the toilets is a wall with the showers behind then sort of thing. I never know what happens because I'm not always in there. But when the changing rooms were more obvious (in the old block) there were only two toilets in the gym and there would be an odd girl who would say, 'Miss I can't use the toilet because somebody's in there getting changed'. But I don't think it's all of them. Odd girls may want to get their trousers on so that noone sees their legs. No I don't think they are quite as strict about it. The new changing rooms are less open so you can be a bit more selective as to where you can go. The new changing facilities are an improvement, the old ones were horrible and old fashioned they have a brand new facility.*

She also indicated that the new changing rooms had been designed for reasons other than respecting the need for privacy

> *The whole funding for this was through girls' football so there are two changing rooms for the home and away sides it has not really been designed for us but for teams who come and play here. It is a problem because the groups won't all fit into one changing room and so they are split between different sides of the corridor and it means I can't speak to all the girls at once like when I want to call the register. That isn't possible so I have to go into the different changing rooms to call and this takes longer and another thing is I don't know what's going on. I have to rely on someone telling me if something untoward happens so supervision is a problem and that's why the girls are in here and not the boys.*

At Chamberlain School, Simon Ralph admitted that the changing facilities, although not ideal or conducive to issues of privacy, were due for refurbishment, a comment that suggested the girls changing facilities would still be predominantly open plan even after the refurbishment.

> *They are open plan. Our changing rooms are quite dated at the moment but they are up for a refurb soon and we are looking to change the lad's side of things, cos they are in dire need. I think the lad's changing rooms are being updated soon 'cos they are in a worse state from like a leisure perspective,e erm and I think it is the intention when there is a bit more money the girl's will be done. There are two changing rooms… the girl's I know have two cubicles and then more of an open plan like you know five or six showers three or four individual cubicles the boy's have more of an open plan arrangement than the girl's.*

The question of achieving greater privacy was difficult to overcome due to the design implications involved.

Ramadan

Religion is important in the lives of the girls in the sample and is not just confined to belief. The comments of the girls in this research show that they always fast during Ramadan. I was interested to explore if they found it difficult to practise their religion as well as participate in PE.

At Birchincliffe School, the girls were expected to participate in some way in PE and this was exacerbated by Athletics occurring during Ramadan at the time the research was carried out. At Chamberlain School the girls' comments indicated that they did not participate in PE during Ramadan.

> *When it's Ramadan, we don't participate in PE. We can just sit there and watch everyone or we can just do some coursework, go into another class and do something* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

> *We can just sit there and watch everyone or we can just do some coursework, go into another class and do something* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

Also there was an onus on the students to approach the teacher during Ramadan to excuse themselves from the activity:

> *They let us sit out* (Rabiya, Chamberlain School)*....but you have to ask* (Pardaj, Chamberlain School);

> *They know that's it's Ramadan, but we tell 'em, before we do PE like* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

The responses to pupils from both Birchincliffe and Chamberlain School indicated that teachers varied in their approach to Ramadan. This is exemplified in Safath's comment:

> *The teachers are they ...I like the way Miss Blanchard is when you are fasting; she will be understanding, whereas some will shout 'why ain't you doing it?' They will just shout at you she will come up to us privately and ask if we are OK and will help give us things to do which are OK whereas other teachers they say you've got to do it they don't understand that we*

can get thirsty and we can't drink so times it is a bit hot and it is a bit hard to do PE when they are being sarcastic to us.

Pardaj also stated that teachers varied in their approach to Ramadan:

Some teachers they are strict and others are alright about it, it varies you know.

Madhia, in contrast believed that teachers did understand but added another dimension:

I think they do understand why we fast er but I think they just don't care personally I don't think it is a consideration.

At first the girls found it a challenge to explain how teachers could approach Ramadan in order to be more inclusive. For instance Munira explained a possible strategy which teachers could employ:

They tell us to change our clothes like but if you are thirsty then just sit down.

However, as the research progressed the girls did make some suggestions of how they believed the teachers could adopt a more uniform approach to Ramadan.

Well it's all about them learning if they want to. They do know I know most of the teachers know and quite a lot of pupils will know they just don't take it into consideration that's it (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

I think we should be able to miss PE when Ramadan is on because I feel tired. It is only for one month and we should be given the choice to sit out. We can sit out for one lesson but we should be able to sit out when we are fasting 'cos I just get really tired. I mean Ramadan lasts for one month so it would mean er six lessons. We should be given the choice to sit out, I am not making an excuse. It is only for six lessons (Abia, Birchincliffe School).

Some of the girls were also conscious of other pupils' reactions to their lack of participation during Ramadan and believed that the teachers could do more to raise their own levels of awareness and those of other pupils. The incidence of victimisation by teachers and other pupils was not universally shared but it did cause concern to some of the pupils as did the perceived lack of concern by the teachers.

They ask us questions and be sarcastic like I think why don't you shut up? (Munira, Chamberlain School).

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Safath had reported an incident, which had occurred during Ramadan:

> *Yes we get comments like you don't need to sit in the sun you are already tanned and do we all eat chipates?. The boys say the things to your face the girls say it behind your back. One of the popular boys asked me about the chipates and although the teacher warned him it still happened again*

Madhia's comment indicated her frustrated at the incidents of victimisation coupled with a laissez-faire approach from the teachers:

> *We talk to the teachers ourselves but sometimes the teachers they don't really care, like they don't do really nothing about it and so I just think I might as well leave it 'cos there's no point wasting your time 'cos they don't really do nothing about it. If it's still going to carry on them we might as well put up with it. Nothing much happened, you can report it but it don't really change anything* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Lafiza stated that the non-Muslim girls resented their lack of participation because some of their non-Muslim counterparts also wanted to opt out of PE but for non-religious reasons.

> *Some of the other girls they don't like it because they don't want to do PE either* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

> *They say it's not fair and then they will stare or talk about us behind our backs.* (Pardaj, Chamberlain School).

In contrast, some pupils stated that their non-Muslim counterparts varied in their support for Ramadan and others were supportive.

> *Some girls from our side[6] do understand and some don't* (Rabiya, Chamberlain School).

> *We were brought up as Muslims and we don't get any problems from non-Muslims 'cos in this area there are many of us. There's lots of people to back us up* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

Kit issues

Birchincliffe School had adopted a kit policy where Muslim students could wear track suit bottoms in the summer and winter. The girls appreciated this as they did not want

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[6] Side refers to the year groups; there are two "sides" - 'Avon' and' Thames'

to show their legs anyway. They felt more conscious in the summer months where their non-Muslim counterparts had to wear shorts.

> *At my old school there were more Muslim girls and there was less difference here you feel more conscious of being Muslim and of wearing track suit bottoms especially in summer.*

Madhia explained that at Darras Hall the non-Muslim girls could wear track suit bottoms in the summer and this allowed them to blend in more effectively.

> *At Darras Hall the other girls could wear track suit bottoms even in the summer months, yes they were quite more mixed there.*

At Birchincliffe Madhia was critical of the girls wearing shorts and stated that it would be beneficial for all girls to adopt a tracksuit policy for practical reasons especially in the winter months.

> *I don't really like showing my legs anyway I think they do it anyway just to show off like when its quite cold and they are still wearing their shorts and when it is really cold why not wear track suit bottoms? If you are that cold then why not wear the track suit?*

Madhia also raised a further practical issue relating to kit:

> *But I actually got the uniform sheet when I first come here and it said what you could wear they didn't have no tracksuit bottoms and went to the uniform shop and it didn't have no tracksuit bottoms so we had to go ourselves in our own way and get our own and the ones I am wearing now (points to them) and the uniform shop should have them.*

Madhia's comment was endorsed by Safath who also stated that the uniform policy should be more explicit about track suit bottoms and they both suggested that the school should introduce standard track suit bottoms as part of the PE kit.

Abia and Laila both liked being able to wear track suit bottoms. Abia would not feel comfortable wearing shorts. Laila wished to speak about her friend who attended Madison Girls High School.

> *I have got a friend at Madison Girls High School [pseudonym] who is Muslim and the school don't let her wear tracksuit bottoms like they do here. If her parents knew they would be angry but as it's a good school. She*

is not happy about it and would prefer to do what we do here and wear track suit bottoms.

Compromise was the key to her friend's dilemma about being Muslim and having to wear shorts. As Madison High School had a good academic reputation then the sacrifice was having to adapt to the euro-centric kit policy. Laila stated that she did not feel any bashfulness about exposure of her legs and she was the only respondent who stated that she would feel comfortable wearing shorts, but her parents would be angry if they found out and she was mindful of this.

At Chamberlain school, Muslim girls could also wear tracksuit bottoms throughout the year but their non-Muslim counterparts could only wear them during the winter months. This policy was about to change and will be discussed more fully in a later section on Inclusion.

The Islamic concern for modesty was also an issue, which permeated the interview responses at Chamberlain School. The PE dress code is an important dimension because of this Islamic requirement. Lafiza, Pardaj and Rabiya all wore the headscarf and were uncomfortable when training with boys. Further discussions led to more specific anxieties with Lafiza regarding mixed sex PE.

Single-sex PE

Mixed sex PE is argued to cause tensions for Muslim students particularly activities such as dance and swimming, where they could be subjected to more 'body scrutiny' by males. Lafiza was the only student who found mixed sex PE problematic:

> *There's a lot of things I can't take part in where there's boys around. I can't take part in mixed PE where there are boys. I am not allowed to show my arms and legs and I have to wear the headscarf where there are boys. It is OK in here [she refers to the single sex gym where the interview is taking place] when I do fitness where there are no boys*.

When Lafiza explained why it was so unpleasant for her to exercise with males, she referred to religion and culture and stated clearly that her parents are strict. She confided that it might be that she is especially sensitive to exposure to boys since she has not grown up with brothers close to her in age. Still, in her opinion, the same goes

for many girls with her background. Lafiza referred to the Islamic requirement for sex segregation and modesty. The segregation ideal for women and men after puberty (outside the closest family) should not be to show themselves or watch each other without a certain minimum of clothing. For girls and women this means the use of a headscarf and clothes that cover the whole body. The segregation rule also states that a woman and a man (who are not in the same family) should not be alone in the same room, and that women and men should be separated in the mosque and on other occasions. Lafiza also stated a preference for a female teacher. This view was not shared by any of the other respondents, who were indifferent about the gender of the teacher. What concerned them more was the lack of understanding shown by their teachers in relation to Ramadan and the incidents of victimization.

Aim 3 *To investigate PE teachers' perception of the Muslim female identity and how they meet the needs of female Muslim pupils in PE and school sport.*

Teacher-pupil relationships are important aspects of schooling. It is well-documented that teachers vary in their effectiveness and the literature shows that most pupils like variety in lessons, enjoy being taught and being given plenty of encouragement and praise when they do well. Pupils are sensitive of their teachers' opinion of them and will interpret any sign as an indicator of their perceived worth. Teachers, however, are not free from bias and can be influenced by stereotypes. School ethos can also contribute to whether teachers teach effectively.

All the teachers who were interviewed for the present study had experience of teaching Muslim pupils, not only in their jobs in the sample schools, but also before they came to teach in these schools. However, it was evident that some of them found it difficult to differentiate between Muslim pupils and pupils from other religious groups originating from Asia. This was particularly true of those teachers who had previously taught in schools with a high proportion of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh pupils, as they tended to 'lump' these three groups together, totally disregarding the diversity between them. These teachers, therefore, had to be reminded occasionally during the interview that we were specifically discussing Muslim pupils and not all Asian pupils. Given the subject matters explored, teachers were likely to understand researcher objectives. As such, teachers may have informed the researcher only part of all the information felt

important, especially if the researcher is seen to take away sensitive information, potentially never to return. It was important, nevertheless, to work out whether teachers were telling the truth but also whether they were party to any untruths (Denscombe, 1984). Table 8 below profiles the teacher sample.

Table 8: Profile of teacher sample

Birchincliffe School

Name	Status	Primary reason for wanting to teach PE	Experience of teaching	Experience of teaching Muslim girls
Mark Thackery	Director of Sport	Working with children, need to organise others	20 years	20 years
Ian Kemp	Head of PE	Love of sport	9 years	9 years
Neil Haden	Head of Key stage 4	Love of sport and need to organise	30 years	20 years
Patricia Blanchard	Head of Girls' PE	Love of sport	36 years	18 years
Barry Slade	PE teacher	Good at sport	11 years	11 years
Leanne Pegg	Trainee teacher	Good at sport	N/A	Not applicable teacher trainee

Chamberlain School

Name	Status	Primary reason for wanting to teach PE	Experience of teaching	Experience of teaching Muslim Girls
Rowena Ward (as Rowena is currently on secondment, I interview her at the secondment placement)	Head of PE	Always viewed herself as an educator	12 years	12 years
Simon Ralph	Acting Head of PE	Enjoyment of sport	4 years	4 years
Samantha Carson	Part-time PE teacher	Love of sport and need to 'boss' people around	9 years	9 years
Nikki McCullough	PE teacher	Enjoyment of sport	3 years	3 years

The majority of the girls had expressed an enjoyment of PE but did highlight key issues which caused tension. I was interested to investigate how the teachers perceived the Muslim female identity and if they could recognize any areas of tension between their identity and PE. It was important that I did not lead the teachers in any way or alert them to what the girls reported as areas of concern. While some teachers believe in

recognising diversity, some provided the Muslim girls with   similar motivation and inducements as their indigenous peers. This is summed up in Mark Thackery's comment:

> *They are just girls aren't they?*

All the teachers who were interviewed were aware that religion was very important to Muslim girls. They also believed that regardless of the level of religiosity, Islam encompassed the lives of these girls:

> *Well if they are calling themselves Muslim, I'd imagine that's central to their whole life. It's like someone saying I'm a Christian, they are making a statement about what I believe, so I would imagine that it is important to them yes. I'm sure some of them are not so keen on it and some are keen on it. Every religion is interpreted different.y. The Bible is one book but it's interpreted in a thousand different ways and I'm sure the Qur'an the same. So you know, it's the nature of religion isn't it? People choose to live their life the way they wish to and they often fit their religion into the way they wish to live their life as much as many fit the way they live their life to their religion I'm sure that some bend their religion to live their life the way they want to* (Mark Thackery, Director of Sport Birchincliffe School).

Mark Thackery's statement also recognized that the religiosity of the girls may vary in that some may embody their faith more so than others. Others, however, felt that the girls' identity embodied their religion and their country of residence:

> *Well certainly they cover their legs or there's one and one girl wear the hiijab isn't it?* (Barry Slade, Teacher of PE, Birchincliffe School).

The teachers also recognised that the girls' culture was an extension of their religion, since Islam was not merely a religion, but rather a way of life:

> *I still think that is a cultural thing from the day that they first draw breath. That is their culture that is the norm and that is the expectation and they do not typically, the girls, they do not fight against it. I think it is far more likely that the white girls would fight against that because culturally there is the youth culture within white girls that that doesn't exist in the same way amongst Asian girls. The Asian boys would kick against it a bit more.* (Neil Haden, Head of Key Stage 4, Birchincliffe School).

Nevertheless, some others were critical of the practical side of worship, which appeared to be alien to life in a largely secular Britain:

> *When they are fasting… this is a strange one but personally from my point of view me personally I worry about the drinking. I don't think they are allowable to faint through lack of food they do get up don't they and have breakfast as the dawn comes up? But it can be a long day without water. My issue is with the drinking. I find that a strange thing that they can't drink water. Especially if Ramadan is in the summer months* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Patricia Blanchard also commented on the amount of time that one of her pupils devoted to reading the Qur'an:

> *I've got a girl in my form who has changed from year 9 to year 10 we were looking at different pathways and her subjects and when I met her parents they said that she was going every night to study about the Qur'an and she's nearly finished all of her chapters on it now and she will have more time next year so. I mean a lot of then do do an awful lot outside school that maybe we as teachers and their friends aren't aware of. Every night after school on top of their learning at school they have a big commitment don't they to read these chapters? So I assume, I don't know but I assume a lot of them do take it seriously.*

It was manifest from the remarks of the teachers that while many appreciated the importance of Islam in the lives of these girls, others perceived it as an oppressive religion. In relation to behaviour and participation in lessons the teachers perceived several advantages associated with having Muslim girls in a class. They viewed Muslim pupils as respectful and since these girls were not disruptive, they made the teachers' job easier.

> *We have some lovely girls in this school, you know, really nice girls like Rehanna (pseudonym), she is so sweet she comes to the door nearly every lesson and she says excuse me Miss I'm really sorry to bother you', every time she says 'I'm really sorry to bother you' she's a lovely girl* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Although, the quiet and respectful behaviour of the Muslim pupils was not always seen as welcome, Simon Ralph, Acting Head of PE at Chamberlain School, equated the quietness of the Muslim pupils in a negative light:

> *Er... I often to find that some of the girls who you have spoken to tend to be quite quiet. I know one of the girls not one that you have spoken to, a quite quiet girl quite reserved keeps herself to herself. Sometimes there is a little bit of a negative towards some activities an in a team game you know needs to be more vocal in PE lacks a bit of motivation generally no behaviour issues. I don't know whether it is down the population percentage-wise*

maybe they are a little more quieter in those situation but then again I have not been to the other extremes (Simon Ralph, Acting Head of PE Chamberlain School).

Mark Thackery and some of his team were cautious when discussing possible disadvantages of having Muslim girls in their class. While the teachers hesitated to use the term 'disadvantages' and some of them felt there were few disadvantages in having Muslim pupils in the class, others believed that they faced certain difficulties with Muslim pupils in their class. Mark Thackery's brief statement summed up a word used frequently by his team:

> *There's still some who are reluctant but also there are many white girls who are reluctant.*

It was interesting to note that all of the other members of the PE team used the word 'reluctant' when describing the Muslim girls attitude to PE participation. Many teachers would prefix their comment with 'not wanting to generalise' as demonstrated in the following statements:

> *These are obviously all going to be generalisations, but er I think their attitude towards PE is that they are reluctant participants. They tend to be reluctant and having said that they are not overtly so. I don't find them to be awkward, difficult, argumentative. I think actually in terms of having their kit and things like that they they tend to be very good, their attendance is good they have the correct equipment. But in terms of actually getting going they have moments of inertia. They don't tend to be on the front foot you tend to have to encourage them a great deal to be involved. There are notable exceptions to that but they are in the minority within that group they are quite quiet they tend not to be very gregarious they tend not to work freely with others they tend to want to be together* (Neil Haden, Head of key stage 4, Birchincliffe School).

> *Er yeah not wanting to stereotype but they are quite reluctant to take part as a group, because there is the odd individual who may buck the trend. Certainly there is one girl in year 7, I don't actually teach her but she is the most dynamic girl in the whole group, I mean she is Asian as far as I understand but this is an assumption on my part that she is Muslim I don't know it is an assumption and my assumption is that Asian girls tend to be more reluctant . Yes, that's the body language er and there is a high percentage of not bringing kit* (Barry Slade, PE teacher, Birchincliffe School).

> *Sometimes they are not so quick in knowing what they have to do you really have to break it down for them only for some of them not all of them some*

of them will give it a go and get into it but they will be reluctant to do it at the star. A lot of them don't want to do it so they come without kit or they have to borrow kit or they have meeting in other Departments and you can't force them to do it (Leanne Pegg, trainee teacher, Birchincliffe).

This theme was also evident at Chamberlain School where some teachers frequently used the word 'reluctant' when describing the Muslim girls in their class:

If I think if I was going to generalise I would have to say my only sort of significant thing that I would have to say about it is I do find that the Muslim girls are less able and they are lazier in their attitude to getting involved and more reluctant to participate in things. Erm but then we have non-Muslim girls who are just as lazy and just as reluctant, erm and just as not able, so erm I don't think it is specifically because they are Muslim or not. But if I was going to generalise I would say that the Muslim girls er are more reluctant to participate because I don't feel that they enjoy it as much. For example I haven't got a Muslim girl in my netball team, in my rounders team, or does the girls' football. That's not because they are not allowed, it's because they are not interested then again on thinking about it. I wonder if they would be allowed to stay on to school to join in the after school clubs, activities and teams. I am not sure what their commitment is at home and what the pressure is from home (Samantha Carson, Head of girls PE Chamberlain School).

Samantha Carson's statement also confirmed an earlier point regarding the 'pressure' from home which some teachers feel inhibits participation, especially in extra-curricular PE activities. In congruence with the girls' statements, the teachers also recognised the areas of PE which could cause conflict for Muslim pupils in referring to kit, communal changing, mixed-sex PE, Ramadan and extracurricular activities.

Kit Issues

In congruence with the girls interviewed, the teachers recognised that modesty was a key concern for the girls in their class and allowances had been made to accommodate this. Some teachers at Birchincliffe had been instrumental in changing the PE kit to allow Muslim females to wear track suit bottoms.

Well ever since I have been here they have changed the kit, we have never had the Muslim girls having to wear shorts or anything like that, so there has been no improvement since the kit change because it's always been like that I know that some schools still insist on the wearing of short skirts/shorts well that's a bit short sighted on the part of the school isn't it? (Mark Thackery).

Similarly Neil Haden also stressed that the Department needed to understand the religious requirements of the girls.

> *We have to be aware of their kit and what they are wearing and some there is some difference from family to family and some are much stricter than others but generally speaking we have to be aware of that so we have to be aware of what they wear and how they dress and the girls are wearing long sleeves and tracksuit bottoms, it isn't a problem, it isn't a problem, they all happily do that and they get on with the other pupils don't see it as anything other than the norm it's not an issue* (Neil Haden).

Ian Kemp the Head of PE cited his previous school, Rosemead (pseudonym), where the Head of PE made no concessions to Muslim students in terms of kit:

> *The Head of PE there has been there for 26 years and he is very 'old school' in a sense very traditional so that when the girls do netball they wear netball skirt,s which in one sense looks very nice and yes I can see his point but if it affects participation but as you said there is 1% ethnic minority there and it may not have come up as a problem but then other girls may have a problem with it.*

From the above statement, it is evident that schools vary in their policies on kit and their understanding of religious requirements. Indeed, Chamberlain School was taking a retrograde step in relation to kit. The current Head of PE, who was on secondment, expressed concern by this policy change:

> *I brought that in place from year 9. I mean girls would come at Year 7 and say 'I've got my periods can I wear tracksuit bottoms?' Well I would say 'of course you can', you know? No one wants an embarrassing situation and you know it's about understanding of the child and caring that they are not embarrassed and giving them the opportunity to take part as much as possible. But I think that policy at Chamberlain has been changed since I have been away. You will find there has been a lot of changing policy Mr Ralph was given the OK to run the Department how he wanted to and I think it is compulsory now that they have to wear shorts now* (Rowena Ward, Head of PE Chamberlain School).

Simon Ralph, the Acting Head of PE suggested that as pupils wore non-uniform track suit bottoms, this created an untidy look and he was in favour of introducing a standard PE kit to rectify the problem but this did not include track suit bottoms even for Muslim students:

We are trying to enforce for example, erm shorts cos our kit over recent years has deteriorated and we are trying to get students back into t-shirts shorts and socks and so it looks uniform and looks more professional. Er but obviously we bear in mind that religion does play a part in this and so some students are not supposed to be bareing their legs and so on and so we have said that if they can bring in a letter from home then obviously we will overlook that area.

Simon Ralph explained that if Muslim students did produce a letter then they could wear track suit bottoms.

It is with any students for if I don't know if someone has asthma[7] on their legs, or a rash on their legs that they don't want to exposed then for various reasons and then we will be aware of the fact that this is the case. It has already come in and obviously we don't want to work on the Year 10 and 11 because it is difficult to change old habits so we have tried to work on the Year 10 and 11 student,s but it is difficult to change old habits. I mean so we stated with year 7 and 8 and we are working hard with the years and with the lads we are having a more positive effect because lads more often than not don't mind wearing shorts. But erm girls are quite conscious of their bodies at that time of their life and not wanting to show their legs and that is across the board. That's er some girls don't mind some do. Well basically we have some excellent indoor facilities and my view on it is if you are indoors you're certainly not going to be cold so I don't see any reason why you want to wear tracksuit bottoms. However, if a member of staff realises that they are going out outside in future weeks then they will give them the option of wearing tracksuit bottoms. So for my football when I go outside we realise we are going to be outside for the next six weeks if you would like to bring your tracksuit bottoms then feel free. We are aware of the financial climate and etc and it is unfair for families to shell out £14.00 or £15.00 for a specific Chamberlain pair of tracksuit bottoms, we are not an affluent school and we haven't got affluent families to an extent, so then we don't want to punish families for not having a 'C' on their tracksuit trousers. The core thing we have is shorts, the blue top, and the socks that is the kit that all students will buy at the start of year 7. We have very few students in Year 7 wearing tracksuit bottoms erm there are a couple who have lost their shorts and OK not a problem they have brought something alternative. We obviously say obviously 'well get yourself another pair and we give them a couple of weeks'. The students who are doing GCSE PE they always wear shorts boys and girls have taken to it well and are now all wearing shorts in Year 10 and 11 pretty much every lesson I think it has a positive influence on their learning because if they are turning up in any old football top just looks disorganised now it looks more uniform.

The other members of Simon Ralph's team were supportive of this new policy together with the rationale for it:

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[7] This was copied verbatim; he probably meant to say 'ezcema'

We have just changed the style of it, erm so erm this year boys and girls still all wear the same so that is a blue erm what's it called? A blue erm Puma t-shirt erm with the Chamberlain logo, Puma shorts, they wear knee high socks and trainers, boys and girls erm. If there are any issues, problems for example religious reasons or for health reasons if some one is particularly overweight or erm if someone had a bad scar on their leg or eczema that they didn't want to show then what we have requested is just a note from home explaining that and then that would be fine for the girls to wear jogging bottom.s I said girls but if there was the same situation with the lad,s but I don't think we have had. But for all indoor activities anyway they have to wear their shorts, erm if we were going out I don't know say for a block of football or a block of netball say erm then we would have told them prior to that and I would have said to bring jogging bottoms for the next six weeks after that you bring your shorts as normal, erm the Muslim girls do wear the kit but they wear jogging bottoms (Samantha Carson, Chamberlain School).

As Samantha Carson stated, Muslim girls were allowed to wear track suit bottoms if they produced a note from home. Simalarly Nikki McCullough reinforced this policy:

Er If they bring a note. 'Cos we try to get at the start of the year all girls wearing shorts and we tried to really really hammer that more because they try to wear a mix of different tracksuit bottoms and they end up looking quite scruffy really cos they just wear a mix of different things. Like, one person's got Nike and the next Adidas you know what I mean? And they look a mess when you see them en masse and we did say if for any particular reason someone cannot wear shorts because of eczema or religious reasons as long as they brought a note from home then this was OK. It wasn't as if we were just trying to get en masse the girls trying to encourage them to wear shorts rather than the tracksuit bottoms especially when they are indoors. When we go outdoors we often say there is a outdoor lesson next week so bring your tracksuit bottoms bring, your jumpers but when they are indoors in a sports hall for the whole lesson if they can then wearing shorts is a lot better rather than having sweat going through tracksuit bottoms. Do you know what I mean? So it's a lot more hygienic. So that is a concession that we have made and we have had quite a few notes come in.

I explored with Simon Ralph and his team whether they were aware of the religious requirements of their Muslim students, in particular, the need for modesty. Samantha Carson was very vague on this area and did not answer the question directly preferring to discuss the new policy of shorts. As this has been introduced in year 7 she was optimistic that it would be gradually accepted by all pupils in due course:

What we are hoping is 'cos we have brought it in compulsory across the board erm for boys and girls in year 7 then that will follow on through. So it is going to take a few years but erm you know by the time the present year

7 are in year 10 all they would have ever worn is shorts so they won't know any different.

On the other hand, Nikki McCullough admitted that she was not as informed as she would like on this area:

Er I don't know. I am going to sound really ignorant now because I don't think that I know enough about the specific religions. Do you know what I mean?

Simon Ralph, who was instrumental in introducing the new kit policy, commented that concessions were made to Muslim pupils but only if they produced a note from home.

Ramadan

It was evident from the girls' comments that Ramadan was an area, which caused tensions for the Muslim girls partly in relation to the inconsistent approach adopted by the teachers. In concordance with this view, the teachers' statements varied on this issue. Mark Thackery at Birchincliffe School stated:

Well Ramadan, what happens is when Ramadan happens the kids don't take part in sport.

He then went on to clarify:

They don't sit out (emphasis) they don't change and they are not physically active what we say is at the very start after that after a week or two, or a lesson or two, we expect them to bring some kit and be involved in the lesson in some way but we never expect them to be sprinting, running physically exerting themselves when they are fasting.

Abia had stated that she had found it problematic that Athletics had been scheduled when Ramadan was taking place. The Muslim Council of Great has produced a policy document of good practice, which states that during Ramadan there should not be any physically exerting activities such as Athletics. Mark Thackery was not aware of this document and expressed sentiments that were not conducive to changing the curriculum:

Well there are physically exerting activities and we are not going to change the curriculum just because of Ramadan, which is twice a year, isn't it?

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Ian Kemp, the Head of PE at Birchincliffe did not cite Ramadan as an issue for the Muslim girls in his class, the sole issue he cited as being a possible area of concern was kit and as far as he was concerned this had been addressed. Trainee teacher Leanne Pegg also referred to kit as the only possible area of tension for Muslim pupils. In comparison, Neil Haden, also part of the management team did cite Ramadan as being a possible issue for the Muslim girls:

> *Yes we respect that fully er we respect it and we also try to actually celebrate it with them, so we acknowledge it with them we don't actually stand 'em up on a chair and say 'Oh well done', and give them a clap (laughs). But we do within the changing room and the conversastions we have in the changing room we are publicly there saying to them shaking their hands saying I respect you there I'm not sure I could do that, well done and acknowledge in that kind of way. They are not expected to do PE during Ramadan although we do encourage them to take part during the end of Ramadan so it's not a… (**n.b. this point was not developed**) see medically we are informed but once their body gets used to their new daily regime then actually they can take part but we don't force the issue but we do say to them now your body's used to try and join in a little bit but if you need to stop, stop. So we do encourage them to still rather than put the shutters down. But if they're saying I'm fasting and I don't want to take part then they don't take part that's fine we respect that even though we know some are actually using it but we are not going to go there we don't need to go there we respect it and we try to celebrate it with them.*

Patricia Blanchard was less aware of the school policy on Ramadan and was equivocal on the issue:

> *They don't come in they have the days off. I don't know how much 'lee way' the school gives them you will have to speak to senior staff about that, some will be off for one or two days some will be off for more than that and so on so yes the school gives them time for that.*

Barry Slade held that the Muslim pupils used Ramadan to create tensions:

> *There is no pressure put on them at all we just ask them to bring their kit and there is no pressure put on them at all and you say to them 'what are you doing at lunch time were you out playing football?' so at break time and lunch time lunch time they go out doing their normal activities and then they'll come to PE lesson and say they can't do it and you get very much go on challenge me this is my faith, this is my religion and that's the impression you get you don't understand and we try to understand that's a definite feeling that it's an opportunity for them to create an us and them situation*

A similar picture existed at Chamberlain school where members of the senior management team expected some form of participation albeit just holding a stop watch. Rowena Ward, Head of PE, had initimated that she had made an effort to find out more about the requirements of Ramadan:

> *I actually made a effort to speak to a friend of mine who was the religious studies teacher to find out about it and I always knew when abouts it was. I didn't always have exact times and dates but I always knew when. So in the changing rooms we used to say, you know just mention it that you need to be bringing your kit. Als,o we gave them the choice cos you know to be fair the lads would participate fully absolutely fully and some of the girls in recent years did and they are allowed to have water in their mouths and spit it out aren't they to quench the thirst in that way? So it is not as strict for under 14s and so under 14s can drink water and keep themselves hydrated during the day.*

There was no formal written policy within the PE Department on Ramadan but there existed an expectation that the students had to participate to some extent The comments below from Rowena Ward were symptomatic of many other comments by the PE staff at Chamberlain:

> *We gave them the option of what extent they wished to participate but they had to be involved even if it was Ramadan standing on the side and refereeing or standing on the side watching a team and giving feedback you know at certain points in the lesson.*

Similary Simon Ralph, the Acting Head of PE, stated that although there was no formal written policy on Ramadan, the Department expected a certain level of participation. The girls had stated that they would have liked their teachers to be more aware of when Ramadan was rather than having to tell the teachers and this was confirmed by Simon Ralph next point:

> *There's not a school policy as such they, just have to bring a note just to say they are, it's that time of year. So we obviously get them involved as much as possible with the lesson but obviously bearing in mind you know the physical restraints for the students that students may ....so say with badminton we can get students running a tournament, say officiating or acting as a coach as opposed to doing something practically. They can still be involved in the lesson even if they are not actively taking part in it from a practical perspective. So you know they are very much part of the lesson, I don't obviously through exhaustion etc want to get them practically running around, very much again I get involved as much as I practically can and that's with any student who is injured or what ever, or not in kit for whatever reason.*

From the comments the students had made, in particular from Pardaj and Rabiya, that teachers did not understand what they were going through, it was important to explore teacher awareness. This lack of awareness of Ramadan was confirmed by Samantha Carson's statement which was representative of many:

When they are fasting between… is it like between the hours of dusk till dawn? Are they allowed water not to touch their lips?

Sam Carson echoed the earlier points made by her collegues that a level of participation was expected during Ramadan. Nikki McCulloch presented a different view. She explained (in harmony with Simon Ralph) that pupils bring notes in to inform the teachers when it is Ramadan:

Occasionally we just get notes and we write them off for the whole time. They will come and just be part of the lesson. One of my year 8s she will just bring a note every week, but sometimes she has a go and then sometimes not. Then some tell you at the start of the lesson and then some don't say anything at all. This girl didn't tell me until mid way through a lesson she was fasting and I said to her she should have told me at the start of a lesson, but then maybe I should have been more aware of it as well.

Nikki McCulloch's final remark was indicative of what the Muslim girls were seeking but she remained unaware of any school policy on Ramadan and did not think that the onus should be on individual teachers to seek out this information. When questioned on whether a school policy on Ramadan existed she replied:

Not that I know of, if they do it hasn't filtered down to me unless I am meant to go and look for it. I have never really heard anybody talk openly about anything like it but is can be the same in the group of those who have special educational needs. You tend to you have to really go and search out the information, you sometimes wish the person would say these are the people in your group this is what you need to know and print out the information at the start of the year. That would be quite helpful.

Single-Sex PE

The Muslim girls with the exception of Lafiza did not regard mixed-sex PE as problematic and this is in opposition to the literature in this area. This was also an area, where teachers appeared to be sensitive and had made concessions to accommodate the needs of their Muslim pupils.

We try to be sensitive. In year 9 single sex PE is offered as girls are reaching puberty. In Key stage 4 although single sex-PE is an option many Muslim girls have opted for mixed sex PE and I think in the time I have been here parents have been less controlling. I get fewer letters now excusing pupils from PE (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

Mark Thackery had been instrumental in setting up the single-sex curriculum in Year 9 and for the girls to be taught by a female PE teacher. As Patricia Blanchard explained this was in response to pressure from local Muslim Leaders:

It used to be an issue when their religious leader in Lindley (pseudonym) at one stage early on in my teaching career at Birchincliffe about 15 years ago wouldn't let them do mixed PE when they got to puberty, which they seemed to say was year 8 to year 9 and we had girls then who were not allowed to do dance or gymnastics if it was with boys or whatever. Which is why historically in the school why we teach the year 9 girls separately from the year 9 boys totally. We brought in it in Year 9 for all the girls so we can't obviously teach say 6 girls separate to the others and all the rest of the school were on mixed PE so it would have been an issue so we brought it in as the few we had weren't happy doing mixed PE in year 9. Then in Year 10 it was all choosing so for example if you put netball on nearly all of the Muslim girls would choose netball as they didn't want to be in badminton where there would be boys as well. Now we have straight away mixed PE in year 10 and there hasn't been an issue with it in 6 to 8 years not one girl has said 'I can't do athletics with my form' So that thing that was there now seems to have passed.

The comments from members of staff at Birchincliffe revealed that single-sex PE worked well and from the girls lack of concern it was an area which caused fewer tensions than Ramadan. Neil Haden's comments reflected that the teachers were aware of the single sex issues and adapted the curriculum accordingly:

You have to be aware when you are asking boys and girls to work together and primarily when you are mixing pupils up you wouldn't put an Asian girl with a white boy on a one-to-one but when they work in pairs we just allow them to sort their own pairs out it just happens we don't make an issue about it we just allow it to happen. If if we are working in small sided games then everyone gets mixed up and there is no issue but we have to be aware say in gymnastics we wouldn't have an Asian girl with a white boy and they have to support one another it would never happen a because the girls would automatically migrate towards one another and b we don't just let that happen, you don't create a difficulty to begin with. That's part of our awareness we need to be aware of that and when you are aware of it it becomes second nature we don't even think about it, it just happens and that's fine the lesson goes ahead without any problems.

At Chamberlain School, there was no provison made for single–sex PE and as far as the staff at Chamberlain were concerned this worked well as they were not aware of any complains from students. The only student in the sample who had complained was from Chamberlain School, Lafiza (also Iffat who did not participate in the study). Nikki McCullough from Chamberlain School did not view this as problematic:

> *Yeah, I mean the girls never come to me and say I don't want to take part in this lesson because there are lads in the group well not in my lesson anyway it have never been an issue in my four years of teaching here. So that's never happened we do mix groups, the Year 7s we teach them in forms, basically to get a baseline understanding of their abilities…There is only Rugby if it is taken up which is single sex for health and safety issues and rules.*

Similarly, Samatha Carson did not see any particular issue with mixed-sex PE or indeed the fact that the girls and boys changing rooms were in close proximity:

> *They are pretty good really 'cos we have done it that way since year 7 that's what they are used to it is not an issue for Muslim or non-Muslim girls. Boys you know Muslim boys really they all to be honest they are quite good in our school and I think it is like from year 7 we have mixed PE and also because we are all part of the same department with the girls and the boys changing rooms being next to each other. I know that at some schools girls PE and boys PE is completely separate but we all work quite closely together and I think that they are just used to that from Year 7.*

Aim 4: *To investigate whether the PE teachers use inclusive practices in their lessons.*

The investigation of inclusive practices is facilitated through examination of whether and how the school and PE department ethos contribute towards inclusive practices, in particular, and determine whether PE teachers use inclusive (multi-cultural) practices within the PE curriculum Research has suggested that the successful implementation of any inclusive policy is largely dependent on educators being positive about it (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). Indeed, for inclusion to work successfully within a mainstream school, inclusion must be at the heart of the School Improvement Plan with ownership by all stakeholders (Lewis & Bowpitt, 2000). There must be:

- commitment to inclusive values;
- positive whole-school policies;

- systems which encourage and reward positive behaviour including the setting of teaching and behaviour targets;
- regular review process;
- In-Service training which meets the specific needs of the school.

Paul Lincoln, Director of Learning, Essex County Council, speaking at the Behaviour and Special Educational Needs - *Making the Links Conference*, June 1999 stated that, 'good schools have an ethos which permeates the whole school. Future policy should be geared towards this becoming the norm.'

The culture and identity of PE is recognised as having a number of characteristics that separate it from other curricular. Bailey and Dismore (2004) intimated the significant benefits of a quality physical education, many of which they deem not to be replicable through other areas of the curriculum. Moreover, the localised subject identity and ethos within each school, irrespective of the wider NCPE, also contributes to the relative feeling of uniqueness that surrounds the subject.

School Ethos

Teachers expressed a genuine desire to actively engage with the research. Teachers interviewed, with the exception of Barry Slade and Ian Kemp were loquacious and spoke freely about their reasons for joining the teaching professions and their motivations for wanting to teach PE. However, they found it a challenge to articulate the ethos of the school and also their views on inclusion and diversity. When asked about school ethos teachers really struggled to convey the ethos of their school and there was a long pause and sometimes teachers went off on a tangent to disguise their lack of knowledge on this area. The following quotations exemplify this lacuna:

> *I think the school focuses on high attainment, academic achievement, care of kids. Some of the kids are challenging and don't come from privileged backgrounds… but we do our best for them* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

Neil Haden, Head of Key Stage 4 did not even attempt to sum up the school ethos and instead reinforced Mark Thackery's point about the focus on excellence and achievement:

Good question (pause) I think there is I think there is an ethos of success and to celebrate success and also an ethos of discipline which is important with a school of this size and this helps to create a good working environment (Ian Kemp, Head of PE, Birchincliffe School).

I've forgotten what our mission statement is to be honest. To be honest I can't remember it. (Simon Ralph, Head of PE Chamberlain School).

The Heads of PE at the two sample schools were unclear about the ethos of their schools. It is, therefore, not surprising that the other members of the PE department are also equivocal of the ethos or mission statements of the school:

The school ethos? (long pause). *Well the ethos of the school is all about excellence, striving to get the best other than that we have a whole list of things that the children, you know they sign a behaviour code (looks to find a copy)* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

She then diverted the conversation to refer to the school behaviour policy, which did not entirely address the question of the school ethos.

Barry Slade also struggled to sum up the ethos of the school and after a long pause commented:

I think we try to treat every child as an individual, the ethos is very much join in give it a go, be as active as possible and we are not really, you know, it's not just a case of not performing it's come on why aren't you doing that take the opportunities that are there… get involved.

At Chamberlain School, Nikki McCulloch was equally vague:

Er, er there is not like a set ethos but we do try to be a community led school that do concentrate on their communication to parents and obviously within the local community like linking in with the primary schools that seems to be a bit of a push at the moment.

The previous Head of PE at Chamberlain School, Rowena Ward, was more conversant with the school ethos and able to articulate the ethos of Darras Hall and make useful comparisons with Chamberlain School:

I think the Darras ethos was, was, I think because the children entered the school, the children that were at the school weren't as academically bright. Erm then their ethos was to develop the child in everyway as best as they could, to look at everything about the whole child the culture, and all of those types of things and being a small school that was also, that helped

and when I was there the staff knew all of the children you know all of their needs and that would be their ethos to develop the whole child and their academic ability. At Chamberlain, we looked to first and foremost value added at key stage and key stage 3 results that would be one of their key focuses and I think at Chamberlain they are very much initiative run, they want to keep moving forward and jumping onto all sorts of initiatives. And you know moving forward in that way whereas Darras would take on board an initiative and work it through and improve on it and not always do everything. I think Chamberlain is more data generated that type of thing and I think because is such a big school it is more difficult to get to know individuals. When you have been there for a long time you do get to know them. I mean I suppose I was in a different situation for me personally. I felt that Chamberlain should of (sic) been part of the community and and the reason why I believed that was because I was a pupil there and then I taught the children of people that I went to school with and that community for me was very strong, the communication with parents.

Rowena's comments were more comprehensive and provide a favourable picture of an inclusive ethos at Darras Hall. Although, she did indicate that Chamberlain still works towards an inclusive ethos, as she explained:

Yes I think it… yes it is inclusive in making sure there is equality of opportunity on provision erm and and within lesson ensuring that every pupil can be engaged but I suppose what I would say is to improve it could be it could actively seek to include. It does include, but not to the extent that .. at Darras it found that there was a need to do that so what they did was to over include if you know what I mean to consider the picture of everybody but to include everybody to enhance their life to make their life much nicer in school. I suppose I would call it more active inclusion but policies they do attempt to include and provision is inclusive but as for saying what is inclusive and what do you go beyond that to make life even better that is where Chamberlain need to go now to look and may be celebrating as a whole school what everybody is celebrating there is definitely an awareness.

I explored the policies of the two schools on inclusion and copies of the policies for each PE department are contained in Appendix 9. In considering the potential for teachers to adopt inclusive practices, it is necessary to examine the attitudes of teachers towards integration since without the support of teachers, inclusion policy initiatives are difficult to sustain

Teachers' commitment to inclusive values

The Muslim girls had stated that there were differences between their previous school Darras Hall and Birchincliffe/Chamberlain in the way in which their teachers had

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adopted inclusive approaches. Madhia and Safath had found the transition from Darras Hall to Birchincliffe School difficult due to the different ethos and also the proportion of Muslim students to indigenous students. Safath's following statement epitomises this:

> *At my other school, even though I am really crap at PE my teachers were still really nice and still got me involved and the other people were really nice but here I try to get involved and people talk behind my back about me not being any good so I might as well do nothin'. They would cheer for you which would encourage you more. I was really crap but they would encourage me more and they used to help me a lot 'cos I mean I am really crap but here I won't try.*

Their difficult transition went unnoticed by Mark Thackery who believed that the girls had settled in successfully:

> *I haven't spoken to the girls about it but they are very 'bright buttons' they seem to have settled in very quickly they look very happy to me. I would imagine that they are quite pleased to be here. I think it is a positive environment for them to come into really, I don't know what they have told you? (I don't divulge that the girls have not settled in) But from what I, I don't know I haven't been to Darras Hall myself I have been to Darras Hall for sporting events but have not been there on a school day so I don't know what the environment was like. I know that coming here they have been very welcomed and everything seems to have gone OK.*

His comment that the girls had been welcomed was not supported by Madiha who had stated:

> *At Darras Hall the other girls could wear track suit bottoms even in the summer months, yes they were quite more mixed and they tried to understand us and things from our point of view and I think because we come here late we can't get use to the people around us people from here don't try to be friendly with us.*

It appeared that Madhia was not just being nostalgic about her previous school as negative remarks about her race and religion were made by the non-Muslim students at Darras Hall, but because of the greater proportion of Muslim students there, she felt more comfortable. As there were more non-Muslims at Birchincliffe, she felt outnumbered and vulnerable:

> *People did make comments at Darras Hall, but I was more confident about it but there's more of em here and most of them are like it and I'm not going to waste my breath on you lot.*

Madhia had been upset by a remark made by a popular boy (described earlier in this chapter) which related to skin colour and chipates. She recognised that although similar incidents occurred at Darras Hall the teachers had handled the incidents more effectively, she summed it up succinctly:

> *I think it all depends on the school and how the teachers let you get away with what you are doing. I think at this school they let pupils get away with more stuff whereas in my old school they didn't. I think if teachers were more understanding about our point of view then I think everything can change.*

Teachers had not recognised these incidents and when questioned about possible racist remarks, Mark Thackery did not provide any examples of any incidence of them, but instead referred to his experience of anti-racist policies:

> *In the past I was involved in the Swann Report and that was written and came into the school when I was in High Wickham. And the Swann curriculum said well actually the anti racist policy came out of the Swann report and I was involved very much in that study the lady was in our school and so at that time the staff was very much involved in understanding the nature of I wouldn't say multi-cultural teaching because they actually rebelled against that they thought it was the wrong term they said you've got to be specifically anti racist and fight against racism which is what I learned through that obviously and what I've always gone with really. It's rather than being multi-cultural and accept everything you also have to stand against, make a stand against racist comments or racist views or racist attitudes and that's been a major part of my learning but I haven't done any of that in this school. It's more they like the multi-cultural every individual is important, every individual needs to be respected every individual has different values and different beliefs and they are all to be respected which is fair enough.*

Patricia Blanchard could not cite any incidents of racism and instead indicated that:

> *The children here in general have an awful lot of respect, you know, for each other, er, it's a good school quite honesty or I wouldn't have stayed this long! The children are pretty good we don't have major issues or any that I'm aware of.*

The difference between pupils and teacher views was epitomised by Barry Slade who confirmed that he had not witnessed any racists incidents made to pupils, although his comments did indicate a degree of in-group favouritism and out-group resentment to the Muslim pupils from the indigenous pupils:

> *The other girls often refer to 'them' as a group. It is more to do with the reluctance it is the same for girls but again the girls themselves isolate themselves they almost set themselves aside.*

Neil Haden, Head of Key Stage 4, was more voluble on the issue of racism and how it was tackled:

> *It happens, it happens everywhere erm and there will from time to time, somebody will have made a comment, an aside or whatever when cos they are frustrated or angry and so Paki might be said or something of that kind might be said. I have never know it amongst girls ever but a boy will say that and that's born out of not being terribly articulate and not really knowing how to express their feelings properly erm and a word like that will be said and then he Asian boy will take exception to that and say that it racist and then we have to deal with it in that kind of way.*

According to this quotation, he had not witnessed a racist incident among the girls in his class. He went on to explain the school policy on racism:

> *We have school policies on both, we have school policies on both and if it is a racist incident then the policy is that has to be recorded that is not a school policy but it is a legal requirement that it has to be recorded. So if a pupil says that someone has been racist towards them we have to accept that is the case we have to accept the accusation and we have to deal with it an we have to investigate it and often the comment has been made out of frustration and out of an immaturity and inadequate vocabulary rather than being racist but the Asian boys won't necessarily be able to see that of course and our job is actually to explain that to him but very often it isn't actually racist it is just an inappropriate comment that has been made.*

The formal policies on inclusion were explored in greater detail at both schools. The PE Department policies for both schools (refer appendix 9) contain sections that relate to inclusion and multicultural education. However, Simon Ralph and other PE staff were not aware that such a document existed. There is no specific reference to Muslim students. Instead, the document is adapted from the school's generic equal opportunities policy document.

The material quoted here from two students and two teachers represents the views of most of the sample. As far as the students were concerned, the teachers varied in their levels of tolerance and commitment to inclusive values. This corresponded to teachers who often lacked awareness of how to include or indeed the school PE policy on inclusion.

> *Miss Blanchard tries to get everyone involved ... Miss Blanchard she is the only teacher here who does help us a lot and she understands, she is really nice. We wish we could have her for every lesson* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

> *Miss Blanchard is good though do you remember when I was in the rugger scrum?* (turning to Madhia) *and she encouraged me more* (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

> *I can't actually quote it but we have got all sorts of policies we've got bullying policies anti racist policies, we've got policies about respecting other cultures, other people on whether they be travellers, middle class, different to you and of the course the anti-racist policies, so we definitely have that and the other thing is we are a language school and a massive part of our thing is to encourage understanding of other countries and communities, the ways they live, you know other cultures*? (Mark Thackery Director of Sport, Birchincliffe School).

> *I delivered on some of the training days on inclusion and special needs at the time and I am not sure what it is like now we had a lot of adapted equipment you know we included physically disabled children in all of the lessons and I included a policy I was actually looking for this policy which had about 4 pages on this* (Rowena Ward, Head of PE Chamberlain School).

It was also noticeable from the interviews with teachers that there was a lack of in-service training on inclusion. Teachers could either not remember any in-service provision or stated if there had been any sessions offered on this they had forgotten, as exemplified in the following comments:

> *We get tons of INSET opportunities we are always developing and improving our teaching. The multi-cultural aspect has been part of it, it has not been the major part of it I mean we are teaching individualised, er individual children. There is a massive focus on individualised learning so (pause) there's no major emphasis here on the multi-cultural aspect um as such* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

I'm just trying to think there are so many different things some of these INSET days have been very meaningful.... . No I can't think of any (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Yes we do, off the top of my head I can't think what the last one was but yes you know throughout the year there are focus days on that. (Samantha Carson, Chamberlain School).

It was then revealed that the focus days were on the inclusion of disabled pupils rather than on issues of race *per se*:

Yes there have been INSET days on inclusion, but then that is a huge, huge area, on multi-culturalism oh I'm not sure it's the kind of thing I want to say yes we must have done but typically on multi-culturalism I'm not sure we have. But we are a language school though and part of that there are activities going on all of the time. I mean we have got community projects where we are linked with schools in Italy, Slovenia, Germany, what's the other one? Poland! and we have developed links with them we because are a language school and clearly out of that there is a cultural dimension and because we are a language school we do do a little bit more (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

Neil Haden then went off at a tangent about links with other schools. Many teachers expressed positive attitudes towards diversity and inclusion but it was evident from interviews with the Muslim girls that on occasions there was more that teachers could do to make them feel included in the PE lesson, such that coping strategies were devised such as changing in the toilets and for some pupils (not interviewed, but referred to) truancy, forgetting their kit or refusing to participate. Teachers varied in their attitudes to compromising on issues such as kit and Ramadan. The latter was due to practical limitations as exemplified in the following statements by the Heads of PE at both Schools:

I think people need to be reasonable on both sides. I don't see any problem with that. If we change our curriculum entirely for a minority of children does that reflect fairly on the majority? But if you understand all children and their different needs at different times that's far more acceptable I would say I don't think that's racist I think that is common sense (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

At Darras that was sometimes possible because I may have two groups involved in PE at any one time and we could interchange areas of the curriculum to make sure that they had covered the statutory curriculum requirements which then were a lot you know, they were a lot heavier than they are now but at Chamberlain that would be impossible because you

would then be affecting 280 pupils and with equality of opportunity and access you would have to change.. and also sport is seasonal. So athletics is during the summer because that's the season of athletics and rugby in the winter and you know it is about physical education but you can't lose sight of sport in the context of society and the competitive nature it is taking on board the whole thing but with athletics they could still be included fully (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

The options of single-sex groupings and the introduction of track suit bottoms had helped some pupils, but there still remained the issue of non-participants which appeared to be more of a salient issue at Chamberlain School. One piece of information gleaned during interviews at Chamberlain School related to Iffat who was unofficially excluded from PE and refused to come to school on PE days.. This was an overt objection to a Muslim girl participating in PE. I explored this with both her friend Hafsa and secondly her teacher:

My other Muslim doe[8], like come to school. I dunno but she thinks that Muslims shouldn't do PE 'cos of the clothes that they wear. She says like 'I aye doin. PE'.

Samantha Carson gave a slightly different version of events:

She does participate in PE and bring kit most of the time but keeps herself to herself and does not really communicate much with staff or other students. There are no real behaviour issues to be dealth with, just trying to motivate her within the group.

The legal requirement of the National Curriculum above everything else states that if a child attends school, he/she have to participate in the National Curriculum; a teacher or parent cannot exclude any child from an individual lesson as this goes against equal opportunities access for everyone to the curriculum. I explored the issue of non-participants with Simon Ralph Acting Head of PE. Simon Ralph referred to the pupils who excluded themselves from PE as 'persistents'. I was aware that his categorisation could include both Muslim and non-Muslim pupils, but he had a generic way of dealing with them, as his protracted statement revealed:

Yes we have 'persistents'. If we have persistent non doers what we do is we follow PE policy which is, 2 no kits, a letter goes hom, a detention is given, a phone call is made home, those sort of things. If it goes beyond that we still try to get them involved in the lesson unless there is a large number

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[8] ' Doe' is a colloquial term for 'don't' and 'aye' is colloquial for isn't

and then they are taken off to a classroom. But obviously what that means is for example, if we had to collapse a lesson we deal with 150 students at once. If, for example,e there is like a lot of students, say 20 students we would take them off to a classroom. If needs be, we get cover supervisors down to cover within Departments. But as it happens, our school is really bad for not giving us PE cover. We don't get external PE cover we get a member of staff who is from within school so we get a member of staff from say the science Department, English Department, Maths Department and basically we have had staff who turn up to do cover with their lap tops and expect to do work and that's when issues arise.For example, we set the activity up and the cover staff will just sit and will watch and that's where the kids motivation drops because they think, I am just going to sit down so their motivation drop,s which isn't what it is about. If we have to collapse a lesson and there is a large number of students without kit then we do generally set them off as we may as well make the most of their time 'cos when we get into the Year 11s time then we have to say we are going to send you to a classroom and if you have got coursework to do so it is worthwhile as coursework starts to take over the year 11. And if not they can do some revision for their exams as there are so many exams when they're in Year 11. These students will be leaving three weeks after Easter.

The PE Department at Chamberlain appeared to have a significant issue with 'persistents' and the impending departure of these students appeared to be a welcome respite for both the staff and students alike. This tension was further confirmed by Nikki McCullogh who specifically referred to a 'persistent' Muslim girl in her declaration:

There was a girl that left us last year she brought her kit but she never did PE. She literally said to me, dead clever girl, 'I bring my kit so you don't hassle me but I am not going to do it'. But she has left now she was last year's Year 11. I got on reasonably well with her she was a really nice girl, but she had no intention of doing any real PE. It was as if she brought her kit so she didn't get hassled but she would literally just sort of slide into the background and would never do a lot through the whole lesson. But I never really taught her I only just passed her on occasions when we merged groups. Occasionally we just get notes and we write them off for the whole time, they will come and just be part of the lesson one of my year 8s she will just bring a note every week but sometimes she has a go and then sometimes not. Then some tell you at the start of the lesson and then some don't say anything at all. This girl didn't tell me until mid way through a lesson she was fasting and I said to her she should have told me at the start of a lesson but then maybe I should have been more aware of it as well.

I explored the ways in which Nikki attempted to encourage participation and she cited various options:

Well yeah but we do try and encourage kids across the board but they are not very good at following it we do try and get them if say they are injured

to take an active role in the lesson like say in badminton they can be umpiring that sort of thing so they should bring their kit because they often find that they can do more than they thought or they could just do a bit of walking they can still be practically involved in the lesson.

There also appeared to be gender differences in participation with girls making more excuses than boys for non-participation. She also explained that the girls made more excuses than the boys for non participation:

Yeah you do find that girls bring notes more so to excuse themselves for various reasons most of the time it is parents, like they say I have fallen over and you just look at it and they have hurt their arm and they are doing something that's gonna involve their feet and sometimes it was like they could have had a go they have had an injury but you know they could have still taken part in the lesson but it's like any excuse you know to get out of doing anything they are not too bad but girls are definitely worse than boys and some are just trying to get out of it, but to be fair the one Muslim girl the quiet one now remembering back she brought a note for the first three weeks and every week it was a different reason. Like the first week is I fell over and hurt my foot I can't do PE. That was one of them the next was I have forgotten my PE kit, OK well you could have brought another top and shorts for this week, the next one she has hurt her hand.

Lesson observations

The observation of fourteen lessons of PE included four games, four netball, two fitness, two volleyball and two badminton lessons. The quality of these lessons as, expected with any such teacher profile, demonstated elements of both positive and negative practice. Success of lessons was attributable to good planning, sound organisation and management and good teacher- pupil rapport. Poor lessons were attributable to discipline problems lack of cooperation from pupils, sometimes created by inadequate planning or appropriate activities. In addition to lesson observations, I positioned myself in the PE offices prior to the start of lessons in order to observe the arrival and registration of pupils; it was during this time that letters to excuse pupils from activities emerged and I did not witness one incident where Muslim pupils brought in letters. This was further confirmed by the attendance register.

One example of a lesson that illustrated good practice at Birchincliffe School was a lesson of netball, which started late because of issues at registration. However, the teacher, Patricia Blanchard, had an excellent rapport with pupils and was keen to encourage pupils if their behaviour was off-task or had any lapses in concentration.

She avoided making negative remarks to pupils who lacked enthusism when rotating position or who missed 'easy' shots or made similar mistakes. Her experience was demonstrated and she was enthusiastic in her participation and demonstration warm up with the class and clear on progression throughout a well-paced lesson, positive and supportive in individual and whole class feedback and sensitive to individual pupil groupings and team selection. Continuity was evident and all pupils appeared to enjoy the lessons, even Safath who moved slowly around the netball court and she received support from her teammates and encouragement from Miss Blanchard.

In contrast, a lesson which illustrated elements of negative practice involved a volleyball lesson. This was a mixed-sex lesson and offered an opportunity for inter-group rivalry and this became the dominant intention in the games lesson observed and described in field notes:

> *In the end the children largely ignored the teacher not in a pointed way but they were so engrossed in each other and the plays for power that were going on between them, that their focus on work and teacher interaction was minimal... I would not have enjoyed teaching this class because the children were much more interested in taunting each other ... than doing any work and in the end you stop looking for the problem in the work provided..It seems as if the boys are intent on who hits the ball hardest rather than on who they hit it too. One pupils is wandering round aimlessly and when I ask Barry Slade who he is and why he is not in kit Barry Slade indicates that this pupil is injured but still wants to be part of the lesson.*

Dominance in the pupils' own variation of the game of badminton became a means of exerting superiority over others. This affected the groupings they were prepared to work in, their biased application of any rules and their crude response to skill success or breakdown which led to sides winning or losing points. Any notion of fair-play was missing and the worst scenario of a competitive games-ethic was present. The teacher managed the lesson by trying individual and small group appeals maintaining a semblance of control and retaining his composure such 'coping' strategies are examples of ways in which teachers often survive the experience rather than use preferred w ays of teaching (Evans & Davies 1986).

Summary

In this chapter, empirical evidence gathered during the interviews with Muslim pupils and their teachers has revealed the inter-connectedness of the themes of identity, religiosity, teaching and family. The themes emerged out of the first interviews conducted for this research and were followed up with additional interviews. There have been positive shifts at Birchincliffe School to accommodate the Islamic requirement for modesty in the kit policy to allow jogging bottoms. The Department reinforced the fact that pupils needed to be comfortable and this was perfectly acceptable. On the other hand, there was evidence of a retrograde step at Chamberlain School where the Acting Head of PE had changed the kit policy from jogging bottoms to shorts for aesthetic reasons. Tensions were still evident in the open plan changing facilities and in school policies during Ramadan. Teachers often were unfamiliar with the ethos of the school and also ther was a lack of in-house provison on inclusion and muslitcultural education due to the small numbers of Muslim pupils. Teachers expressed positive attitudes to inclusion but there existed an issue with non-participation especially at Chamberlain School.

Chapter 6
Discussion

As presented in the previous chapter, major themes were identified during the analyses of data in the present study. This chapter discusses what the findings revealed in relation to the literature review. The selected quotations communicate the unembellished rationale behind the interviewees' views and serve to profoundly illuminate the issues under discussion. The views of the teachers are examined as closely as those of the girls since their views are important in understanding the potential conflict that Muslim pupils have between their identity and school-based PE.

The shaping of identity is significant for the adolescent. Through socialisation and contact with a variety of influences within the home, the school and the wider world, the teenager is constantly determining her/his identity in order to make sense of their lived world. This first section elucidates the process of identity formation by investigating the identity of a group of adolescent Muslim girls. The next section examines the school-based PE experiences of the participants and then presents an account of their teachers' understanding of their identity and religion.

The Shaping of Identity

Identities are labels, names and categories through which persons address each other and themselves. They are patterned ways of speaking, thinking and performing that have as their object the inter-personal relations that constitute the identity (Scheff, 1974). Human identity is seen as a social reality that is continually produced within and by, the experience and interaction of individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). People assert their identity in different ways. Age, gender, class and occupation are some of the main social categories through which individuals identify themselves. Nevertheless, in the case of immigrants, ethnicity, language and religion are more pertinent criteria in shaping a person's identity. Minorities not only identify themselves through these classifications, but are also identified by others through them. In the ensuing section, I illustrate the dynamics of this latter group of categories in the light of the study's data.

Identity Definitions.

The significance of ancestral origins from different geographical regions has been retained in academic and popular discussion as an important discriminating variable (Williams, 1987). Immigrants in their adoped country are labelled by their country of origin, regardless of how long ago they came to live there. This is particularly true of the Asians and African-Caribbeans who migrated to Britain. This stance of the indigenous population compels the minorities to resort to various coping strategies. Re-asserting and reinforcing their ethnicity is one of the ways in which ethnic groups create a positive identity for themselves. It has been argued that neither race, nor culture is adequate for the analysis and understanding of educational issues in a plural society; the concept of ethnicity seems more appropriate (Asad, 1990, Back & Solomos, 1992, Jacobson, 1997, Abbas, 2000). In Britain, for many people, 'ethnicity' implies only physical appearance or skin colour. This view has been a contributory factor in discrimination and prejudice against people of Asian and African-Caribbean origin. The distinctive attribute of an ethnic group is not physical appearance, but cultural values: a collected pool of values, customs, behaviours, beliefs and social norms (Verma & Ashworth, 1986). Thus, ethnicity is not only related to one's appearance and the geographical area of origin, but also encompasses an individual's way of life.

The majority of girls in the present study's sample was either born, or had come to live, in their infancy in the West Midlands Region of England meaning that the girls, who were in year 11 at Secondary School, had received all their schooling in Britain. Most of the girls in the sample perceived themselves as both British and Asian; Madhia and Lafiza, for example, respectively referred to their British status:

> *I mean, we are British and we have a right to live here, no matter what they say* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

> *We were born in this country and we were raised here and so we see ourselves as British* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

They felt they were British due to their birth-place or nationality and Asian because of their colour, race, background, religion, culture, upbringing or style of dress. Colour or attire did not seem to matter that much as far as some others were concerned. The fact

that they were born in Britain or had lived in Britain for most of their life was equally important. Moreover, Laila, self-proclaimed as very religious, confirmed the English culture as her culture:

> *Well the English culture is my culture* (Laila Birchincliffe School).

The concept of embodied faith

The centrality of the body in PE makes the subject distinctive in curriculum studies and consequently demands heightened need for teacher sensitivity and awareness of culturally diverse embodied values (Evans *et al*., 2004; Wright *et al*., 2004; Kirk *et al*., 2006). There is no doubt that '... Young people need space, time and opportunities to develop and reflect on their physical potential... to develop competence and learn to be in control of their bodies in safe and supported environments' (Garrett, 2004, p. 154).

The notion of 'safe and supported' environments is important to any critique of learning contexts that appear to create anxieties or lead to exclusion. The withdrawal of some of the Muslim girls from their PE lessons in the present study reflected views that unsafe and or unsupported PE environments existed in some schools. To understand this more deeply, consideration is required of the fact that '... Bodies are both inscribed with and vehicles of culture' (Garrett, 2004, p.141).

Culture shapes values, attitudes and beliefs which determine behaviours and life choices. Learning about the cultures in which we live is a means of making sense of the world. Schools, PE and lived Islam are all imbued with cultural significance through which traditions and practices are both transmitted and transformed. Contested views of the body, performativity, visibility, discipline and control permeate many cultures (Shilling, 2008). This is evident, for example, in plural societies where diasporic groups constantly find ways to display difference in managing the dilemma of sustaining identities connected to traditions and cultures (Dagkas & Benn 2006) while trying to fit into the host society. For example, in Britain diverse thriving cultural dance forms are shared and celebrated in education, often in PE where dance is currently located in the national curriculum. Cultural dance forms are acknowledged as important sites for reaffirmation, development and sharing of cultural heritage in diverse societies (Jobbins, 1995; Roy, 1997; DfEE / QCA, 1999; Sondhi, 2000).

Attention to the concept of *embodiment* of a physical identity acknowledges the material, physical, biological as well as the social whole of the 'lived body' (Garrett, 2004, p. 141). What has been underdeveloped in current debate is any sense of the spiritual self, for example of religious identity and the struggles of people in different faiths for the basic human right to 'manifest one's religion or beliefs' (Human Rights Act 1998). The contested nature of the private / public faces of religious identity is significant and helps to explain different manifestations of religion. But in terms of research that focuses on the body and inequality, PE 'as the one subject area where embodiement is fundamental and central to success and 'attainment', has often been ignored or marginalised in broader debates about difference and education (Flintoff *et al.,* 2008, p.74). Therefore, attention to embodiment, faith and PE could help to increase understanding for more inclusive practice.

For many, Islamic influences lead to preferences to *embody their faith* by covering arms, legs and heads (Zebiri, 2008). This is done for internalized faith reasons not simply to assert their religious identity publically. But in these cases the *consequence* of a private decision to embody faith *is* public manifestation of adherence to their religion. Faith is embodied in the sense that presentation of the body, appearance, physicality, social interaction and behaviour are integral to religious identity, to lived reality of the daily embodiment of religious belief. *Embodied faith* reflects outward manifestations inseparably connected to internalised belief. The concept gives meaning to the interconnectedness of faith, body and identity (Benn, 2009).

Understanding the notion of *embodied faith o*ffers insight into the core significance religion can have on life experience. It is particularly helpful in enabling those outside the faith to understand the lives of Muslim people more fully. For some Muslim people, private and internalised embodiment of faith is their choice, for others the adoption of hijab and more public manifestation of religious belief is central to their religious identity.

Where school PE or sport environments challenge the right of Muslim women to embody their faith, the result is inevitably non-participation, negotiation or coercion. Dominant western school and sport models have developed in the context of perceptions of body cultures and social interaction patterns that are not shared globally.

Those who pursue freedom to maintain outward manifestation of 'embodied faith', often as diaspora communities in non-Islamic countries, seek accommodation of difference as minorities in a predominantly secular society.

Other concepts such as cultural capital and habitus enhance understanding of embodied faith (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986). The cultural capital evident in wearing publically identifiable religious symbols such as the hijab provides an interesting example of the necessity for caution in a world dominated by visual images. Positively, cultural capital might be attached to hijab-wearing Muslim girls or women in strongly religious communities who publically affirm their identities as 'good Muslims'. More negatively, in other contexts hijab may signal separatism and difference and even targets for violence where Islamophobia exists (Conway, 1997; Stone, 2004). For many, hijab is a symbol of honour connected to faith and respect for the Islamic requirement to cover the hair: for some who may be coerced to wear hijab, it could be a symbol of oppression or repression whilst for others it might be a symbol of rebellion against Western values (Fekete, 2008). Interpretation requires knowledge of context and subjective positioning.

The concept of habitus and the process theory of identity can also increase understanding of the significance of embodied faith, and hence the dilemma facing some Muslim families, girls and women when physical activity contexts deny that embodiment. A person's habitus or deeply internalised layers of identity assimilated in the ongoing process of socialisation means individuals develop a sense of who they are in relation to the world in which they find themselves. They acquire sophisticated codes of body usage, articulated for example in terms of dress, behaviours in public and private, and preferred ways of displaying or concealing bodies. Elias's (1991) process theory of identity describes habitus as part of the 'social self' explaining how individuals actively shift prominent layers of consciousness depending on context and need in specific situations.

The present study illustrates diversity in Muslim young people's preferences for degree of adherence of Islamic dress requirements in PE. Where embodied faith was strongest and religious identity most prominent in consciousness, then strict adherence

to religious requirements was necessary. Where accommodation could not be found there were young people who just:

did not take part in PE at all (Iffat, Chamberlain School).

For all of the girls, arm and leg coverage was essential to retaining their embodied faith while participating:

I would not feel comfortable wearing shorts (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Being persuaded or forced to transgress from what she perceived as a religious obligation created tension for her sense of religious identity. Strength of belief integrating faith, body and dress was also seen in other pupils. There was less of an issue with the use of single-sex classes. However, all related to different interpretations of the requirement for body modesty as one pupil in the sample (Lafiza) could not take part where there were boys; her reasons for this are discussed later.

Other pupils chose not to wear any outward manifestation of their faith preferring a private, internalised faith. Important messages of diversity and close connections between identity, body and physicality are raised in such data. The notion of embodied faith increases understanding and sensitivity to the interface of Islam and physical activity participation. Here different cultural values centred on the body can underpin tensions that need to be resolved in the search for more inclusive pedagogical practices.

Culture and identity

Immigrants usually come to their adopted country with high hopes and aspirations. However, Sharpe (1976) observed that great demands on immigrant people in terms of ideology and behaviour are made. She argued that the concept of integration in Britain is quite one-sided. The majority group's judgement of the ethnic minority groups is too often based on how 'English' they have become and there is no appreciation of how meaningful it is for them to retain their own cultural identity. Price (1982)

distinguishes between cultural traits intrinsic to the core of ethnic culture and those that are marginal or extrinsic to it. However, the distinction cannot be so categorical since even an apparently marginal manifestation of the culture may be a response to the intrinsic message of a religion like Islam. Nevertheless, ethnic minorities make their own decisions about which features of their culture of origin they want to retain and which ones they want to abandon. Similarly they embrace specific characteristics of the majority culture of their adopted country and reject others. The latter include the dress code in school and leisure activities such as the culture of drinking alcohol. The selection of quotations presented immediately below indicate the Muslim girls' attitudes to dress code and the consumption of alcohol and its subsequent effect on behaviour, which is seen in a negative light:

> *Have you seen how some of the girls dress here? The Head shouldn't allow it. Their skirts are so short. It is not respectful to themselves. A girl who wears a short skirt and showing too much of herself has no self respect. The school should do more to stop them, like say skirts have to be a certain length but they don't do anything* (Madiha, Birchincliffe School).

> *Why drink lots and then not be able to remember what you did, what's the point of that?* (Soraya, Birchincliffe School).

> *Yeah, like it's not my idea of having a good time if you can't remember what you did 'cos you got drunk. Most think it's cool to drink as much as you can but what's cool about that. I can't see the point?* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Thus, they create their own cultural identity by means of a process of analysis and synthesis, which is not always based on rational judgement. While many cultural traits are adopted or abandoned because of their relative usefulness or obsolescence, others are preserved merely because the minority groups like these customs and perceive them as an essential part of their cultural identity. Notwithstanding their views regarding gender inequality, most girls in the present study's sample admitted that they liked almost everything else pertaining to the Asian way of life. The likeable features mentioned by some were: adherence to Islam; dress code; arranged marriage; and the way weddings and festivals were celebrated. The respect and closeness within the family were seen by almost all the girls as a positive aspect of Asian culture. Many teachers felt that these adolescent girls wanted to retain certain aspects of the Asian culture, but also wished to adopt some features of the indigenous British culture. This

indicates a process of negotiation whereby the girls are constructing their own identities for themselves:

> *I think what I like about the Pakistani culture is the weddings. Pakistani weddings they are much better [than the British weddings]. Have you seen the bride's dresses they are beautiful? What I like about the English culture is I like some of the music and the fashion* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Soraya also confirmed that she liked British Music, fashion and the 'soaps'. However, aspects of the Asian culture were preferred as exemplified by one of Rabiya's comments.

> *The people, 'cos you can talk in our own language and just have fun You can't do that with English people, white people* (Rabiya Chamberlain School).

The importance of religion

Religion is an under-researched domain in terms of its influence on the social self and body cultures, particularly in the fields of education and sport. Perhaps this is not surprising in current theoretical debates pursued predominantly in secular contexts. Religion has a significant role in the lives of many human beings to the extent that they may want to identify themselves by their religion only. Human identity formation is a necessary and central function of religion (Bellah, 1968; Mol, 1976). Religion has been defined as a sacred cosmos that bestows the ultimate valid identity on humans: the name by which they are known to God (Berger, 1967). Authors have interpreted the relationship between identity and religion in various contemporary societies (Mol, 1978). This line of reflection takes the identity religion link beyond the context of modernised societies and argues that religion serves the essential function of stabilising individual identity in any society (Weigert *et al*., 1986). The Muslim population of Britain also exemplifies such a paradigm of religious identity. Religion plays an important part in most British Asian communities and guides the principles around which they live. Sharpe (1976) argues that their religious beliefs and principles determine their moral ethics and form the social milieu in which they live into one centred around many stern requisites of behaviour. Such requisites include moral conformity, loyalty and cooperation, self-discipline, recognition of the dominant authority of the elders, respect for marriage and the advocation of modesty and

restraint. However, these principles are confronted by the ethos of a capitalist and largely secular British society that impinges on the beliefs of these religious minorities, thus exerting pressure on them to adapt to the majority view.

Still, there may well be an enormous gap between religious beliefs, religious behaviour and religious prejudices (Delamont, 1980). People may believe in the teachings of a certain religion, though not practise it fully in their everyday lives. This is particularly true of British Muslims, the majority of whom originate from South Asia. However, there is a unique concept of religion embedded in Islam, which makes it a way of life. Consequently, etiquette and belief are closely connected and Muslims are required by their religion to live their life according to its teachings.

The fundamental beliefs of Muslims are based on the six precepts of Islam. The religiosity of British Muslims can be seen on a continuum, on the one end of which are those who live their lives entirely according to the tenets of Islam: clearly an ideal to be attained by all Muslims. On the other end are those who call themselves Muslim due to their belief in God as the Creator and also because they were born to Muslim parents: they, however, do not practise the religion as dictated by the five pillars of Islam. All of the girls, who participated in the present study, were born to parents both of whom were Muslim. The girls had been brought up as Muslims too, which is the normative practice of Muslim parents who do not perceive it as indoctrination, but rather as their paramount responsibility:

> *My parents think religion is really important it goes down the family tradition...I agree with them* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

> *Religion is important to me but I don't mind doin' anything. Like she wears a scarf (pointing to Lafiza) and I don't my Dad goes to me like it's your choice and my Mum, like if you don't wonna wear it you don't 'ave to* (Munira, Chamberlain School).

The majority of girls showed a certain pride in being Muslim and referred to themselves as Muslim.

> *My own religion! I'm Muslim and I'm proud to be what I am. I like the way we follow it in our family* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

When asked why religion was important Hafsa gave the succinct answer:

It's cos we're Muslims like.

Paradoxically, most of them had also maintained earlier during interviews that they perceived themselves as both Asian and British. This suggests that their religious identity takes precedence of their ethnic identity as the former is a less ambiguous and more positive and enduring source of identity for them. Furthermore, when the girls were asked what they thought of religion, the vast majority of them saw it as a guide and a set of rules to live by, thus equating it with morality:

Religion is important to me such as Ramadan I am really interested in that. It's like 'cos if you don't have no religion then like you just follow anything. Religion tells you what to do like what is right and wrong (Abia, Birchincliffe School).

Religion tells you who you are, it's like a name it you don't have a name then you don't belong anywhere (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Madhia perceived religion as something which gave her identity and a sense of belonging. However, the religiosity of the girls was not just confined to belief. As far as religious practice was concerned, most of them prayed and read the Qur'an occasionally, but fasted regularly, since the entire family fasted during the month of Ramadan. A few girls in the sample prayed five times a day and read the Qur'an daily; some of them also taught their younger siblings to read the Qur'an. There were also girls who had to be reminded to read the Qur'an, in other ways they lived their lives according to the tenets of Islam as the ethos, culture and climate of the home were Islamic. The following statement exemplifies the religious practice of many girls in the sample:

Religion is really important to me. Religion is my whole life.... It's fasting during Ramadan, praying and reading the Qur'an. My parents sometimes have to remind me to pray but I don't mind 'cos I think it's important (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Almost all of the girls had learned to read the Qur'an before they reached their teens. Most of them either learned it at a community based school in a mosque or from a family friend who lived near by. A few had been taught by their parents at home. All

of the girls had now stopped going to the community school at the mosque when they reached puberty, as it was thought improper for them to go out in the evenings and to study with boys.

All the teachers interviewed were aware that religion was very important to Muslim girls and that the degree of religiosity varied from family to family. They also believed that regardless of the level of religiosity, Islam encompassed the lives of these girls:

> *Well if they are calling themselves Muslim I'd imagine their religion that's central to their whole life. It's like someone saying I'm a Christian, they are making a statement about what I believe, so I would imagine that it is important to them yes* (Mark Thackery, Director of Sport Birchincliffe School).

In congruence with the girls' views, some teachers also felt that religion mattered to these girls to the extent that they saw themselves first and foremost as Muslims, thereby identifying themselves by their religion:

> *I mean Muslim cultures are far more strict and if you are in a Muslim culture and you say you don't believe, then I would imagine that's more of a big issue more than in a Western society saying you're not a Christian* (Mark Thackery, Director of Sport Birchincliffe School).

Others, however, felt that the girls' identity embodied their religion and their country of residence:

> *I've never asked them directly. I wonder whether the answer might be that they are British Muslims more than anything else* (Ian Kemp Head of PE Birchincliffe School).

The teachers also recognised that the girls' culture was an extension of their religion, since Islam was not merely a religion but a way of life:

> *They have a powerful cultural background a powerful religion their expectations within their religion that teaches them within their religion which is still powerful for them where it doesn't exist for the white girls and boys but they still want, the Asian boys want a bit of both worlds perhaps rather more perhaps than what the Asian girls want to* (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

While the teachers appreciated the importance of Islam in the lives of the girls, some perceived it as an oppressive religion into which these children were indoctrinated. Nevertheless, the girls themselves, being brought up by Islam respected it as much as their parents. Evidently the girls' religious identity, thus shaped was so firmly intermeshed with their everyday life that it was inconceivable for them to be anything but Muslim.

It was manifest from the remarks of the teachers that while some appreciated the importance of Islam in the lives of these girls, others were unaware of the religious requirements of Ramadan. As in all religions, the degree of private/public display of religious adherence and the degree of religiosity, or the extent to which religious and cultural practices are embodied, will vary. In a democratic society requests for religious freedom that challenge established PE practices, resulting in exclusion of some pupils, warrant critical attention.

Relationships with parents

The girls, do not choose an identity independently of their parents. They know the boundaries and respect the limits imposed by the parents. Issues, which emerged from the girls' responses, related to the relationship structures with parents together with secondary issues concerning dress codes. There were no signs of stress apparent during the interviews or responses leaving an impression of identity being shaped consentfully. Hafsa illustrated that although there were 'rules', she did not consider them as unreasonable.

> *I have to ask my parents before I go out. Mine aye* (are not) *strict, if I want to do stuff I ask her if I can go out and she says yes* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

Madhia also indicated that her parents were not strict:

> *I get along with my parents so well I wouldn't say they were as strict as some I know. My parents they are both understanding parents and some parents are not like that* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Also there were no reported disagreements with parents and the majority of respondents viewed their parents as understanding as illustrated in Madhia's next comment:

> *No not disagreements really, because my parents they care about me and I respect that. They are OK with it and I often normally stay at home. I'd rather stay in home with my family and my cousins and I do have quite fun staying at home with my cousins all around me and what's the point of going out at night at that time and you don't do anything? You don't have much to talk about and nothing to do you know? I'd rather stay at home at night with my family who care about me.*

From Madiha's comment, it also emerged that some parents were more strict. The additional next statement from Madhia also illustrates this point in relation to watching TV and going out with friends.

> *Some parents are really strict. I seen some parents who don't allow their children to go out they don't allow them to watch TV I actually seen that with my own eyes and are really strict and I am so happy that my Dad and Mum are more understanding. I have seen some parents say you can't do this you can't do that and I feel so sorry for them people because I think you should let them live their life as well* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Madhia's response intimates that although boundaries are necessary, a degree of freedom is also desirable. One area highlighted with the potential to cause a degree of disagreement was fashion as indicated by Laila. Laila also expressed a broader attitude towards fashion. This had the potential to cause some conflict with parents who may not share this broader view.

> *I like some of the music and the fashion. You know the 'Goth' fashion. I have got mostly red and black in my wardrobe. My parents think I am into Devil worship! But they were only joking, 'cos they know I'm not* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Safath also refers to boundaries in terms of dress code, in the following statement, in which she equates the strictness of her parents with concern for her welfare:

> *I used to wear a scarf at my old school but since I came here I don't. I do wear trousers my Mum she does understand why I do that and I try to get involved with others but my Mum doesn't understand that [not wearing a scarf] and sometimes says why don't you wear a scarf on your head mostly she does understand and my parents are quite understanding but sometimes*

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she says I am out of control! My parents they worry too much (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

Only one of the respondents (Lafiza) claimed that her parents were very strict but she did not view this as problematic

> *Wearing the headscarf goes down the family generation and my family are very strict and so I follow what they say. I just stay in after school and help out I'm not allowed to go out* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

Relationships with friends

The social dimension of school has been pointed out by a number of recent empirical research studies. (Afshar 1989; Shaikh & Kelly 1989; Stopes-Roe & Cochrane 1991; Wade & Souter 1992). Similar findings have been documented by Sharpe (1976), who notes that Asian girls express more enjoyment and enthusiasm for school than English or West Indian girls. Other research studies also point to laughter or 'mucking' or 'messing about' as the central feature for girls and boys, a means by which they make their school lives enjoyable (Furlong 1977; Willis 1977; Woods 1979; Davies 1980; Denscombe 1980). A number of girls liked the presence of their friends in school:

> *I like school: I've got all my friends here; we can have a laugh together* (Pardaj, Chamberlain School).

Peers are an important feature of a child's school experience (Lomax, 1978). In school, children become part of a distinct social system and are subjected to a variety of influences. Most important of all, they become members of a group of age-mates, most often from the same stream. These groups have values, norms and status hierarchies which every member must take into account (Hargreaves, 1967, p.183) and their influence on behaviour in schools, inside classrooms and within the local environment should never be under-estimated, especially among adolescents who are at a vulnerable age (Reid *et al*., 1987). The significance of friendship groups among boys has been widely researched. As far as girls are concerned, Furlong (1976; 1984) forwards the idea of interaction sets presenting them as a more fluid notion of friendship that changes from one context to the other. Nevertheless, others found girls' friendship groups in school operating as important aspects of their members' lives. Similar

friendship groups were discovered amongst the girls in the present study, though there was some evidence of Furlong's interaction sets as well:

> *I hang around with Asian girls. We understand each other's problems and we have a laugh. But in my Science lessons, I have all English children in my group and I sit with English girls, so they are also my friends* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

As can be seen from Hafsa's comment, these interaction sets only appeared to operate within the context of the classroom, and peer groups remained important for their members through which they mediated their school experiences (Delamont, 1990).

Furnham and Stacey (1991) point to an age-related trend of own-race choice for companions and friends in day-to-day situations. They maintain that a majority of children at pre-school stage accept children of other races as companions and playmates, but then there is a rapid decline in cross-race acceptance until there is a marked cleavage along racial lines in later childhood and the teen years. Laila, amongst others, also made such statements regarding cross-cultural friendships:

> *Yeah, most of my friends are non-Muslim. Friends understand or try to understand our religion and culture. A friend said 'your fasting that's cool right' and he tried to fast with me.* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Research (Smith & Tomlinson, 1989; Basit, 1995) indicate that friendship patterns result partly from social structures and partly from individual personality. In the present study, girls had mainly close friends who were Muslim. The following quotation from Pardaj exemplifies the homophily principle in friendship choices

> *My friends are people like us* (Pardaj, Chamberlain School).

Similar ethno-centrism in the friendship choices of ethnic minority children has been documented by other researchers (Durojaye 1969; Bhatnagar 1970; Troyna 1978; Fuller 1980). Some of the sample also found it difficult to make friends with non-Muslim girls:

> *Most of my friends are Asian. I don't really get on with white girls - well, most of them. It's the way they talk. They are always boasting about themselves* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

It is clear that an important factor influencing the friendship patterns of the Muslim girls in the sample is the similitude of circumstances, mores and values. Newcomb (1961) found that the most stable friendships developed formed between those who shared similar backgrounds. Similar others will serve to validate their beliefs and increase the possibility of engaging in similar activities (Rubin, 1973). The Muslim girls have been socialized to live their lives in a particular way. They, therefore, refrain from indulging in similar pastimes as their non-Muslim peers and their contact with them is confined to the safe environment of the school.

Some teachers also noted the tendency of Muslim girls to group together:

> *They just huddle together and not being very sociable to others either and they seem to be very conscious of themselves and they stay at the back. It is upsetting... it's not upsetting, but it is quite sad to see that they are very within themselves it is in single-sex lesson not just mixed lessons they generally don't mix with the non-Muslim girls* (Leanne Pegg, Trainee Teacher Birchincliffe School).

> *The other girls often refer to 'them' as a group but not ... .er my wife's Jamaican and my kids are mixed race and they come home and say someone has called me black today...but I've never heard any of the kids here boys or girls call them 'Paki' or any rascist terminology directed at Muslims in that sense, but they are still regarded as a group. It is more to do with the reluctance it is the same for girls but again the girls themselves isolate themselves,s they almost set themselves aside. They tend to stick in their own social group, you know this year 8 Asian girl she tries to get along with everybody. I coach her for volleyball she is the only Asian girl in year 8* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

Some of the teachers also commented about the lack of involvement of the Muslim pupils in PE lessons but did not make many suggestions of how to rectify the situation and also commented on the lack of involvement of Muslim pupils in extra-curricular activities but also did little to rectify the situation. Haug (2002) identified social development as a basic tenet of inclusion. Thus the learning environment should facilitate social development in the form of increased fellowship, involvement with peers, increased democratization and equal status and the negotiation of individual differences, personal achievement and progression. Thomas's (1997) concerns shared by Goodwin (2007) are that some school communities are becoming pampered in that some selection systems mean that youngsters only mix with pupils of a certain class and culture. McLeskey and Waldron (2002) contend that genuine inclusion creates

classrooms where *difference* is a natural part of the setting. Moreover, the CSIE (2003) reminds us that segregation hampers our understanding of those who are different, whilst familiarity reduces fear and prejudice. Rouse also argues that children 'belong together rather than needing to be protected from one another' (2000, p.74). The assumption of the part of some of the teachers interviewed that Muslim girls do not wish to form friendships with non-Muslim girls further complicates the inclusive setting and encourages avoidance behavior. Gore (1990) suggests that the pedagogical processes of ITT courses should address the growing diversity of pupils in PE, an issue that still troubles the PE profession. Gore (1990) asks what it is 'about PE and its conduct that attracts a rather homogenous population of white-middle-class ectomesomorphic young men and women to become its next generation of teachers?' (p.104*)*.Gore suggests that the PE profession represents a white, middle class hegemony; there are few teachers of colour and even fewer PE teachers in this category (Benn, 1998). Ignoring the problematic nature that this lack of diversity presents in building a more equitable society that reflects the British cultural mosaic, physical educators both current and future who develop activity programs based on 'white middle class values' (McLaughlin and Heath, 1997) will face many challenges when trying to connect with an increasingly diverse high school student population. Gore suggests that 'we must be more reflective and examine the forces in the formation of our own position on teacher education' (p.104). ITT needs to create more opportunity for under-represented groups to be engaged in PE. As Benn (2010) indicates, 'the problem for Muslim females is not with participating in PE but with systems and structures that denied preference to embody faith' (p.1).

Tensions between religious identity and school-based PE participation

Tensions between educational practices and religious belief are important because, for many Muslims faith is the dominant determinant of pervasive values, behaviours and social relations. Issues at the interface of religion, ethnicity, gender, and physical activity are not unique to Islam but have been omnipresent historically where body practices and religious beliefs have been incongruent (Coakley, 2007). The centrality of Islam reflects its status as a 'core life value', and is an 'important part of everyday life' (Espositio & Mogahed, 2007, pp.5, 21).

Overall, the attitudes of the Muslim students at both schools sampled were positive towards PE, with recognition of the health benefits of the subject and its 'difference' to the rest of the curriculum.

I think PE is important for exercise which you don't get in other subjects where you are just sitting (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

The fun element of PE was mentioned by several of the girls and also that it was a subject requiring little or no cognitive effort, and a source of escapism from the rigour of learning elsewhere:

I actually like PE 'cos you can do anything you like. So I like it…. It's like spending you own time like you can do sports wherever you want to. You can be sporty there's no writing and there's no exams instead of doing writing it's like a 'doss' in some ways (Munira, Chamberlain School);

PE is fun and you don't have to write (Rabiya, Chamberlain School).

This perception inherent in the quotation, of PE as a non-academic subject, is a more widely held perception with pupils, teachers and parents. Some of the activities in the curriculum were more popular than others as illustrated in the following statements:

I like netball and I play the position of Goal Shooter and sometimes Centre. I like rounders and trampoline. Our PE teacher Miss Blanchard makes it fun… I don't like football or rugby because there is more chance of injury (Abia, Birchincliffe School);

I like badminton…I like the games like where you don't have to run around much. Where you don't have to do much (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

Other girls preferred single-sex sports because:

It's 'cos the boys play rough and they try and show off in front of the girls (Munira, Chamberlain School*).*

The issue of boys playing rough is a gender rather than a cultural issue. Only one pupil interviewee in the present study gave religious reasons for preferring single sex PE activities.

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I don't like it when there is a group of boys around. It goes against my religion to play sport where there are boys around. I can't take part in mixed PE where there are boys (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

There were noticeable 'conditions' to the enjoyment of the Muslim students, which related to good and bad inclusive pedagogy and practice, as is further evidenced in the following sections. Enjoyment was linked to success, doing interesting activities in a comfortable environment, with understanding teachers. It was the open or closed attitudes of teachers towards Islam and Muslims that contributed to the PE experiences encountered by the Muslim pupils (Runnymede, 1997). Several students articulated their view of teachers' level of awareness and attitude towards their needs:

I think they do understand why we fas,t er but I think they just don't care personally. I don't think it is a consideration (Madhia, Birchincliffe School);

Some teachers they could just ask us, 'are you alright?' or something (Pardaj, Chamberlain School).

Others found teachers who were more sensitive to their needs which helped the Muslim girls to participate:

I like the way Miss Blanchard is when you are fasting she will be understanding whereas some will shout 'why ain't you doing it?' They will just shout at you she will come up to us privately and ask if we are OK and will help give us things to do which are OK whereas other teachers they say you've got to do it they don't understand that we can get thirsty and we can't drink so times it is a bit hot and it is a bit hard to do PE when they are being sarcastic to us (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Only one pupil stated that she did not like PE as she did not feel confident. This was confirmed by her teachers' statements who said that she was 'slow' moving in lessons. This can be related to Block (2000) who made the point that learning in PE was not about the game but the child. Children who were always out first because they were less mobile or never passed the ball did not benefit from the setting. Barriers to learning and inclusion still remain. Although, Safath did state that she had enjoyed PE more at her previous school due to the encouragement offered as illustrated in the following quotation:

At my other school, even though I am really crap at PE my teachers were still really nice and still got me involved and the other people were really nice but here I try to get involved and people talk behind my back about me not being any good, so I might as well do nothing. They would cheer for you which would encourage you more I was really crap but they would encourage me more and they used to help me a lot 'cos I mean I am really crap but here I won't try.

Safath also differentiated between teachers in her level of enjoyment:

Miss Blanchard is good though do you remember when I was in the rugger scrum (turning to Madhia) and she encouraged me more?

Such statements confirm that the teacher is a significant element in participation.

Dress Code/Kit issues

Some of the main issues raised as being problematic in previous research are PE kit, private spaces for changing, participation in extra- curricular activities and activity levels during Ramadan. In the present study, these issues were not related to a willingness to take part in PE but to a need for concessions on traditions and systems of organisation that were not conducive to Islamic requirements.

The issue of PE kit provides interesting insights into the conflict between religious identity and PE. As far as the students were concerned, the issue was one of good practice for everyone, with Muslim girls commenting on the unfairness of uniform policies, which gave particular concessions to Asian students that were not extended to their non-Muslim peers

The uniform policy at Birchincliffe School was sensitive to the needS of Muslim students and all of the respondents at this particular school were satisfied with the way in which the PE department allowed them to wear track suit bottoms.

They let us wear track suit bottoms, but I wouldn't mind wearing shorts but my parents wouldn't like it (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

But then Madhia contradicted this statement by adding:

> *No I don't really like showing my legs anyway. I actually feel more comfortable wearing my track suit bottoms rather than shorts I would feel so bare having nothing covering you.*

The non-Muslim girls could also wear track suit bottoms in the winter but not in the summer months. The consequences of this was that some of the sample felt more marginalised during this period and also experienced resentment from other girls who were not allowed, unless by personal negotiation with teachers, to wear track suit bottoms. Previous research (Williams & Bedward, 2001) however, has suggested that kit is predominantly a gender, rather than a cultural issue as indicated in their assertion that which some: 'schools had initiated changes in kit policy which had benefitted all pupils in other schools non-Muslim pupils had to suffer the humiliation of being identified as unacceptably obese before they could access the policy which operated for Asian girls' (p.62).

Madiha and Safath both reported problems with the PE policy on kit in comparison to Madhia's previous school this was viewed as more problematic because of their Muslim 'visibility'. This was exemplified by the following statements:

> *At Darras Hall, the other girls could wear track suit bottoms even in the summer months, yes they were quite more mixed and they tried to understand us and things from our point of view. At my old school there were more Muslim girls and there was less difference here you feel more conscious of being Muslim and of wearing track suit bottoms especially in summer.... Here we feel more on show and we feel a bit awkward, like they stare at you thinking like why are you wearing that?*(Madiha, Birchincliffe School).

> *We stand out and there are only about 20 Muslims in the whole school and there are 1,500 pupils so we stand out.* (Lafiza, Chamberlain School).

The students who had raised these issues also stated that the non-Muslim girls resented being unable to access the same track suit uniform policy in the summer months. Madhia explained that these girls would prefer to wear track suit bottoms in the winter for practical reasons.

> *I think there are some who don't want to wear them and like I am saying they don't want to show their legs and are more comfy in tracksuit bottoms*

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and they can get cold sometimes and so want to wear it (Madhia, Birchincliffe School)

Madhia's observation confirms findings of earlier research by Williams and Bedward (2000), who found that students often had more sophisticated understandings of issues of gender and culture than some of their teachers have. This may not be surprising, given that some teachers' own experience, as pupils, trainee teachers and sportsmen and women, had been almost exclusively in single sex, mono-cultural environments. This stands in sharp contrast to the experience of the students, which has been of mixed-sex, largely multi-cultural primary schooling and of curriculum opportunities which are routinely available to all pupils irrespective of gender. This is not to make any judgement about the quality of the students' primary PE experience, but simply to note that its context may be different from the learning context of their teachers.

While this explains the existence of different and contrasting physical activity sub-cultures, it is less satisfactory as an explanation of the lack of awareness, among some teachers, of female students' opportunities and activity involvement outside the school. A similar point can be made about cultural issues. While teachers had attempted to accommodate the needs of their pupils by making concessions on uniform and, in some cases, in organisation of teaching groups, there seemed to have been little involvement of pupils in this process. A belief that uniform rules were now accepted by students, following explanations from the teachers, was not confirmed by some of the students themselves, who, irrespective of their own culture, saw the school policy as unfair or racist:

> *But I actually got the uniform sheet when I first come here and it said what you could wear. They didn't have no tracksuit bottoms and I went to the uniform shop and it didn't have no tracksuit bottoms so we had to go ourselves in our own way and get our own and the ones I am wearing now (points to them) and the uniform shop should have them* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Not all respondents were similarly affected and this was dependent on their religiosity. There were others in the study, who were in families and communities that took a more liberal position towards their Muslim identity in contemporary Britain. For those students, there had been no difficulties with participating in school PE dress codes,

mixed-sex lessons and extra-curricular activities but they were aware of the difficulties faced by their friends whom they deemed to be 'more religious than them':

> *I doe 'ave a problem with kit but my other Muslim friend called Iffat* (pseudonym) *doe like doin' PE 'cos she wears that Scarf on her head and every Friday she doe, like come to school......she thinks that Muslims shouldn't do PE 'cos of the clothes that they wear* (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

Although noone in the sample would wear shorts, some girls who had friends in other schools, stated that the policy on kit varied from school to school.

> *I have got a friend at Madison Girls High School (pseudonym) who is Muslim and the school don't let her wear tracksuit bottoms like they do here. If her parents knew they would be angry but as it's a good school she goes there. She is not happy about it and would prefer to do what we do here and wear track suit bottoms* (Laila, Birchincliffe School).

Teachers' arguments against particular choices of clothing seemed to demonstrate more about personal taste than about sensitivity to adolescents' concerns about decency and about their developing body image as exemplified in the following quotation:

> *We are trying to enforce for example erm shorts cos our kit over recent years has deteriorated and we are trying to get students back into t-shirts shorts and socks and so it looks uniform and looks more professional er. But obviously we bear in mind that religion does play a part in this and so some students are not supposed to be bareing their legs and so on and so we have said that if they can bring in a letter from home then obviously we will overlook that area. I think it has a positive influence on their learning because if they are turning up in any old football top just looks disorganised now it looks more uniform* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

The introduction of this new kit policy was implemented for aesthetic reasons. Exceptions from wearing shorts can only be made following a demonstration of the need to wear shorts for cultural or health reasons such as eczema on their legs. The need to adapt uniform policy for those whose body failed to conform to school specified norms seemed potentially maginalising and alienating and represented a backward step from the kit policy that was currently in place. Mr Ralph had recently introduced the policy in Year 7 and therefore the girls sampled were in Year 11 were

not affected by this new policy. Previous research has indicated that males remained more likely than females to hold stereotypical views regarding the norms of boys and girls PE (Waddington, *et al*.,1998; Colwell, 1999). However, it is important to note that female teachers at the same school endorsed the new kit policy (as illustrated in Chapter 5)

These comments serve to highlight that kit policy is related to personal taste and also social tradition which can be discriminatory in its impact on PE practice (Scraton, 1992). Several teachers stated that shorts were more conducive to playing sport for hygiene reasons as exemplified in the following statements:

> *When they are indoors in a sports hall for the whole lesson then wearing shorts is a lot better rather than having sweat going through tracksuit bottoms. Do you know what I mean? So it's a lot more hygienic. So that is a concession that we have made and we have had quite a few notes come in* (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School).

> *It is obvious that it is a lot healthier where you let the fresh air get to you where you are in a track suit you know perspiration and for health and hygiene reasons* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

The latter teacher explained that there was an inconsistency where the non-Muslim girls did not want to wear shorts for PE but then wore short skirts around school where there legs were exposed.

> *I mean they say we want to wear our track suit bottoms in PE to cover our legs and then you walk out there round school and see the same girl in the shortest skirt, they are kidding everyone. You walk round here between lessons and look at the length of skirt it's terrible, seeing the top of their tights showing, obviously not with the Asian girls who wear trousers* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

This conservative comment regarding skirt length was also confirmed by one of the Muslim girls from the same school. Two of the respondents held very traditional views about the dress code adopted by their school, in particular the length of skirts permitted by the school.

> *Most girls wear skirts it is ridiculous how short they wear it. I just think they are way out of line and should wear trousers as it looks smarter or they should say the skirt should be a certain length say on your or something knee but they just go wearing skirts up on their arse and like that is not school uniform at all! And they have blazers and it looks ridiculous*

the blazers are longer the skirt so want is underneath and I don't think that is smart wear. What I call smart wear is trousers and a blazer and that would be smart. Short skirts with a blazer is not smart (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

The lack of awareness of the needs of Muslim girls on the part of some teachers was noticeable as demonstrated from the following comment from one member of the department from Chamberlain School when asked about whether Muslim girls could wear shorts:

> *There is an Asian girl in my year 8 group who wears very long shorts like basketball shorts, they are really long, er but then again I'm not sure if she is Muslim.* (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School).

The various comments quoted above raise many questions about the inconsistency in kit policy in school and support Dagkas and Benn's (2006) assertion that '...Change appears to be patchy and the evidence suggests that tensions and restrictions on young Muslim women persist' (p.8). Whilst Birchincliffe School had adapted its kit policy to suit Muslim students, it was not fully effective as it was not incorporated into the uniform policy for the school and served to make Muslim students more visible in the summer months. It seems that, for one of the sample schools, PE uniform is, at best, appropriate for specific cultural groups and for those whose bodies conform to a socially designed desirable size and shape. Exceptions have been made for particular minority ethnic groups. For others, whose bodies fail to conform to a particular model, exceptions can, apparently, only be made following a process of negotiation.

Traditions such as appropriate kit are part of a history of subject pedagogy and practice, and have only recently been challenged by increasing cultural diversity. It is important to note that the research illuminated considerable inconsistency in school PE policies. At Chamberlain School the previous Head of PE had changed the policy to meet the needs of Muslim females, but while she was on secondment, Mr Ralph, Acting Head, had been given the mandate to alter this policy:

> *Erm, so we set in place kit policy, erm where they could wear track suit bottoms without being questioned no one would question that as long as it was the correct colour for the school, the uniform but you know comfortable for them and for their culture, and you know I spoke quite a bit to parents as well. But I think that policy at Chamberlain has been changed since I have been away. You will find there has been a lot of changing*

policy Simon (Mr Ralph) was given the OK to run the Department how he wanted to and I think it is compulsory now that they have to wear shorts now (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School, Head of PE).

The teacher responses to kit issues support research which alleges, 'whilst PE teachers cannot be described as a homogenous group, neither for that matter are they heterogeneous as such' (Green, 2002, p.79). The way in which teachers thought about PE had been shaped by their deep-seated pre-dispositions (or habitus): in particular, towards sport and PE. Nonetheless, whilst habitus is formed in early life, it remains susceptible to development as networks of relationships become ever more complex and compelling; especially in and around the world of work. The particular networks of relationships that PE teachers inhabit make *particular* interpretations of PE more likely than others. As such, PE teachers' philosophies bore the hallmarks of their prior PE and sporting practice and their contemporaneous practical teaching contexts. It is noteworthy in this regard, Rowena Ward's previous school had comprised of a 50:50 split between Muslims and non-Muslims and therefore, her outlook had been shaped by her previous experiences, which were different to all of the other teachers sampled, who had experience of teaching Muslim students but these students were in the minority. In contrast, Mr Ralph had taught for 4 years at Chamberlain and he referred to his school days of PE in an all boys' boarding school, where his passion was rugby.

According to the literature, kit issues can also be a powerful force that restrict female participation rates (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993; Benn, 2002). This was supported by comments made by Rowena Ward at Chamberlain and Neil Haden at Birchincliffe:

> *It's about that understanding of the child and caring that they are not embarrassed and giving them the opportunity to take part as much as possible* (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

> *We want them taking part and if you want them taking part and enjoying themselves you have got to make them comfortable now in everything you ever do. You buy the kit to make you comfortable which allows you to take part otherwise you don't do it. I don't go skiing in a T-shirt, I don't go diving and not wear my wet suit for goodness sake! I make myself comfortable and that allows you to take part and that is the philosophy you should have really. If it's cold you wear the appropriate clothing and then there is not reason not to take part. You don't want people sitting on the side because of something we haven't addressed just because of a pair of*

tracksuit bottoms. How simple is that? (Neil Haden, Head of Key Stage 4, Birchincliffe School).

Additionally, Rowena Ward stated that she had discussions with parents at parents evening about the benefits of exercise and had also found out more about Ramadan:

> *Because some parents disagreed with the physical exercise type of thing and I 'ad a number of conversations at parents' evening about the benefits of physical activity and exercise for everybody. Er and er also making it clear that it was statutory and a government requirement, erm and we talked a little bit about activities and they liked a lot of the aerobics and fitness and I amended the curriculum so they could still get a broad and balanced er PE curriculum but structured the activities more to suit the girls... I actually made a effort to speak to a friend of mine who was the religious studies teacher to find out about it and I always knew when abouts it was.*

Ramadan

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is the fourth pillar of Islam, an act of worship of great spiritual, moral and social significance for Muslims. It is obligatory for all males and females to fast once they attain the age of puberty. The physical dimension of fasting involves completely abstaining from all forms of nourishment for one month. The spiritual and moral dimension of fasting is considered to be of far greater importance than the physical dimension in general. Muslims are encouraged to cope with normal life under a different set of guidelines not to use Ramadan as an opportunity to avoid aspects of normal life.

Religion for the sample of Muslim girls was not confined to belief and all girls sampled stated that they fasted during the month of Ramadan. The following statement exemplifies the religious practice of many of the girls in the sample.

> *Religion is very important to me...such as Ramadan, I am really interested in that* (Abia, Birchincliffe school).

Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) noted in their research that in order to avoid strenuous exercise, some parents encourage their children to miss school on PE days during Ramadan. They concluded that as the number of Muslim children has increased, PE

teachers have felt it necessary to alter their policies and allow certain things. Foster (1990) and Basit (1995) point to an improvement in the knowledge and respect shown by the schools for the culture and backgrounds of the pupils and, therefore, in teacher-pupil relationships. A document produced by the Muslim Council of Great Britain (2007) gives guidance to schools on how to foster inclusion during the month of Ramadan:

'... Schools can develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their children and school life by recognising and building upon the essence and spirit of Ramadan. Whilst the discipline and the challenge of fasting is to continue with the normality of everyday life, staff should exercise a degree of understanding, by encouraging pupils to avoid excessive exertion in PE to prevent excessive dehydration' (Muslim Council of Great Britain, Information and Guidance for Schools p.28).

In relation to PE, the document gives the following specific advice:

'... The majority of pupils who are fasting are able to take part in most physical activities during Ramadan without putting themselves at risk or danger. Fasting may make some pupils feel tired or drowsy, or even develop headaches due to dehydration. This may necessitate some pupils having to reduce their physical exercise. Schools may wish to consider and plan less strenuous activities in PE lessons during Ramadan' (p.30).

However, there was a great deal of inconsistency between the comments of the pupils regarding concessions made during Ramadan. Four pupils from the same year group and from the same school gave the following responses to concessions made during Ramadan.

Some teachers they are strict and they don't understand what we are going through and everything [Ramadan] they could just ask us, 'are you alright?' or something. The others they say 'it's not fair' and then they will give us that dirty look (Pardaj, Chamberlain School).

They let us sit out, when it's Ramadan (Rabiya, Chamberlain School).

When Ramadan is on we don't participate in PE (Lafizia, Chamberlain School).

They tell us to change our clothes like but if you are thirsty then just sit down. They know that's it's Ramadan, but we tell 'em, before we do PE like (Hafsa, Chamberlain School).

A similar pattern was observed at Birchincliffe School. Madhia illustrates the lack of consistency in how teachers approach Ramadan.

> *We are allowed to sit out for one lesson and at the other times have to participate; we do PE but we can just watch. I like the way Miss Blanchard is when you are fasting she will be understanding she will come up to us privately and ask if we are OK and will help give us things to do, which are OK. Whereas, other teachers they say you've got to do it they don't understand that we can get thirsty and we can't drink so times it is a bit hot and it is a bit hard to do PE when they are being sarcastic to us* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

In exploring with Madhia what 'things' they were give to do, she explained that they could still get involved in activities with tasks such as timekeeping. One of the girls who did not share the view that the PE teachers were understanding of Ramadan was Abia:

> *I think we should be able to miss PE when Ramadan is on because I feel tired. It is only for one month and we should be given the choice to sit out. We can sit out for one lesson but we should be able to sit out when we are fasting 'cos I just get really tired. Ramadan lasts for one month so it would mean er six lessons we should be given the choice to sit out, I am not making an excuse* (Abia, Birchincliffe School).

Abia had previously stated that she liked PE and when she was observed during PE lessons she was an active and involved member of the group. It was also apparent that Athletics was scheduled during the period of Ramadan. This illustrated that Birchincliffe School was 'not mindful of fasting' and the guidance offered by the Muslim Council of Great Britain (2007) that children should 'not be engaging in overly demanding activities' (p.32) during Ramadan.

When asked how the teachers could be more inclusive during Ramadan the consensus from pupils was for the teachers to be cognisant with when Ramadan occurs and to speak to the pupils privately beforehand to give them to option to participation in a less strenuous way in PE lessons.

Extra-curricular activities

Encouraging pupils to participate in the running of schools appears to be conducive to good attainment, attendance and behaviour (Rutter *et al.*, 1979; Reynolds *et al.,* 1996) as well as to their enjoyment and favourable perception of school life (Purkey & Smith, 1983). Although the majority of respondents held positive attitudes towards PE, their participation in extra-curricular activities was very limited. Deem and Gilroy (1998) counsel against the development of strategies to promote sport, which neglect the kinds of perceptions women in general have of sport and the negotiations they may need to engage in if they wish to participate in physical activity. They point out that a great deal of women's leisure activity takes place in the home, thereby suggesting that home-based activity is not a particular feature of Asian or Muslim culture. This raises the issue of why Muslim girls do not participate in extra-curricular PE activities and whether there are cultural or pedagogical reasons.

The majority of the girls sampled did participate in physical activity outside school and stated that exercise was important and also enjoyable:

> *I do a lot of walking and play badminton out of school and in the summer or when the weather is nice I play cricket at home* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School);

> *I play cricket and play rounders with my family* (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

These statements indicate that the students preferred a more relaxed way of exercising, for example visiting local fitness clubs or playing informal games with their family and/or friends. It was clear that many girls took part in physical activity outside school, but not always in a form which would necessarily be acknowledged if expectations of organised participation in a formal setting such as a sports or leisure centre were applied. For several of the girls in the sample, physical activity was something to be undertaken in the family setting, one which demanded that they could participate in games with sisters, brothers and other relatives.

Some girls said they would have no problem obtaining parental permission to participate in extra-curricular provision but there would be problems if it interfered

with 'academic progress'. Most of them expressed lack of interest in extra-curricular activities and the kind of sports provided by the school as the main reason for non-participation. Some identified heavy schedules in school and the timing of extra-curricular activities as the main factors for their lack of participation rather than a repressive home environment. Therefore, teacher assumptions about the restrictions placed on Muslim girls' is misplaced.

> *Yes, at my old school I liked PE more. I took part in extra-curriculum PE there but not here at Birchincliffe I've gone off it here... I don't feel I want to try here or get involved in the activities anymore it would be different if I was still at the other school it's just not in my heart anymore* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

> *I was more involved at my old school. I played netball and rounders after school* (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

> *There is no time in year 11, in year 7, 8 and 9 I played rounders There is no time in Yr 11 because of coursework* (Soraya, Birchincliffe School).

Abia (Birchincliffe School) and (Pardaj, Chamberlain School) were being honest in their respective observations:

> *I was supposed to go to netball club on lunchtimes but I forgot.*

> *We could do netball but we stopped after a couple of weeks.*

I asked Pardaj to elaborate on the reason for stopping; her response was

> *Dunno, just got bored with it I suppose.*

Comments from Muslim girls about out-of-school activity supports the contention of Verma and Darby (1994) and Verma *et al.,* (1994) that many Asian and Muslim girls define leisure and recreation differently, in that activity outside school is something enjoyed within the family circle. Some of the Muslim interviewees had gardens where they played games with siblings on a daily basis. Others took part regularly in physical activities with members of their extended family either at leisure centres or local parks. Among the ethnic groups within our sample, cricket was the most popular game to be

played informally with family members. It was clear that many girls took part in physical activity outside school, but not always in a form which would necessarily be acknowledged if expectations of organised participation in a formal setting such as a sports or leisure centre were applied. For several of the Muslim girls in the sample, physical activity was something to be undertaken in the family setting, one which demanded that they could participate in games with sisters, brothers and other relatives.

Teachers on the other hand saw the lack of participation as indicative of a repressive home environment and perceived the lack of participation as a problem:

> *The problem is some of their parents do not like them doing it after school it was not a problem during the lunch time but it is after school.* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

It appeared that due to timetable constraints extra-curricular activities now took place after school rather than during the lunch time and Miss Blanchard explained the rationale for this:

> *Well you see, there is less time now in lunch time as they have shortened it down to ¾ of an hour by the time they have had something to eat although they play cricket they can play cricket a lot of the girls do cricket and football outside (points to the pitch outside) a year group have football and a year group have cricket so they do get involved. We have got some Muslim girls in the netball team.*

These teachers seemed to characterise the students as the problem rather than considering whether their own practices might be the issue. While some Muslim pupils speak of family expectations which limit their ability to become involved in out-of-school activities, others have clearly constructed a lifestyle which includes physical activity as part of family activity. This supports Verma *et al.*, (1994) and Verma and Darby's (1994) suggestion that young Asian women have adopted lifestyles of their own choosing.

Delamont and Galton (1986) document similar findings about pupils who live a long way from school or go home for lunch and cannot participate in extra-curricular activities. Some of the teachers interviewed also reported that non-Muslim girls were

not interested in PE and Games because these activities ruin their make up and hairstyle:

> *If I go out in the rain, my hair will gonna go all curly and I straightened it this morning its like 'oh Miss its gone fuzzy'* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Delamont and Galton (1986) also observe that pupils never join in extra- curricular PE activities because they do not find them interesting. They conclude that for the majority of pupils these activities are not a salient part of school life. The concern expressed by some teachers about the lack of involvement of the Muslim girls has been documented in the literature. Smith and Tomlinson (1989) observe that schools are less successful with Muslim pupils that with other minority groups as regards extra-curricular activities. The literature indicates that whilst some schools have begun to organise extra-curricular activities in a manner that ensured better participation of ethnic minority pupils this was not evident in the present study. It is interesting to note that Birchincliffe School had extra-curricular provision as an area for development in its *Departmental Handbook* especially for ethnic minorities, as indicated in the following extract:

> 'Equal opportunities**:** Focus on our extra-curricular provision to ensure participation among target groups such as girls, ethnic minorities and pupils with disabilities. Registers are now being kept at such clubs to enable accurate analysis' (p.7).

Teachers commented on the lack of involvement of the Muslim pupils in extra-curricular activities but did little to rectify the situation. The rhetoric contained in the *Handbook* did little to address the situation. Interviews reinforced concerns about the haphazard nature of attempts to encourage participation in these activities and timetable constraints mitigated against lunchtime clubs.

Relationships with teachers

Teacher-pupil relationships are important aspects of schooling. 'A supportive learning environment is vital to any engagement of learners' (Benn, Dagkas & Jawad, 2009,

p.8). Pupils' acceptance of teachers' authority is vital to effective teaching and learning. However, Reid *el al* (1987) point out that teachers need to remember that there is a subtle difference between authority conferred by institutions and authority earned through good leadership and meaningful teacher-pupil relationships. The latter is related to respect, the former to status. The literature shows that most pupils are sensitive of their teachers' opinion of them and will interpret any sign as an indicator of their perceived worth. Teachers, however, are not free from bias. Hargreaves (1975) observes that pupils who conform to teachers expectations are seen to possess a wide range of characteristics while those who deviate possess all the vices. Moreover, teachers, like other members of society can be influenced by prejudice, stereotypes, expectations and media images (Wade & Souter, 1992).

As previously stated in Chapter 5, the teachers sampled had experience of teaching Muslim pupils but it was evident that some of them found it difficult to differentiate between Muslim pupils and pupils from other religious groups originating from Asia. This is exemplified in the comment from Barry Slade:

> *There is one girl in year 7 I don't actually teach her but she is the most dynamic girl in the whole group, I mean she is Asian as far as I understand but this is an assumption on my part that she is Muslim* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

Similar comments were made from others staff members where Asian was used interchangeably with Muslim. Two teachers refer to talented Asian girls but clarified that they were not sure whether these girls were in fact Muslim.

> *We have got an outstanding footballer in year 7 a couple of very talented year 8 girls, well they are Asian but I'm not sure if they are Muslim* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School*)*

> *There is a very good Asian girl in Year 7. I don't know whether she is Muslim and she is very good as well* (Leanne Pegg Trainee Teacher, Birchincliffe School).

All the teachers perceived several advantages associated with having Muslim girls in a class. They viewed Muslim pupils as keen, dedicated and respectful and since these girls were not disruptive, they made the teachers' job easier.

We have had an influx from Darras Hall School (pseudonym) of very positive Muslim Girls. The ones I've taught, I'm not teaching a very high proportion this year but the ones I have been teaching have been very positive. I've been very pleased with them. (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

The interview responses from the former Darras Hall pupils intimated a different viewpoint. His perception that they had settled in was not an accurate reflection of reality. In addition, Patricia Blanchard also confirmed that the Muslim girls as a group were easy to manage in terms of discipline issues.

The Muslim girls as a group are not naughty, there is one new girl she is not naughty but just very slow (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Patricia Blanchard was referring to Safath who was the first to admit that she was not confident in PE and did not enjoy the subject. While the teachers hesitated to use the term 'disadvantages' - and some of them felt there were no disadvantages in having Muslim pupils in the class - many others believed that they faced certain difficulties when they had Muslim pupils in the class. These ranged from taking part in extra-curricular PE activities to levels of participation. The majority of teachers believed that the girls' reticence and stemmed from parental and cultural restrictions placed on after school activities:

The problem is some of their parents do not like them doing it after school it was not a problem during the lunch time but it is after school. The problem is a lot of our Muslim children go the mosque straight after school learning about the Qur'an and everything else. So we 'ave all our extra-curricular clubs straight after school. I mean a lot of then do do an awful lot outside school that maybe we as teachers and their friends aren't aware of. Every night after school on top of their learning at school they have a big commitment don't they to read these chapters? So I assume I don't know but I assume a lot of them do do a lot of them do take it seriously (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Their culture requires them to have certain duties within the home that takes priority over school work, whether it's PE, Maths, English whatever it is and I think you would find if you look closely at it the erm the requirements from home, the demands that are put on the girls at home are different from the demands that are put on the boys (Ian Kemp, Birchincliffe School).

I haven't got a Muslim girl in my netball team, in my rounders team, or does the girls football. That's not because they are not allowed it's because they are not interested then again on thinking about it. I wonder if they would be allowed to stay on to school to join in the after school clubs, activities and teams I am not sure what their commitment is at home and what the pressure is from home (Sam Carson, Chamberlain School).

Sam Carson's statement highlights her lack of awareness of the issues surrounding Muslim girls. She is not aware of why Muslim girls are reluctant to participate and her statement is self-contradictory. Furthermore, teachers also perceived gender differences between Muslim girls and boys in how much freedom they were given in their home environment:

The parents are willing to push the boys more and I dunno really but it just seems to me that they have higher expectations of them and in some ways boys are given more freedom in ways in which the girls aren't and the demands of their home life make it difficult for them (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

It appears that the indigenous teachers find it hard to understand that Muslim parents, who do not let their daughters go out unaccompanied, are being protective and not oppressive. The teachers appear to apply the norms of the majority population to the everyday life of these girls, thus failing to appreciate the distinctions between the indigenous and the British Muslim cultures.

There was very little evidence of the conflict, perceived by Mr Haden, during the interviews. If there was a conflict, the girls, surprisingly, appeared to cope with it extremely well at such a young age. They certainly showed no signs of neurosis and seemed to view their situation quite objectively. Far from wanting to have boyfriends, the girls in the sample did not even want the same amplitude of freedom that English girls had as indicated in the girls' earlier comments regarding their relationships with their parents. Though many were clearly influenced by aspects of the western culture such as music (Stopes-Roe & Cochrane, 1991), they maintained they had harmonious relationships with parents and enjoyed themselves as much at home as in school.

While some teachers believe in recognising diversity, yet providing the Muslim girls with similar motivation and inducements as their indigenous peers, the feeling prevalent among some is that Muslim girls are generally reluctant participants in PE.

Indeed, the word 'reluctant' appeared to predominate the narratives of teachers in several of their responses. Their narrative accounts of this have been highlighted in Chapter 5. The reluctance was not observed in the sample of lessons observed or in attendance patterns. These notions of the teachers may have implications for the teachers and the ethnic minority children whom they teach.

> *Sometimes the Muslim girls have been a little bit harder to reach but no harder than some white girls, but certainly not at the moment in this school. Well in the past we have had year groups where they were a little more reluctant to be energetic and were a little reluctant to participate, they weren't naughty or anything like that, just getting' them to run was quite difficult (laughs). We had to give them lots of encouragement* (Mark Thackery Birchincliffe School).

> *I was going to generalise I would say that the Muslim girls er are more reluctant to participate because I don't feel that they enjoy it as much* (Sam Carson, Chamberlain School).

The teachers belong to a different ethnic group and/or social class. They tend to perceive people's ability through the lens of their own educational experiences, which in most cases are Anglo-Saxon and/or middle class. However, assertions regarding unrealistic aspirations fail to take into account the fact that ability and achievement are not static and can be enhanced with motivation: not only the intrinsic motivation of the pupils, but also the way they are motivated by their parents and teachers. The teachers' views indicate that Muslims are perhaps a misunderstood religious group in Britain. The presence of Muslim pupils in school has made the teachers consider issues they had never thought of before. The teachers emerge as hard working professionals who are concerned about all their pupils and are doing their best to help these pupils attain a good education, regardless of ethnic origin or religion. Nevertheless, there is evidence of polarity in the teachers' perceptions regarding Muslims, who are seen as either not having any aspirations or holding unrealistically high ambitions. The teachers' comments seem innocuous on the surface, but they sometimes give the impression that they are guilty of prejudice and inadvertent racism. Yet they are struggling to make sense of the life of these girls. In their endeavour to do so, they understand some aspects of the Muslim girls' religion and culture and misunderstand the others. If one teacher comprehends something that the other teachers cannot understand, s/he totally misunderstands something else. As a result of this inconsistency in understanding, different teachers produce different misconceptions. This misinterpretation of

religio/cultural values is not uncommon. Many teachers seem to view these adolescent Muslim girls with the same lens with which they see the Anglo-Saxon adolescent girls without taking into account the subtle differences in the way of life of the two groups:

> *The majority are no different to any other girls that we teach I'm just thinking if any stand out. No I don't think there is any real difference... I suppose what we don't get is an awful lot of them representing the school* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Writing in relation to gender, Scraton (1992) suggests that understanding of cultural expectations is vital to an understanding of young women's experiences, attitudes and behaviours with respect to PE and physical activity. The quotations below indicate that such understanding is equally necessary in relation to cultural differences and that it requires considerable further development among many teachers. The complexity of issues of culture and gender in relation to physical activity should not be underestimated:

> *I am not sure whether I can clearly differentiate between Muslim girls and girls and I'm not sure you may not be looking to draw that distinction that may be outside of your remit but I can't help but say that in my response* (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

Muslim ethos is misunderstood to the extent that respectfulness is seen as shyness or submissiveness, protectiveness is viewed as oppression and modesty is construed as traditionalism. Patriarchy is only perceived in negative terms as despotism and its loving, supportive and guiding role is underestimated. A Muslim father is erroneously perceived as an authoritarian figure and a Muslim mother as a passive model. Westernisation is conceived as progress by the teachers and they label their Muslim pupils and their families accordingly. Nevertheless, the teachers' job is to impart knowledge and understanding, not to 'Anglicise' the girls. (Basit, 1995, p. 236). In other words, the teachers should allow the girls to be educated in consistency with their beliefs and the wishes of their parents, in a spirit that values their multiple identities, (faith, cultural and British) without exerting implicit pressure on the girls to conform to the majority norm. The teachers are effective when they understand the dynamics of the Muslim religion and culture to some extent and teach within that framework without exerting implicit pressure on the girls to act contrary to their beliefs and experience. However, it is almost impossible to prove class bias and covert racism. It is

also difficult to differentiate between racially motivated prejudice based on resentment and prejudice emanating from misunderstanding and lack of knowledge. Teachers are effective where they have been trained to teach in multi-ethnic schools and are, therefore, sensitive to the issues involved. In the present research, these are mainly senior teachers with several years of teaching experience who are part of the power hierarchy of the school and are offered the opportunity to attend multi-cultural and racism-awareness courses. Such courses appear to be indispensable for a better understanding of the pupils and making them available to all teachers, regardless of their hierarchical standing, can be advantageous.

The teachers in the present study perceive the Muslim girls, whom they teach, both as an asset and a difficulty, a point neatly illustrated Neil Haden's observation:

> *Their behaviour is always impeccable. I cannot remember a Muslim girl ever saying anything out of turn. They are perhaps less keen to throw themselves whole-heartedly into sports that they are not sure about and need a lot of encouragement and teasing out of their shells, but once they have got involved, they really take it aboard* (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

Though they believe that these girls bring diversity into the school which is beneficial for all the pupils, yet some accuse Muslim parents of causing problems, either through ignorance or obstinacy. Interestingly, many teachers are convinced that Muslim girls need sympathetic listeners with whom they can discuss their so-called problems. Again, many teachers appear to apply the norms of the indigenous, middle class society to Muslim girls, whereby they feel that adolescent girls should have the autonomy to decide what to do with their life, how to shape their identities and how to realise their aspirations and if teenagers lack such autonomy, they must be miserable and need help.

Some teachers have internalised this notion, at least in the sense that they also think that some Muslim parents do not allow their daughters to participate fully in the day to day activities of the school and thus suppress their aspirations. Most teachers in the sample find it strange that, by and large, these girls live their lives according to the way they have been socialised by their parents from a young age. They are also not aware that these adolescents have supportive families with whom they are able to discuss

most of their problems and, hence, do not need what they might see as the interference of outsiders.

Teacher understanding of Ramadan

> 'Education is a place in which knowledge, sensitivity and understanding can be nurtured in the global citizens of tomorrow but only if the learning environment and practices those young people encounter reflect such human capacities' (Benn, Dagkas & Jawad, 2009, p.25).

Consideration of the interaction between ethnic minority pupils and 'white' teachers is required to determine the processes of education in greater detail. Stanic (2000) believed the teacher to be 'the most important component of the quality education of all children' (p.1.2). The question of how teachers perceive ethnic minority groups in education is important to expand, as it is at this level of interaction that subtle forms of racism occur. Findings from research into aspects of teacher racism, whether witting or unwitting on their part, have been contested in education journals with debate revolved around issues of methodology and the politico-ideological perspectives of the research itself. The Rampton Report (DES, 1981) related ethnic minority underachievement to the failures of 'bad teachers', 'a lack of responsiveness' and 'bad practise'. Indeed, even earlier on, research on attitudes towards ethnic minority pupils suggested teachers had failed to recognise differences in the cultures of ethnic minority pupils (Brittan, 1976). It is well documented that teachers may stereotype certain groups as more or less able within the academic field (Mac an Ghaill, 1988) and similar stereotypes have been found in relation to PE Lewis (1979) and Lovell (1991). Gillbom (1998) ascertains that these repeated research findings provide incontrovertible evidence of racism in schools and how teachers can be directly implicated.

In a project on British Muslim secondary girls in PE, Carroll and Hollinshead (1993) found several issues were raised as problematic by the pupils and teachers, Ramadan, was one of these issues. Siraz-Blatchford (1993), however, has criticised this research, for example in failing to recognise the institutional racism that underpinned the apparent lack of concessions on the part of the school. The present study reveals lack of concessions by PE teachers during Ramadan, seventeen years after Carroll and Hollinshead's study:

> *I think teachers could do more like when it's Ramadan then we feel like we are making excuses not to take part but I like PE so it's not an excuse. If they said to us, 'look we know it's Ramadan if you get thisty then you can stop or something'* (Abia, Birchincliffe School).

The girls would have liked their teachers to be more proactive in organising less exerting activities during the month of Ramadan and for the teachers to approach them privately as a group and give them the option to be included in the lesson in a less physical way. The teachers as a group differed in their knowledge of the school policy on Ramadan and also PE policies on this issue were not transparent. Mark Thackery, Director of Sport at Birchincliffe School exemplified the lack of knowledge of his colleagues when questioned about the PE policy on Ramadan:

> *But there are other kids that fast, there aren't just the kids doing Ramadan, there are other kids in the school that fast as well, you got Mormons, you got Jehovah's Witnesses you got all sorts of people that fast*
> (Mark Thackery, Birchinclife School).

Although there are many similarities with other faith groups many of the issues facing 'Muslim pupils are different in kind and degree' (Muslim Council of Great Britain, 2007 p.19). A document issued by the Muslim Council of Great Britain (MCGB) gave advice to schools on the types of activities to avoid in PE during Ramadan. Mark Thackery stated that he was unfamiliar with this document, although he stated that the school is understanding of the needs of pupils during Ramadan:

> *We are certainly understanding if we have gymnastics they can do some things they can do things that don't exert themselves more than anybody else.*

Mark Thackery's assertion that he was understanding was then embroidered by a more intolerant remark in response to the excerpt from the MCGB document to schedule less physically exerting activities during Ramadan:

> *Well there are physically exerting activities and we are not going to change the curriculum just because Ramadan which is twice a year isn't it?*

He then explained why he thought that Ramadan was twice a year and then reiterated that although the school was understanding, they were not going to change the curriculum:

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> *Well, no, no, whatever, there have been two different celebrations, yeah I thought both was Ramadan but I'm not totally sure. Um we're not going to change the curriculum totally, but we are certainly understanding.*

His comments may either be explained by a lack of awareness or racially motivated prejudice. The document produced by the MCGB was not a prescriptive document but the main aims were to promote a greater understanding of faith, religious and cultural needs of Muslim pupils and how they can be accommodated within schools. It also provided features of good practice of how to meets their needs. Further evidence of how pupils are accommodated during the festival of Ramadan is provided in the following quotation:

> *They have a big breakfast before sun comes up we have many kids who come here who have no breakfast at all, so yes they can say' I haven't had my breakfast today Sir'.They have a big meal once the Sun's gone down there is no reason in my view to stop physical activity, there is a need for being understanding, they are not eating for a long period during the day during daylight and during that period they are not going to be able to run and sprint and jump and do the same level as other people. So we understand that it is a problem, but we like them to bring their kit and be involved in the lesson in some way. They can learn a sprint start without having to do a sprint, they can do some timing. If there is a long distance run gymnastics they can do a gymnastics routine without killing themselves in any way, they can take part in passing drills in football, without going to the game so I think there are many aspects during Ramadan which they can still take part in and I don't think we need to overreact to everything. I think people need to be reasonable on both sides. I don't see any problem with that. If we change our curriculum entirely for a minority of children does that reflect fairly on the majority? But if you understand all children and their different needs at different times that's far more acceptable I would say. I don't think that's racist I think that is common sense.*

Mark Thackery's justification for being understanding was to give pupils options to participate but in a less physical way. His comment related his reluctance to change the curriculum for a minority of children endorsed Slee's (2001) research which found that teachers still adopt the medical model, whereby they expect the child to adapt to the school. This supports Goodwin's (2007) findings on the inclusion of disabled children who found that a proportion of teachers expressed the conviction that an inclusive environment would negatively affect other pupils. It also supports Rich's (2004) concept of liberal individualism where the role is to facilitate access and opportunity as key objectives, rather than address the nature of power relations itself. In addition it

echoes recent research findings by Benn (2010) who found that teachers were reluctant to change policy and practice for small numbers of pupils for pragmatic reasons.

As the Director of Sport, Mark Thackery was responsible for the *Departmental Handbook*, which stated that one of the strengths of the Department was the attitudes of PE staff: 'Staff have positive attitudes to inclusion' (p.6). The interview responses indictated that the reality did not match the policy intent. The *Handbook* may state the politically correct thing but when faced with the issue of including diverse children in their own lessons, the reality will be quite different. It appears that Law's and Aldridge's (1995, p.2) notion of 'innovation without change' still pervades the PE profession. There also appears no clear mandate within PE of school policy documentation for recognising Ramadan. Furthermore, the *Handbook* states: 'Two courses on Inclusion in PE were identified and staff designated to attend them. Unfortunately these courses were cancelled so we are still looking for further training opportunities' (p.7).

Other staff at Birchincliffe School adopted a similar haphazard approach to Ramadan. As the girls had stated there was no written policy from the school or the PE Department relating to Ramadan and consequently there were inconsistencies in how staff approached this issue. This confirms Dagkas and Benn (2003) findings that teacher understanding of the religious needs of Muslims varied. The common theme with all of the staff interviewed at Birchincliffe was their lack of coherent knowledge on Ramadan. Patricia Blanchard's comments (previously cited in Chapter 5) indicated a lack of familiarity with school policy on Ramadan. The 'time off' that Patricia Blanchard referred to was for the celebration of Eid. The school can allow two days of authorised absence for the festival of Eid not Ramadan. Patricia Blanchard placed the onus for decisions on Ramadan onto senior management and therefore abdicated personal responsibility for how this issue was addressed. I did have the opportunity to speak to senior PE staff, Mark Thackery and also Neil Haden who was also Deputy Head. Neil Haden gave a different reply to Mark Thackery, who had stated that pupils were expected to participate in some way (previously stated in Chapter 5).

Neil Haden's statement indicates an element of tolerance for religious needs during Ranadan but also a lack of consensus from PE staff between Thackery and Haden on how Ramadan is approached and confirms the female Muslim's interview statements on this. Barry Slade at Birchincliffe School takes Neil Haden's comment about Ramadan being used as an excuse for non-participation further:

> *You say to them 'what are you doing at lunch time were you out playing football?' So at break time and lunch time lunch time they go out doing their normal activities and then they'll come to PE lesson and say they can't do it and you get very much go on challenge me this is my faith, this is my religion and that's the impression you get you don't understand and we try to understand that's a definite feeling that it's an opportunity for them to create an us and them situation.*

Barry Slade's statement confirms research in this area which states Muslim children who are often cast as 'problems' in PE settings (Carroll & Hollinshead, 1993; Tinning *et al.*, 2001; Kahan, 2003). At break time, the pupils were engaging in physical activity but not in the context of a lesson and so may attach a different meaning to kicking a ball around at lunchtime out of the context of the more formal games dominated curriculum (Theodoulides, 2003). Barry Slade affirms Mark Thackery's earlier comment about the Department being understanding. Nevertheless, there is little evidence to support this in the interview data with teachers or pupils. In attempting to make PE more meaningful for students from diverse ethnic backgrounds Carroll and Hollinshead's (1993) study suggested that teachers should create a more inviting physical activity culture while still respecting cultural boundaries can be identified. Failure to do this has thus resulted in the creation of in-group/out-group in teacher-pupil relationships.

Jackson *et al*'s (2003) research suggested a lack of experience in a particular setting may be a factor for the teachers showing a lack of awareness of Ramadan. Only one of the teachers sample had experience of teaching in a school with a large percentage of Muslim students and she was the only teacher who had reported taking steps to research the timing of Ramadan and the religious needs of pupils during this time. Nevertheless, Rowena Ward Head of PE at Chamberlain School, was not instrumental in having a written policy on Ramadan and disseminating this to her colleagues:

> *There wasn't a written policy as such, erm but in terms of participation policy it was definitely discussed in Departmental meetings erm and the*

same was to be applied across the Department. Like I said they should be in PE kit and taking part in the aspects that they felt they could be involved with and for some of them it was the physical side and for some of them alternative activities (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

In both schools the lack of clear, written guidelines on Ramadan served to create inconsistencies and ambiguities in how the situation was handled. Although codes of practice are not enough to create inclusive practice, staff are more likely to engage in inclusive practice if they feel the institution facilitates this. (Goodwin, 2007, p.146). Furthermore, Rowena Ward reinforced Mark Thackery's comment that it would not be possible in such a large school to change the curriculum during Ramadan to suit a minority of pupils:

> *That would be impossible because you would then be affecting 1280 pupils and with equality of opportunity and access you would have to change.. and also sport is seasonal. So athletics is during the summer because that's the season of athletics and rugby in the winter and you know it is about PE but you can't lose sight of sport in the context of society and the competitive nature it is taking on board the whole thing but with athletics they could still be included fully.*

The *Every Child Matters* philosophy applies to all, including meeting the needs of Muslim pupils. Moreover, educationalists such as Gilmore, Campbell and Guskelly (2003) support the contention that teachers become more conservative as they get older and form prejudices, which prevent them from making effective change. This was not confirmed in the present study as the younger teachers such as Mr Ralph, Nikki McCullough and Sam Carson at Chamberlain School were no more effective in addressing issues relating to Ramadan than staff over the age of 40 at Birchincliffe School:

> *There's not a school policy as such they just have to bring a note just to say they are, it's that time of year so we obviously get them involved as much as possible with the lesson but obviously bearing in mind you know the physical restraints for the students that students may ....so say with badminton we can get students running a tournament say officiating or acting as a coach as opposed to doing something practically. They can still be involved in the lesson even if they are not actively taking part in it from a practical perspective. So you know they are very much part of the lesson, I don't obviously through exhaustion etc want to get them practically running around, very much again I get involved as much as I practically can and that's with any student who is injured or what ever, or not in kit for whatever reason.* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

The pupils at Chamberlain had expressed concern about teachers not appreciating their needs during Ramadan. Although students did not object to bringing in letters, it did appear this was an additional level of bureaucracy imposed upon the students by Simon Ralph. Instead this issue could be resolved with mutual recognition, understanding, and flexibility. Similar levels of ignorance relating to Ramadan were expressed by Simon Ralph's colleagues:

> *When they are fasting between… is it like between the hours of dusk till dawn? Well, erm we during that time we do have students who think that they can be excused because of that and use that to be excused for not doing PE that day. The way I understand it is and correct me if I'm wrong is that erm just because Ramadan is happening they should carry on with their normal day-to day duties as they should happen, so as far as I' m concerned to be at school to do PE is your normal day-today duties. Are they allowed water not to touch their lips? I can understand that they are going to feel a bit weaker and what we say is you get changed as normal just as if you are excused so you have got your kit on and do as much as you can. If you don't feel like doing any more then you have to communicate with us it is not because this is happening that you have the right to be excused from PE just because of that. That's what I say and that's what the Department say but obviously if you have got someone who is going to pass out on you or feeling weak then you have got to use your judgement. Well if it is an activity like badminton, then maybe they can sit out for a bit, but if it is like a full-on football tournament, it is a bit more difficult* (Sam Carson, Chamberlain School).

Sam Carson's narrative lays bare her misunderstandings about Ramadan. Her perception that Ramadan is an excuse for non participation echoes earlier points from Barry Slade at Birchincliffe School. Furthermore, these patterns give substance to the Muslim girls' statements which suggested that teachers did not appreciate what they were going through during this time. Non-participation did appear to be negotiable but the onus was placed firmly on the student to inform the teacher during the period of Ramadan that they were fasting. The data confirm the need for teachers to be more instrumental in approaching the girls to show that they are aware of this important event and to give clear guidance to pupils which is consistently applied by all staff. Pupils thought that the onus should be on the teacher to approach them as they felt conspicuous approaching the teacher often in front of other pupils to explain that they were fasting. The urgent need for this is highlighted in Nikki McCullough's (Chamberlain School) comments:

Occasionally we just get notes and we write them off for the whole time, they will come and just be part of the lesson. One of my year 8s she will just bring a note every week but sometimes she has a go and then sometimes not. Then some tell you at the start of the lesson and then some don't say anything at all. This girl didn't tell me until mid-way through a lesson she was fasting and I said to her she should have told me at the start of a lesson but then maybe I should have been more aware of it as well (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School).

When questioned about whether she was aware of a school policy on Ramadan, Nikki replied:

Not that I know of if they do it hasn't filtered down to me unless I am meant to go and look for it.

The School prospectus states that Chamberlain 'is committed to inclusion'. The Ofsted Report (2008) also noted that 'the school is 'a warm, friendly and welcoming place. Pupils are looked after and valued' (p.7). It also awarded the school grade 2 under the category: *How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can*. Similarly for Birchincliffe School the Ofsted Report (2007) recorded that '... The school is inclusive, welcoming a wide range of pupils' (p.4). The school was awarded grade 1 'outstanding' under the category: *How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?* Grade 2 was awarded for equality of opportunity. The findings from this study present a challenge to the Ofsted Reports. This is not to imply that the staff are not good teachers in the conventional sense of PE teaching; in fact they were, but they had received only limited training to work in inclusive environment. Such an assessment reflects the traditional nature of the understanding that Ofsted inspectors, in common with other educationalists, have about the nature of inclusive PE. Furthermore, it reveals the deep-seated attitudes and modes of thinking that will prove relevant to real progress.

Teacher philosophies

Insights into the the importance of a teacher's pre-professional background in the development of a professional identity are important in the present research with its focus on the understanding of Muslim identity (Whitehead & Hendry, 1976; Templin & Schempp, 1989; Mawer, 1996; Armour & Jones, 1998; Green 1998; Brown; 1999). In line with the findings of a number of authors writing on the theme of the

socialization of PE teachers (Dewar & Lawson, 1984; O'Bryant *et al.*, 2000), for many teachers in the present study, valuing sport was a pervasive and enduring influence being, as it was, central to many of their lives and identities ('I love sport and all the different activities'). Associated with this, experiencing *success* in sport led to them valuing opportunities for sporting *competition*. This 'love of sport' had been influential at the outset of their teaching careers - in terms of their original orientation or 'subjective warrant' (Lawson, 1983; Dewar & Lawson, 1984; O'Bryant *et al.*, 2000; Curtner-Smith, 2001) and continued to be influential, regardless of their age or gender. The following quotations capture these points succinctly:

> *I always had an interest in sport, loved sport as a kid and had very positive instances at school loved my PE at school carried that out at school and played part in teams outside school. Went on to do BTec Leisure at School not really knowing what I wanted to do, but knowing that I wanted to be involved in Sport or leisure in some way and during that I looked at the aspect of teaching so it wasn't something that I aimed towards it was something that developed and I never really looked back* (Ian Kemp, Head of PE Birchincliffe School);

> *Er... obviously one enjoyment of sport probably the first thing, er interest in Sport. PE. I had positive experiences when I was at school through my PE teachers and it sort of seemed a nice career to me, doing the things you liked doing. A lot of my friends are teachers and so having holidays at the same time you did sort of look at that (laughs)* (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School);

> *I was fortunate to be exposed to good quality teaching and I still see some of my old teachers socially when I go back home to ... (place removed to protect identity) I have a beer with them* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School);

> *I have always enjoyed sport and have always had a good relationship with my PE teachers er and always got on very well with them and consequently they were positive role models for me, er you know ever since I was young sort of thing like in Primary School. I have always done whatever sports I can get involved in and it seen as like a natural progression as such* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School);

> *Really good, really friendly, you knew there was a definite line between teachers and pupils but I had a good relationship with them, but I knew if there was ever a problem they could help be I didn't have a bad relationship* (Leanne Pegg, Trainee teacher, Birchincliffe School).

Simon Ralph, Mark Thackery and Leanne Pegg focus on the strong bonds that they had with their PE teachers who were often seen as friends and substantially influenced

them as pupils. In this way, they became 'inducted' (Paechter & Head, 1996) into the teacher's world. There are some clear ontological connections between these teachers sampled and their former teachers, connections that encourage certain embodied sensibilities, dispositions and pedagogies over others. The responses of these teachers, regarding their biographies, lend weight to a conceptualization of childhood and youth as 'the main "transmission belt" for the development of habitus' (van Krieken, 1998, p.156); habituses which have come to characterize social groups such as PE teachers. Thus, as Dewar and Lawson (1984) and Placek *et al.,* (1995) among others, have observed, the sporting biographies of prospective teachers and their PE experiences as pupils act, in effect, to socialize them into particular views regarding the nature and purposes of the subject: into particular 'philosophies' or, more exactly, ideologies. The teachers in this research have of course the difficult task of trying to balance the many priorities of their duties, such as trying to include, motivate, keep control, structure and deliver content knowledge in their classes; no easy task as new recruits. Before exploring the data further, it is worth highlighting that all of the teachers have spent a lifetime excelling in PE and sport, and it is hardly surprising therefore that they share an emphatic desire to return to these contexts and 'make a difference'. This is neatly expressed in Rowena Ward's and Leanne Pegg statements:

> *I have always had a passion for sport. I then took that into education, so for two reasons really, but the main one was to develop the whole child through the physical to develop their physical things* (Rowena Ward, Head of Sport, Chamberlain School);

> *I just wanted to share my enthusiasm for sport, cos I think sport is about getting everybody involved really, not many people sitting on the side, unless there are medical problems I'd rather get everybody involved no matter what ability maybe they are not a strong athlete but they should have a go* (Leanne Pegg, Birchincliffe School).

Their achievement in sport not only made these teachers 'enthusiastic' about PE but also consolidated their convictions of being able to *generate change* within these contexts. For all the teachers sampled, sport and PE provided them with satisfaction and enjoyment and were, therefore, highly valued, and influential in their life. Many accounts suggest that sport as a pathway helped to foster a sense of identity that drew primarily on physical activity skills and dispositions. Great importance was given to 'passing on' the positive experiences to other generations of pupils. While the precise nature of the values, knowledge and experiences that they wanted to pass on varied

according to the ways in which they positioned their own identities, they shared a commonality in their perception of wanting to offer *something of themselves* in their teaching. As such there are key embodied links between self and social identity. The data raise some interesting points in terms of a discernible social reproduction of desire and practice. The philosophies of the teachers in the study also supported research by Rich (2004), which found that teachers who were enthusiastic about PE often found it difficult to empathise with those pupils who did not share their enthusiasm. In some cases, non-participating students such as those who were fasting at Ramadan were described as not being committed or even lazy:

> *I do find that the Muslim girls are less able and they are lazier in their attitude to getting involved and more reluctant to participate in things* (Samantha Carson, Chamberlain School).

What is interesting here is that the teachers sampled found success, enjoyment and fulfilment in PE. They view themselves as successes of the PE system, and draw upon the benefits, enjoyment and success that they found came to them quite 'naturally'. This enjoyment may therefore clash with those pupils who do not with to participate in PE lessons or extra-curricular PE classes due to certain religious requirements. Moreover these experiences had a bearing on how they should address the inclusion in PE. The teachers sampled were keen to develop a pedagogy that focused on motivating students. It is difficult to disagree with some of the well-intended aims these teachers had for teaching:

> *It's about developing its teambuilding rather than simply developing the skills to play the game it is far more of that and social interaction and about developing their personal and inter-personal skills* (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School);

> *Er, well the whole ethos really is working together, teamwork, and appreciating other people the differences in people things like that, as well as getting pupils aware of their own fitness levels and things and through that it leads to a variety of games as a means to an end. I don't think any particular game or sport is the 'B all and end all', it is all a means to an end of keeping fit and healthy and appreciating other people, teamwork and those type of things. Conforming as well* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School);

However, there is a much more subtle process of reproducing gendered and cultural inequalities within their teaching. These subtle inequalities become more visible when

we 'unpack' the ideologies and aims that these individuals bring to their teaching. Leanne, for example, like many of the teachers in this study, had the clear objective of wanting to encourage 'more girls into sport'. On the surface, this seems a positive objective and one motivated by a discourse of 'gender equality'. However, when we explore the embodied and discursive resources Leanne envisaged using to achieve this aim, a more complex picture emerges. She indicated that she planned to increase participation by emphasizing 'the fun aspect that always *worked for me*'. Of course applying what 'worked for them' as successful able pupils becomes difficult to apply to those who are 'more reluctant' participants in PE for a whole variety of reasons. These experiences had strong implications for the ways in which, as teachers, they identified with and socially positioned the Muslim girls as 'problematic' within their PE classes. Furthermore, Leanne did state that the girls who were more reluctant participants when she was at school had altogether different relationships with their PE teachers:

> *They had a very different relationship with them it was always them saying why don't you just put your kit on and see what you can do and then if they were being rude to them it could turn into a shouting match like I'm not doing PE why are you making me do PE.*

Leanne Pegg referred back to their own schooling experiences to make sense of the differences in participation in the PE classes within which they were teaching. These are the lifelong experiential resources that these women draw upon in both conscious reflective ways, and sometimes more deeply embodied ways within their pedagogy:

> *I have already seen it here and I would say well why don't you put your kit on and see what you can do. You never know whether they are telling the truth or not but you've just got to take their word for it and then follow it up afterwards.*

In the above comment, Leanne refers back to her own schooling experiences to make sense of and deal with the problem of girls 'making excuses' in PE. Although it may be the case that Muslim girls were reluctant participants in PE and sport, the significant point here is that the perceived solution to this 'problem' was to change the attitudes of girls, and not to address inequitable gendered and cultured dimensions of the PE curriculum and structure. The problem, as they see it, is motivating these girls *into* the current system of PE, rather than the structure or nature of PE itself. This is potentially problematic given that research has pointed towards the struggles associated with a

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male-dominated sport curriculum in England and Wales (Kirk, 2001; Williams & Bedward, 2001) and the calls for the pursuit of *multiple strategies* for the advancement of women's and girls' interest in sport and PE (Hargreaves, 1994; Williams & Bedward, 2001). Such discourses of individuality may Pathologize 'failing' individuals, locating the fault in the individual while concealing contributing social factors.

NCPE

The new statutory requirements for PE in schools emphasis the importance of equity and inclusion and the responsibility of teachers to provide programmes that incorporate pupils of both genders, all social backgrounds and ethnic groups and those with special educational needs and disabilities. The NCPE, 'is central to any consideration of inclusive PE' (Goodwin, 2007, p.20). PE is a statutory 'core' subject of the National Curriculum in England and Wales. It offers a niche within curriculum time in which multiple personal, physical and social qualities can develop if complimented by teaching, learning environments, and lesson content, which the individual finds facilitative to his or her long term development. It was necessary to gauge how teachers viewed the curriculum advocated by NCPE and their philosophies would then inform their attitudes towards inclusion. However, it was interesting to note when questioned about the influence of NCPE on their teaching the majority of teachers were not familiar with the abbreviation this is summed up in the following quotation:

> *NCPE... what's that?* (Mark Thackery, Director of Sport, Birchincliffe School).

It was surprising that he did not recognise the abbreviation as he later remarked:

> *Well the National Curriculum took my ideas; they were my ideas before the National Curriculum came along... I think the NCPE is good for developing certain attributes. I was involved in the QCA consultation for this so I do feel more involved. But some teachers may feel that they had it imposed on them* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

This statement confirms research by Jackson *et al*., (2003), which suggested that individuals dislike being informed or change. Theodoulides (2003) took this a step further and referred to teachers sabotaging innovation. Rather than sabotaging the

NCPE, the data revealed that the NCPE appeared to have had little impact on the way in which teachers delivered PE.

> *Erm obviously there are a few things in terms of what we have to do but no I mean we are still teaching quite structured activities. I changed it to like more traditional activities, like we never did Rugby which has such a positive effect on individuals that I see it as a positive thing we should do but er but yes and no. It gives staff some more variety in terms of what they would like to teach and to teach to their strengths as you are not necessarily teaching a set activity you can just teach skills via various activities to work towards the same goals to perform at maximum levels. It doesn't have to be for example athletics you can go and perform at maximum levels in the fitness room you know so it is variation and it gives the staff more variety should we say* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

> *NCPE yeah, it has put a few restrictions I think but erm for my teaching method and planning what have you then it hasn't made any difference at all really no. I was doing what they said before it came in on leadership courses which I had been on* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

Neil Haden also confirms that the NCPE has had little impact on his teaching and delivery of PE. This confirms that teachers were neither 'shaken or stirred' (Green, 2002) by the introduction of the NCPE:

> *Schools don't have this thing called the Key Stage 3 strategy, yeah? At all points for the same things being turned over year on year and you go through phases where some things become the flavour of the month, the way to do things at the moment but actually it is all the same we have all heard it many times before haven't we? But we have heard it all before when it was called something else. The key stage 3 strategy about of how to structure a lesson and the key issue there is you set out your lesson objectives, well what is new about that? We were told that when we were in school about lesson objectives so yes it does but it is important 'cos for a start off it gives you as a teacher a focus because you know, what you are meant to be doing so your whole lesson flows from that you know and you know what you want to achieve in the lesson, but also it is very much the pupils knowing what that lesson is about and what they by the end of the lesson they should have at least attempted or be however far along the way I mean when it comes to assessment and forms of assessment it's not random, it is a focus for assessment, because it is there as a learning objective and everybody knows what it is they are doing* (Neil Haden, Birchincliffe School).

The natural desire of teachers to teach within their own comfort zone, reproducing the experiences of their own schooling, helps maintain the *status quo*. Indeed, the curriculum advocated by the NCPE breadth of study (DfEE/QCA 1999) allows

teachers to follow the traditional PE activities without really challenging their understanding of inclusive ideals. According to Thomas (1993), the revision of the curriculum in 2000, left a heavy emphasis on competitive games being taught in schools, therefore reinforcing established cultures of 'sexism, racism and motor elitism'.

Similarly, PE teachers respond to the immediate pressures of their working situation as involved participants in the 'hurly-burly' of teaching and in this sense, PE teachers' interviewed were not reflective practitioners. Indeed, their views on their subject frequently appear more *reactive* than *proactive*.

> *I am a bit 'too long in the tooth' I don't think I do anything wrong, don't get me wrong I am 'not teaching back in the ark' . A lot of these ideas come in and when you look at it the things which they are asking you to emphasise are the things which you are already doing. I don't think that you need to change your whole curriculum because they are saying now that we ought to teach teamwork so we just do whole lessons on teamwork but we do teamwork as part of the whole spectrum of everything else. The kids get the whole spectrum here and a lot longer on each thing than they do at some schools. They get an awful wide mixture of things here, tasters of lots of things with the idea that they take something on from all that which they may use later in life. I think they get a really good balance in this school* (Patricia Blanchard, Birchincliffe School).

Without claiming too much in the name of NCPE, there remains an important role for the subject to play in providing young people with a holistic knowledge, understanding, and social skills to ensure physical activity (of some kind) becomes a regular aspect of their daily life (Fairclough & Stratton, 2005). This importance was recognised by many of the teachers within the sample:

> *The last thing you want is for kids to leave our school and then have nothing to do with PE and this is why we come to the snooker club and consequently as these guys are in Year 10 consequently lots of these guys have signed up and become members of this snooker club, since being coming from school. So it has had a positive effect, like a lot of the guys know this and that because they are down every weekend so it's had a positive effect* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

Inclusive PE

The literature recognises that PE has an important role to play in inclusion. In understanding inclusive PE, Sugden's (1991) four principles of entitlement, access,

integration and integrity are still relevant. Rizzo and Wright (1988) also emphasise the importance of teachers' understanding of their own abilities to teach a diverse population. Their belief that they can manage the inclusive learning environment is just as important as teachers understanding of the schools' ethos. Furthermore the status of PE within the school has implications for inclusion. If PE is given low status within the school then teachers may not feel that they have the support to effectively include.

Talbot (2008) speaks of the place of PE within an 'integrated curricula' that recognises its' 'distinctive contribution' (p.8). The rhetoric surrounding the contribution of the subject has long been a matter of discussion within PE research literature. Kay (1998) has previously maintained that important as immediate products of PE are, they remain short term goals in the overall context of the teachers' role at school. He has since continued this in his discussion that PE should be carried out *with* and *for* pupils (Kay, 2003, original emphasis), with long term aims including not only continued participation in activities throughout life, but also now with an appreciation of a wide variety of considered, holistic and interdisciplinary benefits.

> *I think that PE is a major department. No other Department does what we do for the kids in terms of helping them to develop leadership skills and how to work as a team. We have developed leadership through the 'step into sport' programme, Junior Sport leadership programme. I agreed with the leadership aspect* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

The effects of PE are no longer seen as being merely part of the relatively short lived curriculum for children of school age. Its unique contribution to lifelong learning and education has been acknowledged amongst others by Doll-Tepper, (2005), former President of the International Committee for Sport Science and PE, who referred to the indispensable role of PE in the education process. It is also now appreciated more widely as playing an important role in achieving broader educational objectives such as whole school improvement, community development and effecting personal behavioural and attitudinal change among pupils (Houlihan & Green, 2006). Whilst it has been widely accepted that PE is a subject, which affords opportunities for a great number of valuable outcomes such as these, it is inevitable that there continues to be a debate about where the priority within the subject should lie (Whitehead, 2000). Green (2002) recognises that PE teachers are often at the mercy of the expectations of their head teacher, and senior colleagues, in particular. Teachers viewed head teachers or

members of senior management as presenting a particularly constraining influence on the PE department. The experience of Simon Ralph supports Thomas's (1993) and Armour and Jones' (1998) assertion that PE is given less status than other National Curriculum subjects among head teachers. Giroux (1991) wrote about the borderland nature of PE where PE teachers are very much on the borders excluded from the solidarity of the school community by virtue of their practical subject matter. Similarly O'Sullivan, Siedentop and Tannerhill (1994) observe:

> '... If the high school ecology marginalizes PE and makes it difficult to change, certainly the manner in which PE teachers and programmes succumb to these contingencies makes it difficult for high school change agents to get PE moving' (p.426).

The teachers at Chamberlain School supported the borderline nature of PE and reported that PE was firmly at the bottom of the hierarchy as far as other subjects were concerned. The same was also true of Birchincliffe School, but to a lesser extent. Whilst Mark Thackery, Director of Sport was more complimentary about senior management, he believed that the Head could have been more instrumental in helping the school to achieve a sports specialism which would position PE at the heart of their curriculum. He did recognise that PE nevertheless makes a distinctive contribution to whole school improvement creating innovative learning opportunities for all. On the other hand, Simon Ralph was candid in his criticism of senior management:

> *My perception of my PE Department in my school is that we are quite low in the pecking order. Unfortunately is, I perceive to be quite low in the pecking order. And that is to be kept quiet. I feel we are the lowest of the low in the school in terms of the management's perception* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

This statement serves to confirm the prestige differentials between PE and other subjects where PE remains at the lower level of the prestige scale. It is not regarded as a real lesson with a pedagogical means. It also confirms Hardman and Marshall's (2005) assertion that PE is the 'Cinderella of the school' (p.48) in terms of its status. Simon Ralph referred to the use of dedicated PE lesson space for examinations and the removal of pupils from PE lessons to catch up on more important academic subjects if they were falling behind. Also the PE department had also requested in the annual *Self Evaluation Plan* (SEF) extra support staff and resources to replace broken equipment.

In spite of numerous requests, their needs were not met. This statement supports the literature which reveals deficiencies in provision of PE equipment in schools (Hardman & Marshall, 2005 p.53) The perceived low status awarded to PE by the senior management was frustrating for Simon Ralph and his colleagues. He believed, in line with the literature, that PE provides a rich context for promoting socio-moral education (Miller, Bredemeier & Shields, 1997). Furthermore, effective schools are not only interested in enhancing academic qualifications, but they are also concerned with the social and moral development of their pupils and their participation in the day to day life of the school, both inside and outside the classroom (Smith & Tomlinson, 1989).

> *In my opinion, you look at successful schools and PE is a massive part of a successful school, er because it brings so much to students but the value that our school puts on PE is extremely low because staff morale has a negative impact. I mean it is the first subject to be, you know if kids are behind on coursework it's you know ask PE, can they come out of PE? Erm can they do that? We had a moderation the other day and three staff out and we had no cover and so consequently that had to watch a film* (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

The PE facilities at the school, according to Simon Ralph were 'outstanding', nevertheless, the perceived low status and lack of support for the PE department had an effect of the moral of staff. Moreover, the lack of co-operation from senior management restricted the development of the department. This lack of input from senior colleagues may be a contributory factor to failings in their inclusive practice. Furthermore, the lack of communication between PE staff and senior management left the PE department feeling that while the inclusive experience of children could be improved, this was somehow the duty of someone further up the school. The intention of this research is to search beyond the rhetoric, the policies and the theory to gain a perspective of PE that gives voice to the pupils and teachers. Simon Ralph's comments gave valuable insights into the reality of working in an environment which was perceived to be unsupportive. Observations in the PE Departments of Birchincliffe and Chamberlain School help to unravel the harsh realities and day-to-day pressures that teachers face. The implications of the poor support for PE teachers raises questions about sharing any optimism with regard to improving either equality of opportunity or quality in PE without improved professional and economic support (Evans *et al*.,1996). Green (2002) suggests that if 'we want to understand why teachers come to think and

believe what they do about the nature and purposes of PE and, indeed, their everyday practice, then we need to explore the networks of social relations - or figurations - of which they are a part' (p.66).

Observations in both schools revealed the start of the PE lessons to be organised chaos with often up to 20 minutes spent on registration and staff managing pupils who were seeking to be excused for the lesson for various reasons. There was also evidence of a lack of planning as students reported that they thought that they were doing netball and there were often last minute changes where students had to do other unexpected activities such as badminton or weightlifting. Tensions between staff were also evident at Birchincliffe School. On one particular occasion in the PE staff room, there was a heated exchange between Patricia Blanchard and Mark Thackery. Patricia had requested that he take the students to the gym whilst she was dealing with late-comers and he had refused to co-operate saying that it was not his responsibility. This event supports van Krieken's (1998) game metaphor of social networks. In particular, interdependency ties inescapably *constrain* people to a greater or lesser extent. This is held to occur in a manner analogous to that in which, in a game, the dependency of a player on the intentions and actions of team-mates and opponents inevitably influences the player's own intentions and actions. It is argued, then, that the workings of social processes such as education can usefully be conceptualised as multi-player, multi-level games. Such an analogy enables one to focus on a particularly important aspect of processes such as education: namely, the existence of 'bonds' between people who ostensibly see themselves as belonging to one side or another. Conceptualizing social processes in terms of the model of a game brings to the fore the centrality of *power*. Power is conceived as a central dimension of social relationships, and the many kinds of figurations or webs of interdependency of which people are a part are characterized by many different sorts of balances of power (Elias, 1978; Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998). Whilst interdependencies are 'reciprocal' they are also typically unequal: 'usually one party in a social relationship tends, at least in certain respects, to be more dependent than the other party' (Mennell & Goudsblom, 1998, p. 22) with the result that an uneven balance of power, or power ratio, exists. Inevitably, the power differentials inherent in the nature of particular interdependent relationships (such as those between Mark Thackery, Director of Sport and Patricia Blanchard, Teacher of PE) are more pronounced and more predictable. They are typically reflected in varying

degrees of authority and influence. This type of relationship is not conducive to collaborative working.

Teachers and Inclusive practice

The literature indicates that collaborative working is a pre-requisite for effective inclusion (Lacey, 1998). Collaborative teams are where all members of the team have equal voices (Drucker, 1974). There was little evidence of collaborative working in the incident described above, which was not a 'one-off'. Indeed, Katzenbach and Smith (1993) suggest that leadership in collaborative teams does not rely on dominance. Adair (1986) is clear about the importance of a good leader to an effective team, 'teamwork is no accident it is the product of a good leader' (p.125). PE is an 'ideal vehicle' for teamwork to occur (Hayes & Stidder, 2003 p.53) but the stereotype of the PE teacher as 'heartless taskmasters' (McCullick *et al.*, 2003 p.4) who endorsed the traditions of elitistism is embedded in popular culture and exemplified in the following quotation:

> 'I naturally grew up to hate PE and games, generally associating it with unpleasant, negative and at times humiliating experiences. Sport, games, PE – it's important. It's exercise, it can build confidence and character. It can be and should be fun. For me, and many others like me, it was an ordeal. Untold numbers of children in the past were never given a chance by PE teachers, who only had eyes for the elite athletes in their charge. I would like to believe that things are different now' (Ashby, 2001, p.6).

Orwell (1970) also harboured bitter memories of his public school sport and he observed that sport was a training ground for elitist bullies. However, this research aimed to see if teachers were now more effective using PE to make a positive contribution to inclusion rather than exclusion. In relation to effective inclusion Robertson (2000) believed that if inclusion was to be effective then the involvement of the whole school was necessary. In common with many educational innovations, the teachers in the sample showed support for the philosophy of inclusion and both schools claimed to have an inclusive ethos both in their prospectus and mission statements:

> *It's part of our way of life I don't think anything of it really. Diversity is good of course. Yes diversity is a positive thing* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

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Similar positive statements in relation to inclusion are summed up in the following two quotations from teachers at Chamberlain School:

> *I think at Chamberlain they are very much initiative run, they want to keep moving forward and jumping onto all sorts of initiatives... Yes I think it... yes it is inclusive in making sure there is equality of opportunity on provision erm, and within lesson ensuring that every pupil can be engaged but I suppose what I would say is to improve it could be it could actively seek to include. It does include but not to the extent that... at Darras, it found that there was a need to do that so what they did was to over include if you know what I mean? To consider the picture of everybody but to include everybody to enhance their life to make their life much nicer in school. I suppose I would call it more active inclusion but policies they do attempt to include and provision is inclusive but as for saying what is inclusive and what do you go beyond that to make life even better that is where Chamberlain need to go now to look and may be celebrating as a whole school what everybody is celebrating there is definitely an awareness* (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

Rowena Ward's commentary endorsed Benjamin's (2002) belief that staff found it difficult to cultivate their own inclusive approaches, and they needed a whole school or department context and effort. The staff interviewed did not think that they had any real influence over whole school policy and were unsure what change or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) would be appropriate. Jackson (2004) was troubled about the efficacy about the philosophy of inclusion that placed inadequately trained teachers with only minimal knowledge about the principles of inclusion in PE settings. None of the teachers sampled had received formal training on inclusion. Rowena Ward stated that she had delivered training on inclusion but this related to the inclusion of disabled pupils rather than ethnic minorities:

> *I delivered on some of the training days on inclusion and special needs at the time and I am not sure what it is like now we had a lot of adapted equipment you know we included physically disabled children in all of the lessons* (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

Opportunities to enhance their skills and understanding were minimal. It appeared that despite policy, legislation and good intentions the reality confirmed what Laws and Aldridge described as 'a dislocation between theory and practice' (1995, p.2). Whether from staff of management inertia regarding CPD there should be some concern that staff wanted to focus on developing other aspects of skills and knowledge, possibly

because although they recognised that the school had an inclusive ethos the issue was not a major one.was evident with staff highlighting just how little training they had experienced. Perhaps this is why Capel (2000) suggested that teachers would find it difficult to effect change when they lacked awareness about how to effect such change. However, CPD should not be seen as the only solution to the dilemma of effective inclusion.

While many schools organise courses for their teaching staff to enable them to teach effectively in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious school, the nature, quality, duration and content of these courses varies enormously. This is neatly summed up by Patricia Blanchard:

> *I'm just trying to think there are so many different things some of these INSET days have been very meaningful and very worthwhile and others well it 'goes in one ear and out of the other'. No, I can't think of any on inclusion.*

Though all the teachers who were interviewed acknowledged that INSET was available at their school, the majority seemed vague about whether in-house courses had focused on inclusion as previously outlined in Chapter 5. The Head of PE at Birchincliffe School also said that he was not aware of any INSET on inclusion:

> *I missed an inset day earlier on in the year there may have been something on that but my wife had just given birth, but I haven't been involved in anything no* (Ian Kemp, Birchincliffe School).

The findings reported in Chapter 5 indicated a lack of provison of INSET days on inclusion. Neil Haden, Deputy Head also reiterated that the school had not provided any INSET inclusion courses which focused on culture *per se*:

> *Yes there have been INSET days on inclusion, but then that is a huge, huge area, on multi-culturalism oh I'm not sure it's the kind of thing I want to say yes we must have done but typically on multi-culturalism I'm not sure we have. But we are a language school though and part of that there are activities going on all of the time.*

The members of staff interviewed at Chamberlain School staff were equally vague about inclusion courses with a focus on culture:

They definitely need to work on gifted and talented that was on the SEF. Inclusion in terms of physically disabled, special needs their provision there is very good (Rowena Ward, Chamberlain School).

Er yeah I am trying to think about the CPD days we do have CPD days and I am sure we have had and have spend days looking at SEALS (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) it is spoken about it in meetings etc etc…so yes we have had yeah (Simon Ralph, Chamberlain School).

Yes we do, have inclusion type courses. But off the top of my head I can't think what the last one was but yes you know throughout the year there are focus days on that (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School).

There are on training days an hour which look at specific things like SEN (Samantha Carson, Chamberlain School).

In arguing for inclusive schooling, inclusionists expect teachers to adopt a more cooperative learning approach. However, the research process confirmed that traditional ideas remain firmly entrenched:

There's the dominant culture which has existed here for many years and if people choose to be educated in our system and I believe there are Muslim schools. If people choose to be educated in our system it's because they don't mind and they quite like something that we offer. Erm, that's not to say we shouldn't bear in mind Muslims and their needs, but at the same time they need to adapt slightly to fit in with what's been successful in the past for us erm, it's a balance isn't it? It's a balance for everybody and I don't think we if we go way out of our way for specifically the Muslim girls were gonna go way out of our way for specifically other cultures erm other religions, other people and we try to do what we can for everybody to try and have respect for everybody an understanding of everybody, opportunities for everybody (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

Mark Thackery's discourse shows little commitment to inclusive practice. Beyond the political and educational rhetoric more immediate concerns for teachers relate to how much they feel they have to alter teaching, learning and management strategies (Goodwin, 2007; Benn, 2010). However, it should also be noted that there may be a weariness of the teaching profession in general in a culture of change politics (Gardner, 2000). Nevertheless, ITT programmes should carry some responsibility for raising awareness of and dealing with inclusion practice issues.

Ainscow (1998) suggested that full involvement in the curriculum and culture of a school is central to inclusive practice. Nevertheless, it would be also comforting to

think that the National Curriculum framework and guidelines would encourage teachers and departments to compensate for inequalities in abilities and opportunities. The theme of social inclusion is embellished and underpinned by three key principles which should permeate throughout the learning and teaching process in schools. Although the culture of the school endorsed inclusive PE, two of the principles of inclusion (DfEE/QCA 1999, p.32) were not being addressed, namely:

1. Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
2. Overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils

In relation to the first issue, a Muslim pupil at Chamberlain School (Iffat) was identified during interviews by Hafsa as not participating in PE:

Every Friday she doe like come to school. I dunno but she thinks that Muslims shouldn't do PE 'cos of the clothes that they wear.

Iffat removing herself from PE was an overt example of exclusion. Iffat did not want to meet with me. So I could not explore the issue further with her. I was keen to validate this lack of participation with Samantha Carson. However, due to the confidential nature of pupils' responses I could not directly reveal what Hafsa had said about Iffat's absences. I approached the issue by asking why Iffat had not wished to meet with me in order to explore the matter further with Samatha Carson:

I just think that she is very shy and did not have the confidence to meet with you. She does participate in PE and bring kit most of the time but keeps herself to herself and does not really communicate much with staff or other students. There are no real behaviour issues to be dealt with, just trying to motivate her within the group (Samantha Carson, Chamberlain School).

The above statement illustrated the difficulties of functional inclusion, showing that some Muslim pupils spend considerable periods of the lessons uninvolved. Furthermore, some pupils deliberately resist doing PE:

There was a girl that left us last year she brought her kit but she never did PE. She literally said to me, dead clever girl, 'I bring my kit so you don't hassle me but I am not going to do it'. But she has left now she was last

year's Year 11. I got on reasonably well with her she was a really nice girl, but she had no intention of doing any real PE. It was as if she brought her kit so she didn't get hassled but she would literally just sort of slide into the background and would never do a lot through the whole lesson (Nikki McCullough, Chamberlain School).

While Nikki McCullouch was certainly aware of the inactivity of this pupil but she did not suggest an appropriate strategy to address this inactivity. Furthermore, as McLeskey and Waldron (2002) indicate there is little point in placing pupils in community school settings if their PE experiences contributed to continuing social isolation. In relation to the second principle of inclusion stated earlier there was no attempt to overcome the potential barriers to her learning. A further example indicated that Nikki McCullough seemed unacquainted with some of the complexities of inclusive learning. Established approaches to PE overshadowed pupils' needs:

> *I mean I think there are two Muslim girls in year 7 and from the first few weeks of term, one of the girls was so timid almost as if she had not mixed with anyone she was very quiet I had some run ins with her early doors about her kit. Because she just didn't bring her kit and wasn't as if she was naughty it was as if she was trying to avoid the whole issue of doing PE and it doesn't help that she was so quiet and the group as a whole a rowdy and so she just seemed to be so quiet in comparison to her group but effort wise and teaching wise I have had no problems.*

Nikki McCullough's observation confirmed Huang's (2010) view of teacher training, suggesting that teachers are still trained in a culture where PE is designed for all learners. This links back to Rich's (2004) research where the PE teacher who has excelled in PE at school often finds it difficult to empathise with those who do not share their love of sport. Feelings of inadequacy about performance particularly in a competitive setting intensified this pupils' feeling of isolation. This confirms that teachers still under-estimate the importance of the child in the learning process and would rather focus on the traditions of PE. Robertson (2000) advocated assessment and identification of needs and abilities as key to inclusion if teachers use appropriate collaborative and co-operative practices then all students would work, develop and learn together, as suggested by Folsom-Meek and Rizzo (2002).

Folsom-Meek and Rizzo (2002) highlighted time factors and the degree to which inclusive PE was an unfair expectation as concerns for teachers. Issues of time and planning, review and evaluation are longstanding and while recent changes to working

conditions have started to address some of these. It should be noted that all of the teachers sampled had positive attitudes to the rhetoric of inclusion. They all believed that they were using inclusive practices. However, positive attitudes and Codes of Practice (DfES, 2001) are not enough to ensure inclusive practice. Whole school ethos and policy are crucial, therefore to the successful transition to inclusive schooling. Unfortunately although the Prospectus and Ofsted Reports stated that Chamberlain and Birchincliffe respectively were inclusive, not every staff member was effective at ensuring inclusion.

The literature indicates that managing the learning setting, not just teaching the children, emerged as a persistent issue in developing inclusive practice (Goodwin, 2007). It seems inconsistent with the outcomes of the Warnock Report (1978), notwithstanding subsequent legislation and government policy, that some PE teachers are completing their training with little or no understanding of some of their pupils' needs. Of course, it was not just the lack of training opportunities that constrained the staff. Lienert, Sherrill and Myers (2001) had drawn attention to teachers' frustration with inadequate support from management, suggesting that the right resources might make inclusion more likely.

Social Inclusion

'When we pick teams in the playground,
Whatever the game might be,
There's always somebody left till last
And usually it's me.

I stand there looking hopeful
And tapping myself on the chest,
But the captains pick the others first,
Starting, of course, with the best.

Maybe if teams were sometimes picked
Starting with the worst,
Once in his life a boy like me
Could end up being first!'

Allan Ahlberg (1983)

Another significant aspect of inclusive schooling is social inclusion and it is this which often exposes the lack of understanding that exists about inclusion. Tomkins and Deloney (1995) suggested social inclusion was the *raison d'être* of inclusion, and in general terms refers to processes through which individuals can be integrated back into society. Britton and Casebourne (2002) cite the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion's definition of broader aspects of social inclusion which refers to:

> The process by which efforts are made to ensure that everyone, regardless of their background experiences and circumstances, can gain access to the services and facilities they need to achieve their own potential in life... An inclusive society is also characterised by a striving for reduced inequality, a balance between individual's rights and duties and increased social cohesion (p. 14).

PE and sport in schools have become an increasing focus for the past Government's objectives for social inclusion. The establishment of Specialist Sports Schools in the late 1990s undoubtedly accelerated the UK Government's drive towards achieving social inclusion through PE and sport. Former UK Minster for Sport, Kate Hoey, (2001) outlined the political agenda of central Government with regard to PE with a clear focus on citizenship and leadership. Although Hoey held office for a short period of time, there was no noticeable digression from the Government in its approach to PE:

> We must work together to promote the provision of high quality PE by qualified personnel for all ages, regardless of sex, race, religious or ethnic background or ability....We must promote the health and well being of the community through PE. We must promote the education of teachers and those responsible for the delivery of PE programmes in educational establishments and in the community (p.23).

Hoey highlights how PE in schools could contribute to wider societal issues and offered an opportunity for teachers to embrace aspects of equal opportunity. Indeed, the ability of teachers to foster full inclusion remains open to debate. While physical and instructional inclusion may have occurred, social inclusion is often poorly understood or misinterpreted. Although the interview data explored teachers' awareness of pupil tolerance, for adolescents who are striving to be part of a recognised social group, increased tolerance is not enough, they have a need to be accepted. Many of the girls interviewed, especially the girls new to Birchincliffe School, did not feel welcome by their peers. Incidences of racism were misinterpreted

or ignored by their teachers. This is illustrated in Safath's references to how reported incidences of name-calling were handled by teachers:

We talk to the teachers ourselves but sometimes the teachers they don't really care, like they don't do really nothing about it and so I just think I might as well leave it, 'cos there's no point wasting your time 'cos they don't really do nothing about it if it's still going to carry on them we might as well put up with it. Nothing much happened, you can report it but it don't really change anything (Safath, Birchincliffe School).

Issues of social inclusion reflected many of the dichotomies of inclusive practice. Although the teachers reported tolerance and acceptance of difference, unfortunately, observations suggested limited multi-dimensional interactions and endorsed Butler and Hodge's (2004) suggestion that there is little evidence to support the idea of social inclusion actually occurring in PE lessons. The philosophical perspective of PE teachers did not always match the reality experienced by pupils.

They really tried to include us at Darras and PE was more fun. Here we feel more 'on show' and PE is not as exciting. I have gone right off PE here. Yes and we feel more on show here, like that everyone is looking at us. I think it's probably because we used to get along with people there more, yeah and they (**i.e. the teachers**) *would just really, you could get involved in more stuff. We used to get along with them more and we could wear our tracksuit bottoms and they would as well. It was more like a school where they weren't much bothered on what colour we were or not and more, I think so we could relate to them more compared to this school and here* they (**i.e. the other pupils**) *look at you and stare* (Madhia, Birchincliffe School).

Madhia had found it very difficult to manage the transition from her old school Darras Hall to Birchincliffe. Chapter 5 provided indications of racists comments made to Madhia from pupils at Birchincliffe School:

*Because we were new to the school and because we were a different colour to most of the other girls, but we try to mix with them and some of them are really nic,e but on the other hand some of them are really nasty. (*Madhia, Birchincliffe School)

Acquiring friends was a key component of Huang's (2010) concept of social inclusion, and pupils place friendship among their top five vaues (Ridsdale & Thompson, 2002). Yet discussions with Madhia and Safath revealed some of the difficulties they had in

forming friendships and both had experienced bullying in the whole school setting and in PE. Both Madhia and Safath presented a picture of social interaction where they had approached pupils to try to make friends but on the other hand their efforts were notreciprocated. Madhia and Safath experienced exclusion and racism as they were perceived as different. Although Safath had been proactive in reporting incidents of racism to her teachers her perception was a lack of concern from her teachers. Indeed, when Mark Thackery their teacher spoke about the influx of pupils from Darras Hall his perception of them was that they appeared to be settling in fine:

> *I haven't spoken to the girls about it but they are very 'bright buttons' they seem to have settled in very quickly they look very happy to me* (Mark Thackery, Birchincliffe School).

Mark Thackery was seemingly oblivious to the difficulties experienced by these new pupils in their process of settling in. His statement confirms research which suggests that teachers are misinterpreting social interactions with other children as acceptance whereas in reality children's attidudes are slow to change (Sherrill, Heikinaro-Johansson & Sliniger, 1994). Other teachers recognised that the Muslim students tended to group together but did little to foster co-operation, communication and working with others, components at the very heart of NCPE.

> *I've never heard any of the kids here boys or girls call them Paki or any rascist terminology directed at Muslims in that sense but they are still regarded as a group* (Barry Slade, Birchincliffe School).

The Muslim girls had obeyed the natural laws of group selection and tended to band together which negates efforts to promote inclusion. Research has found that teachers admit that it makes their life easier if pupils work in friendship groups. This was evidenced in Leanne Pegg's quotation:

> *The form leader picks teams in groups of four. Never nobody is picked last never ever are people picked last and the Muslim girls all wanted to go into the same group, so she just put them together as it was easier* (Leanne Pegg, Trainee Teacher, Birchincliffe School).

This was also supported by Smelter *et al*., (1995) who argued that the needs of an individual working securely with friends should outweigh the needs of an educational philosophy advocating inclusion. However, this research presents a challenge to the very nature of PE and the contribution it makes to pupils' social responsibility,

socialisation and preparation for life. Thomas's (1997) concern that youngsters did not engage with a range of their peers appeared to be justified by the interview data with teachers and the majority of Muslim girls:

> *It is quite sad to see that they are very within themselves it is in single sex lesson not just mixed lessons they generally don't mix with the non-Muslim girls* (Leanne Pegg, Trainee Teacher, Birchincliffe School).

Thomas (1997) also suggested that segregated schooling produces citizens who are unaware of the potential, as much as the needs of others, therefore, sustaining the divisions in society. Hence, there was a danger that by not challenging pupils' self-determined groupings, teachers helped perpetuate such divides. Theodoulides (2003) also makes the point that working with pupils who are similar to us in someway can be reassuring but it neglects other aspects of inclusion such as appreciating difference. A further concern was that the majority of interactions within the PE lesson were largely with a Muslim friend rather than a wider range of pupils. Pupils did interact with non-Muslim peers but it was the infrequency and inconsistency of these interactions that suggested the need for greater structure and better teacher management of these interactions. Teachers need to address this through lesson management; by leaving pupils to decide groupings, does not always result in positive experiences. Ainscow's (1998) concern with positive interdependence seems justified where teachers' class management did not address the need for all pupils to experience cooperative and leadership opportunities. Shakespeare (2001) advocated equal-status learning. Muslim females as role models was proposed by Barry Slade but he did not attempt to structure or engineer such interactions as indicated in the following quotation:

> *Soraya, she's done really well on the leadership and I almost think that someone like her could be a positive role model. She is not really confident about her own ability,y but that's not the point, it's her manner and her leadership. If we could get someone like her to visit primary schools which have large proportions of Asian girls and to work with a class and she as a role models to those in the class, this would have a knock-on effect and then those girls in that school might be more positive about sport she's not a great performer in.*

Despite this suggestion of positive role models being a potentially constructive intervention, teachers' limited understanding of inclusion issues meant that they did not always adopt effective strategies to include. Inherent in the inclusive process is an expectation that sustained contact with any group enabled greater understanding and

appreciation of difference, from both teachers and peers. As the CSIE (2003) point out we need the familiarity that inclusive schooling encourages to break down the prejudices society still holds about diversity. Educators in the United States promote equal status as learning where all pupils include and are included. However, the evidence from the interview data indicated a degree of uncertainty about inclusion. Schools can contribute to the socialisation of pupils, helping them feel more comfortable and knowledgeable about playing, working and interacting with people of different cultures. However, it was significant that the teachers did not acknowledge their own role in teaching pupils how to interact, despite highlighting the development of social and co-operative skills as one of the benefits and objectives of PE.

Summary

This chapter has discussed what the findings have revealed in relation to the literature review and offered a discussion of the four main aims. I have suggested that the social categories of ethnicity and religion play a significant part in shaping the lives of the girls in the study. It is clear that parental views are shaping the ethnic, linguistic and religious identities of these adolescent girls. Nevertheless, the girls, themselves, are also constantly negotiating their own identities and subsequently creating distinct identities in different contexts without compromising their ethnicity, language and religion. These adolescent Muslim girls are not passive recipients of advice, but are actively participating in creating their identities. Strength of belief integrating faith, body and dress could be seen in this study.Where embodied faith was strongest and religious identity most prominent in consciousness, then strict adherence to religious requirements was necessary, all relating to the requirement of the body for modesty. Religion is important in the lives of these girls but is not confined to belief. As far as religious practice was concerned most of them prayed every day and read the Qur'an and fasted during the month of Ramadan.

The notion of embodied faith increases understanding and sensitivity to the interface of Islam and physical activity participation. It was evident that certain tensions arose in certain areas such as communal changing. Financial issues were used to justify the design of the changing rooms, which were not conducive to the Islamic requirement for modesty. The issue of single-sex spaces arose, but was not as salient an issue as the

tensions which arose during Ramadan which centred on the lack of understanding on the part of teachers and the lack of consistency of how teachers approached Ramadan. Here different cultural values centred on the body can underpin tensions that need to be resolved in the search for more inclusive pedagogical practices. Skills of developing intercultural understanding have to be acquired to recognise difference and respect diversity by adopting more inclusive pedagogical practices. Where tensions arise between issues of religious freedom and statutory entitlement to physical education negotiation is required to seek solutions. Regardless of a school's commitment to 'inclusion', in some cases Muslim girls were being excluded on the grounds of a school's inability to meet religious needs. Currently there are challenges and contradictions between rhetoric and reality, policy and practice. Understanding different body values and ways in which these are affected by practices in physical education and sport is important to effective strategies for the inclusion of diverse lived realities of Muslim girls.

Chapter 7
Conclusions and Recommendations

This thesis set out to focus on the identities of Muslim female pupils in school year 11 and their teachers' understanding of their religious needs. More specifically, its four main aims sought: (i) to investigate the identity of Muslim schoolgirls; (ii) to determine whether the Muslim female identity impacts upon participation in school-based PE; (iii) to investigate PE teachers' perception of the Muslim female identity and how they meet the needs of female Muslim pupils in PE and school sport; and (iv) to investigate whether PE teachers foster inclusive practices in their lessons. The latter at a time when social and educational changes have the potential to provide justifiable educational opportunities for diverse groups. As such, the overarching purpose of this study has been to highlight the PE experiences of Muslim females and whether their PE teachers understand and address their religious needs.

Through the use of a qualitative research methodology, comprising ethnographic research, observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews, a sample of teenage Muslim girls and their teachers at two schools (Birchincliffe & Chamberlain) were used to explore these issues. The thesis adopted a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) that attempted to understand the shared experiences of co-participants. This was realised through a complex and interactive engagement between theory, ethnographic insight and analysis with elucidation of the disparate themes emerging from the analysis of data generated during the research. In this final chapter these various strands are brought together to portray a picture that explains the underlying factors shaping the identity and PE experiences of school girl Muslims and their teachers' understanding of this identity. The views of the teachers were examined as closely as those of the girls, since the teachers have a crucial role in shaping the PE experiences of adolescent Muslim girls. This final chapter encompasses: i) conclusions of the investigation, ii) acknowledgement of strengths and originality of the study's contribution to advancement of knowledge, iii) limitations in the process, iv) research implications arising and v) suggestions for further research.

i) Conclusions

The girls' identity, as regards ethnicity, is being shaped by the perceptions of the parents to a large extent and there was little evidence of conflict between parents and children, testimony to which were the girls' interview responses. The views of the teachers, regarding the girls' ethnicity, also have an impact on the girls. In particular, some of the British-born girls are reluctant to call themselves British because of the attitude of the indigenous society, which insists on seeing them as Muslim, rather than British. School is the girls' main contact with the indigenous society and some of their teachers find it difficult to perceive the girls as British while they hold onto to various aspects of their culture. Yet, some of the sample of girls would be happy to call themselves British, but are conscious of the possibility of non-acceptance and rejection by the indigenous population. Hence, they choose to adhere to their Muslim identity, as that cannot be questioned by their teachers. Still, they undoubtedly perceive Britain as their permanent home and want to succeed there. The girls have internalised the religious values inculcated in them from an early age, albeit to a varied extent depending on their family's level of religiosity. Consequently, these girls see Islam as a means of identity, a source of comfort and a set of rules to abide by. As opposed to the teachers, most girls see Islam as a liberal religion. While the teachers may respect the faith of their Muslim pupils, it is apparent that there is some deficiency in their understanding of the girls' religious and cultural needs.

It is clear that the girls' religious identity is being shaped by the way religion is perceived by the parents. Further, their everyday life in Britain has an impact too, at least on religious practice if not on belief, as some of them find it hard to pray and fast when required to do so during a school day, and the issue of participation in PE during Ramadan presents itself as a concern. Religious practice does not seem to present immediate temporal benefit. Its spiritual value is not fully understood by these adolescent girls because they are influenced by the secular environment of their adopted country. Still, while all of the girls are not necessarily pious, they want to retain their religion to a greater or lesser degree. While living in a secular country may have influenced their religious practice to some extent, their religious belief is intact (Afshar, 1994). Thus, their religious identity is seemingly permanent like gender identity: they are Muslim wherever they are and want to remain Muslim.

The study manifests a kaleidoscope of attitudes as regards how people perceive and structure their social world. Even girls from the same geographical area or social class are not homogeneous, which raises the issue of caution against stereotyping ethnic minorities. Embodied faith guards against this stereotyping. The stereotypical models of oppressive Muslim parents, tense and distressed adolescents, are caricatures unsubstantiated by this research. To adapt Kluckhohn and Murray's (1948) statement:

Every Muslim woman is in certain respects:
   a) Like all other women
   b) Like some other women
   c) Like no other woman

Experiences are shared, which would be common to all the girls in the sample. The notions of embodied faith, intersectionality and habitus have helped in the analysis of what being a Muslim woman means in relation to other Muslims and to PE teachers. Moreover, the insights into the individual experiences of the Muslim girls revealed how some aspects of their lives were like no other.

The findings of this study support research, which has emphasised the active role of the individual in shaping an ethnic identity (Rumbaut, 1994; Khan, 2002). Identity is seen as a dynamic product that is achieved rather than simply given. British Muslims are willing to adapt to those aspects of the indigenous culture that do not clash with their religio/cultural ethos. Culture is dynamic, not static. Immigrants retain the likeable features of their culture of origin and abandon the ones they dislike. They also adopt what they are impressed with from the culture of their adopted country and reject what they find unimpressive. However, it should not be assumed that once the ethnic minorities have gone through the processes of retention, adoption, abandonment and rejection, thereby creating a remarkable sub-culture and identity, this culture and this identity become sacrosanct to them.

They go through such processes throughout their life, and features, which had previously been retained, might be abandoned; similarly, aspects that were once rejected might be adopted, as their expedience is recognised in realising their aspirations. This validates research, which suggests that possible solutions to identity

formation for groups that are ethnically distinct are to develop pride in one's group, to reinterpret the characteristics deemed 'inferior' so that they do not appear inferior (Tajfel, 1978), and to stress the distinctiveness of one's own group (Christian, Gadfield, Giles & Taylor, 1976; Hutnik, 1985). Furthermore, though society perpetuates itself in many ways, yet the children may want to create their own identity by combining aspects of their parents' culture with that of the indigenous culture again. Thus, the metamorphoses continue. This does not necessarily mean that the second generation abandons the parental culture entirely to embrace the indigenous culture: sometimes the younger generation, disenchanted with the indigenous culture and its own status as a marginalised minority, reverts to the culture of origin with more fervour than the parents. Acceptance of the flexible and transient nature of the boundaries between groups seems consistent with Hall's (1982) view of the individual, who he describes as occupying a range of identities at different times, thereby accommodating contradictory allegiances within frequently changing social contexts (Hall, 1992) and perhaps epitomised in the comment that:

> *... At school I look different because of my colour and dress, so I am Asian, but because I was born here, I am also British* (Abia, Birchincliffe School).

Adolescence, as pointed out earlier, is largely viewed as a period of storm and stress (Erikson, 1963) and a problem stage in human development. The characteristic features of this life stage as seen by theoreticians are chaos, confusion, conflict, uncertainty, tension, sense of isolation, vulnerability, turmoil and rebellion. Even those who do not perceive it as a negative phase, at least observe teenage as a time of adaptation, adjustment, challenge, opportunity, individuation, autonomy development and breaking ties. Nevertheless, empirical research challenges the depressing portrayal of adolescence. Coleman (1980) points to the conspicuous absence of a theoretical approach propounding the normality of the adolescence process. He, nevertheless, observes that the transition from childhood to adulthood requires considerable adaptation and adjustment, which many achieve without facing problems. He explains the successful development from teenage to maturity in terms of a focal theory. The present study portrays an interesting picture and refutes the theoretical interpretations of adolescence, like other empirical research. Far from being a period of storm and stress, the teenagers are not expected to sever ties, grow up and become independent,

but childhood dependence is gradually and gently complemented and then superseded by quasi-adult responsibility.

If conflict was evident in the narratives of the girls, it may have been so because of living in a country where many practices are incongruous with their religio/cultural ethos (Basit, 1997). Yet most of teenage girls in this study appear to deal with conflict and contradiction without undue stress. Adolescents who cope successfully with this phase do so with the support of their family. The power of the family structure should not be under-estimated. With the help of their family, these girls are being eased and nurtured into adulthood, not left floundering to trace the route themselves. They do not feel isolated at this stage of life, but define their identity in relation to others.

Autonomy is completely absent from the agenda of becoming an adult. These adolescent girls want to remain connected with their family. They are not being pushed into a precipitate premature adulthood, but have a guided and supported adolescence, where important decisions for the future are made by their parents with their consent. Contradiction and conflict are resolved by analysis and synthesis or by defence mechanisms.

Evidently, the influence of the family is much stronger than any other influence. In the present research, there is clear evidence of strong and confident relationships in the family. The atmosphere in the homes appears to be happy, contented, loving, caring and secure. The girls' family bonds are unambiguously powerful and the family structure gives the girls immense support in their endeavour to realise their aspirations. The family is the vehicle for conveying the group norms to ensure group perpetuation. Yet these norms are not merely based on socio-cultural perceptions: they are sustained by a religious ethos and the religious element gives these norms a strength which needs to be given sufficient weight.

Distinct friendship patterns are apparent in the friendship choices of these teenage Muslim girls. There is a tendency to have as close friends, girls from similar religious and cultural backgrounds as themselves, and those known to their families. Though some Muslim girls have non-Muslim girls as their friends, their friendship is confined to the school milieu. While the parents do not stop the girls from seeking the friendship

of non-Muslim girls, Muslim girls are wary of such contact because of racism. Additionally, since Muslim girls have been socialised to live their lives in a certain way, they are reluctant to gravitate too closely to their non-Muslim peers. This supports the homophily principle and also supports Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978), which asserts that simply being a member of a group provides individuals with a sense of belonging that contributes to a positive self-concept. While some of them might be mentally consentaneous with other able non-Muslim girls in the school, they cannot spend their free time after school like the non-Muslim girls, i.e. they are not allowed to go out in the evenings, go to discos and so on: the leisure pursuits of many indigenous adolescent girls. Hence, their friendship is limited to the school, where they can enjoy the same leisure activities. Another area in which restrictions may be imposed on Muslim girls is staying on after school to take part in extra-curricular PE activities. The parents may view their daughters as still young and need to be protected. Consequently, Muslim girls' participation in activities is affected by factors that may not affect a non-Muslim girl. Extra-curricular activities at Birchincliffe and Chamberlain School were timetabled after school. Though Muslim parents do not explicitly stop the girls from taking part in extra-curricular activities at school, they, nevertheless, prefer them to come straight home after school. The girls understand their parents' concern and, therefore, avoid taking part in extra-curricular sport. However, it appeared that the provision on offer had not engaged the girls who had attended in the past and confirms the literature in this area (Delamont & Galton, 1986; Smith & Tomlinson, 1989). This situation is of some concern to the teachers but while some merely blame the parents, others do not take strategic steps to involve the girls in extra-curricular activities in a manner, which meets with parents' approval. The teachers see the parents as a potential barrier to assimilation. They feel that although the girls may be keen to assimilate, the parents exert a constraining influence. Yet teachers are struggling to make sense of the life of these girls. In their endeavour to do so, they understand some aspects of the Muslim girls' religion and culture and misunderstand others. If one teacher comprehends something that the other teachers cannot understand, s/he totally misunderstands something else. As a result of this inconsistency in understanding, different teachers reveal different misconceptions. This mis-interpretation of religio/cultural values is not uncommon. Many teachers seem to view these adolescent Muslim girls with the same lens with which they see the non-Muslim adolescent girls without taking into account the subtle differences in the way

of life of the two groups. Muslim ethos is misunderstood to the extent that respectfulness is seen as shyness or submissiveness, protectiveness is viewed as oppression and modesty is construed as traditionalism. These conclusions support findings of previous research by Basit (1997).

Processes of change to PE policy were accompanied by tensions. Despite changes to allow a more modest PE clothes kit at Birchincliffe School, some of the girls still experienced incidents of ethnicism directed towards their Muslim identity from their non-Muslim peers in a PE setting and these incidents were exacerbated during the summer months. They embodied Islam more visibly during this time when their non-Muslim peers had to wear shorts and could only wear track suit bottoms by a process of negotiation. Consequently, during the summer months the Muslim girls felt more isolated and more conscious of their Muslim identity and they experienced anxieties about its effects on interactions with their peers in a PE situation. At Chamberlain School, the new uniform policy of 'shorts for all' may cause problems for Muslims new to the school as this policy was being implemented in year 7. Although this was negotiable, the need to bring in letters to excuse them from wearing shorts represented an additional level of bureaucracy imposed upon the students by the Head of PE. Instead this issue could be resolved with mutual recognition, understanding, and flexibility. A follow-up study would be useful to examine the effects of this policy on Muslim pupils new to the school.

Some girls clearly felt strongly about ways in which their religious identity was compromised in the isolating, unsympathetic school situations they had experienced. This was in relation to Ramadan and was particularly evident amongst those students who had experience of being in a previous school where Muslim students were not in the minority. These students were able to make comparisons and discuss their experiences of how PE teachers understood their needs surrounding Ramadan in relative terms. At both Birchincliffe School and Chamberlain School, there was a small proportion of Muslim students, and hence, there were no provisions for religious requirements such as a prayer room. The *Every Child Matters* agenda applies to all, including meeting the needs of even a small minority of Muslim pupils. However, teachers need the competence, confidence and materials to use existing flexibility within the curriculum. The teachers' interview responses indicated variable degrees of

tolerance towards the participation of Muslim students during Ramadan and confirmed that there was not a consistent policy to be applied. Also teachers varied in their understanding of Ramadan, which corroborates research by Dagkas and Benn (2006). Moreover, the data confirmed the need for teachers to be more instrumental in approaching the girls to show that they are aware of when Ramadan is taking place and to give clear consistently applied guidance to pupils. This may help pupils to see their culture reflected in the school PE experience and to create a positive, inclusive culture that values all pupils and enables them to become confident members of society.

Some areas of PE appeared to be less problematic for the girls than reported in previous research (Williams, 1989; Scraton, 1992; Carroll and Hollingshead, 1993; Clyne, 1994; Benn, 1995). Communal showers were not an option due to timetable constraints; and swimming and dance were not curriculum options. In consensus with previous research, all of the girls preferred to change in private. Because of the communal nature of the changing area, the girls would deal with the lack of privacy and individual cubicles by changing in the toilet. Mixed-sex PE classes presented a problem for only one of the sample who embodied her faith more visibly than the other girls. Here, different cultural values centred on the body can underpin tensions that need to be resolved in the search for more inclusive pedagogical practices. Teachers' philosophies confirmed research, which shows that teachers often cast Muslim girls as 'problems' in the PE setting (Basit, 1998). This can be partly explained by teacher philosophies and supports previous research, which revealed that teachers who had experienced success and enjoyment in their own PE lessons found it difficult to empathise with those who did not share their enthusiasm (Rich, 2004). Non-participating students during Ramadan were, therefore, perceived as 'lazy' or 'reluctant'. Locating the lack of participation in the individual directs attention away from the nature of PE, which may contribute to teenage Muslim girls' lack of participation. The issue of 'blaming the victim' is not a new one in the context of PE and similar dynamics of individualism have been highlighted elsewhere (Crawford, 1980). In other words, the teachers were positioning these girls within a framework of liberal individualism where the burden of change rested with the girls themselves and their 'attitudes' towards PE. The solution posited is to encourage girls who are not keen on PE to 'motivate themselves' and cope with the gendered social barriers present within the current practice, structure and curriculum of PE in England. The resources

that PE teachers draw upon, therefore, not only have a bearing on how they come to view Muslim girls in PE, but have a wider implication for the ways in which positions of liberal individualism and a culture of blame come to be subtly reinforced within and through teaching. Moreover, the teachers under-estimate the importance of the child in the learning process and would rather focus on the traditions of PE.

Traditional ideas surrounding PE were firmly entrenched at both schools and more so at Chamberlain School. The intended new PE uniform policy of 'shorts for all' was implemented for aesthetic reasons and the desire to return to the traditional PE uniform. This confirms research by Williams and Bedward (2001), which found that uniform policy seemed to demonstrate more about personal taste 'than about sensitivity to adolescents' concerns about decency and about their developing body' (p. 62). However, this new policy did little to foster an inclusive ethos. Furthermore, the majority of Muslim females did not have a problem with actually participating in PE but instead with the systems and structures that denied preference to embody faith.

A pre-requisite for inclusion is effective team working and collaboration. The lack of communication witnessed at Birchincliffe School and the perception of the lack of support from senior management at Chamberlain School raise questions about sharing any optimism about improving equality of opportunity or quality of PE without improved professional and economic support. Teachers are effective where they have been trained to teach in multi-ethnic schools and are, therefore, sensitive to the issues involved (Basit, 1998; Goodwin, 2007). In the present research, these are mainly senior teachers with several years of teaching experience who are part of the authority hierarchy of the school and are offered the opportunity to attend multi-cultural and racism-awareness courses. Such courses appear to be indispensable for a better understanding of the pupils and making them available to all teachers, regardless of their hierarchical standing. Therefore, although the demographics of the school may be changing, teacher training was not keeping up with managing diverse populations. The present study confirms research, which indicated that staff find it difficult to cultivate their own inclusive approaches without a whole school effort (Goodwin, 2007). Examples of exclusion were given without any attempt to manage it. Some teachers seemed at a loss to know how to manage Muslim pupils who excluded themselves from PE lessons. There was evidence of a lack of in-house provision which focuses on

inclusion in relation to ethnic minorities. The majority of teachers at both schools lacked awareness of any school policy or PE departmental policy on Ramadan.

Individual teachers bring with them personal qualities, complex histories and social experiences that mean a straightforward totalizing fit with any one discourse is unlikely. In this sense, although the study participants drew heavily upon a discourse of liberal individualism, and traditional PE philosophies, it must also be reiterated that in many ways these teachers attempt to accommodate the Muslim girls through their teaching. However, the experiences highlighted, illustrate the more *subtle* ways in which identity resources in the form of key experiences, discourses and embodied practices and dispositions play a key part in valorizing certain discourses within PE, and the implications for these in terms of positioning others.

The research verifies the need for whole school and departmental policies on Ramadan that reflect mutual recognition, understanding and flexibility. The findings also present a challenge to the Ofsted Reports for both schools, which state that both schools were inclusive. Such an assessment reflects the traditional nature of the Ofsted inspectors. Some inspectors are completing training with little or no understanding of inclusion, but it did appear that adequate support from management would make inclusion more likely. Social inclusion reflected the dichotomies of inclusive practice, teachers mis-representing social interactions with others as acceptance. Teachers noticed that Muslim girls tended to group together but offered little in the way of suggestions of how to foster co-operative working. This research presents a challenge to the very nature of PE and the contribution it makes to pupils' social responsibility, socialisation and preparation for life. By not challenging pupils' self-determined groupings, teachers helped perpetuate such divides. Power relations of subordination and resistance are actively reproduced in relation to shifting identity definitions and alliances. In particular, younger people are in the process of negotiating forms of identity and belonging, and this process is marked by a plurality of differences, cultural syncretism and appropriateness of social representations (Conquergood, 1994; Back, 1996; Marshall *et al.,* 1999). The Muslim Council of Great Britain's *Advice to Schools* suggests that more co-operative working will serve to create an environment where children feel welcomed and valued. However, even with the best of intentions, the gap between rhetoric and reality means that some pupils have significant barriers to

overcome before they can experience full inclusion. Creating a community based on equal status relationships is a key element in successful inclusion and in PE the opportunity to structure interactions certainly exists. What is clear is that casual interactions or the presence of a Muslim pupil in the PE setting is not enough to promote tolerance and acceptance. Indeed, the findings suggest the move towards a more inclusive and democratic social situation in the PE class still remains a far-off goal.

With the new coalition UK Government, there are plans from the encumbent Education Secretary, Michael Gove, to reinstate competitive sport in schools. The intention is to reverse a decline in competitive sports introduced by local authority councils in a politically correct move to ensure that there are no winners or losers. Schools will compete against each other in district leagues and school sports league tables with Olympic-Style events. This return to the traditions of an elitist, competitive and games orientated curriculum may reduce the potential for meeting everyone's individual needs. According to Goodwin (2007), the ethos of league tables can undermine aspects of whole school inclusion. This new political agenda may, therefore, militate against inclusion and further research will be required to address this important proposed change in policy.

ii) Originality of Study

Back (2002) observed that there are dangers when writing a doctoral thesis in trying to judge your own work. He noted, '... The sense of trying to establish the worth of what you've done can lead to intellectual paralysis' (p.22). Notwithstanding Back's observation, consideration has been given to how the thesis contributes to the advancement of knowledge in the subject area.

A strength of this work is its originality. There has been little research dealing with the issues of teaching ethnic minority groups in PE, in particular that which takes perceptions of teachers and their pupils as the focal point to examine the issues and areas of potential conflict. Thus, there is a degree of polyvocality in the thesis that attempts to convey the sense of the two groups under study within the two school communities. The research developed from my own personal experiences of teaching

in a school where in-group favouritism and out-group hostility is transparent. This elitist, competitive environment reduces the possibility for inclusion. The research, therefore, emerged from a belief that inclusion is not universally accepted. As a professional, my concern is with teachers' attitudes, which are a key ingredient in inclusive schooling. My attention then focused on a curriculum area, which may be problematic for inclusion. In a democratic society, requests for religious freedom that challenge established PE practices, resulting in exclusion of some pupils, warrant critical attention.

Another strength is the quality of relationships sustained with the respondents. Without their open and honest accounts, willingness to participate (and for the teachers sample) to find time in their busy schedules, this research would not have been possible. The depth of interview responses with the Muslim sample increased with time. The advantage of having a small sample of girls was that all of the pupils in this year group were interviewed and I did not have to rely on the teachers to select a representative sample for me. Only one pupil (from Chamberlain School) declined the opportunity to take part.

A further strength of this research is the systematic nature of the data collection. An advantage of research in the education sector is the essential discipline of working within time-frames, timetables, set parameters for research that have to be adhered to. Maintaining the schedule was important to establish rapport and was also a challenge at times whilst balancing the demands of a full-time job. Major themes were singled out during the earliest encounters with the teenage Muslims and their teachers. The major themes were issues of identity, embodied faith, culture, the importance of religion, relationships with parents, relationships with friends, tensions between religious identity and participation in PE, relationships with teachers, teacher understanding of Ramadan, teacher philosophies and teachers and inclusive practice. These themes permeated the study. Finally, the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967) that attempted to understand the major themes, was realised through a complex and interactive engagement between theory, ethnographic insight, and analysis.

iii) Limitations

Countering the strength of originality is a concern not to misrepresent the Muslim females or PE teachers in the study. In relation to the Muslim females, being female was essential to gaining access to respondents. Being white and non-Muslim positioned me differently. My consciousness of this ensured every effort was made not to allow this to affect my interpretation of the data. Having completed the study, I do believe that there are positive and negative aspects to 'being different'. Fleming, (1995), in his study of Asian male youth suggests that 'the social distance of a "cultural-outsider" enables description, analysis and understanding of a particular socio-cultural group that is not plagued by subjective "insider" biases' (p.66). My non-Muslim status assisted in some ways, since I presented no risk to the girls' position in Islam (Tinker & Armstrong, 2008). In relation to the PE teachers, my position as a teacher meant that I could understand pedagogical issues and the pressures that teachers face. However, the lack of a PE background was a challenge and meant that there were certain aspects of PE teachers' lives that were difficult to understand such as day to day pressures of teaching PE. The important point is dialogue, as both groups welcomed the opportunity to discuss their experiences of PE.

Whilst the advantages of the in-depth treatment of the subject are clear, it is important to acknowledge that with a case study approach 'there is always a concern about the representativeness of the particular case being studied and thus whether the findings can be generalised to other similar cases' (Innes 1990, p.212). As stated on a number of occasions in this thesis, it was not an aim of this study to generalise the experiences of a small collection of case studies to the wider population of students of this kind. Subsequently, their experiences are not portrayed as being representative of the wider heterogeneous population of students, or PE teachers, nor were they intended to be seen as such. The present study represents a snapshot of a group of teenage Muslim girls and their teachers at a certain point in time. This study is area-specific the sample schools contained a small percentage of Muslim student and a different scenario may be evident in other areas, such as Tower Hamlets, Bradford, Birmingham, Manchester or Glasgow. It illustrates a specimen of the population living at a particular time in a certain geographical region. Although an ethnographic case study offers suggestive evidence, the present study is not primarily intended to make claims of generalisability.

Rather it offers a detailed account of the meanings produced within a specific and bounded case study that attempts to offer analytical insight which furthers our general understanding but without making universal claims regarding its findings.

A particular facet of the research design in this study was the omission of a 'white' control group. This might be considered a limitation. It was felt less significant to use one because a deal of research exists in the field of the gender issues in PE (Williams & Bedward, 2001). Furthermore, this may have altered the confidence built between the researcher and the researched and the quality of the data. Resource constraints added to the pressures of wanting to concentrate on only teenage Muslim girls and their teachers.

A potential limitation highlighted elsewhere by Green (2008) relates to possibilities of bias, uncritical insider positioning, loss of detachment and objectivity in scientific research. According to Benn, Dagkas and Jawad (2010):

> 'all researchers have value positions and face similar dangers. Scientific approaches depend on world-view and can be complementary. Value-laden research, such as that concerned with social justice and emancipation can have rigour and quality and can contribute to the continual search to increase knowledge as a basis for decision-making' (p.10).

Moreover, Carrington (2004) asserts that the aim of social research is to re-present versions of reality, as we can never truly reproduce it. It follows from this that just as we must question our own assumptions about knowledge, subtle realism suggests that we must question the accounts of those studied; being there does not necessarily equate with knowing thus, the gap between the world as it is and the discourse of it means such realist accounts are ultimately fallible. We are still complicit as researchers in the very construction of whatever reality it is we are researching, however 'subtle'; 'that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to' (Geertz 1973, p.9). Put another way, Hammersley's subtle realism still supposes there is a reality 'out there' that is in some sense independent of our theorising of it, just that we can never be sure of gaining total knowledge of 'It'.

The best that the social scientist can hope to achieve in this context is not to regard truth as the goal of inquiry, which somehow can reveal the distinction between false appearance and any essential reality, but, more modestly, to treat social research according to its pragmatic and limited applications. Such a position suggests that we should be more cautious in the claims we make for our research and sceptical of the attempts to define and understand culture using the misleading scientific vocabulary of objectivity and truth. Rather cultural analysis, as Geertz (1997) reminds us, is more about 'guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the Continent of Meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape' (p.20). Thus, we can still make distinctions between 'less useful descriptions of the world' and 'more useful descriptions of the world' (Rorty, 1999, p.48). Despite such realities being the cornerstone of interpretivist work, the limitations that it places upon the outcomes of this study are worthy of acknowledgement.

Because of the age of the Muslim girls in the sample, they often had difficulties in verbalising their broader understanding of PE. Furthermore, they often found difficulty in articulating their experiences in PE. As with the findings of Nugent and Faucette (1995), others had difficulties in expressing their opinions in a consistent way. Their inability to creatively convey their perceptions was at times a challenge to their understanding of PE lessons, and was appreciative of the changeable nature of their experiences. Participants often gave thoughtful yet relatively immediate answers that were influenced heavily by their most recent lessons. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that, and as has been found elsewhere (Groves & Laws, 2003), children and young people have a tendency to refer in the first instance to only the most recent past, when formulating their perceptions of experience. This issue was seemingly minimised through a continual process of weekly interviews, which looked to validate the potentially tenuous responses of the previous week. However, the discrepancies between weeks still remained, and, consequently, their abstract accounts cannot be taken as a complete historical picture of their experiences.

A further limitation of this thesis is its focus on the 'micro' at the expense of the 'macro' factors, for example it has not tackled issues within Islam such as patriarchy or hegemony. The fact that these aspects are not pursued in this thesis is not a problem attributable to the study *per se* but to the path chosen for this research and the

parameters imposed by realistic possibilities. The focus here has been on an interpretive study exploring the experiences of adolescent Muslim girls and their teachers; findings were indicative of wider structural issues and forces.

One possible limitation is the remaining question about the material and whether it has 'dated'. As a part-time research student managing a full-time job in conjunction with doctoral level study has meant that time has elapsed between the data collection period and analysis as well as the writing up of the material. Although never intended, the distance I now have from the data has allowed me to approach the field-notes and interview material with a degree of critical detachment that has probably enabled a richer analysis. It has also enabled me to reflect, perhaps more openly, on my own experiences in the field. The study has been a learning process through which I have learnt about myself and about the topic under study. Thus, the study presents a rich body of ethnographic observation on the inter-relationships between PE, race and identity. Dealing with small numbers and particular life-paths, no claims are made that there experiences will exactly match those of any other groups of teenage Muslims in any other schools. The value has to be in the research process and in sharing some of their experiences with a wider audience.

iv) Research implications

Although the research carried out is small-scale in terms of samples' numbers, the emergence of certain evidence enables some recommendations to emerge from the study. In the belief that schools can play a pivotal role in facilitating the inclusion of Muslim pupils, there are also some clear implications to be drawn from this research.

It would seem imperative that teachers are encouraged to expand their understanding of Muslim girls' attitudes towards and experiences of physical activity to one that includes physical culture. This would entail exploring the meanings that girls attach to sports, activities, clothes, friendship groups, music and the media and the ways in which they relate to the physical culture (Macdonald, 2002). Moreover, Initial Teacher Training and subsequent CPD may be the very context through which to develop these wider understandings of the needs of teenage Muslim girls. There is evidence to suggest that teacher education programmes have not given sufficient attention to

critical issues of culture and diversity (Goodwin, 2007) and subjective experiences are often sidelined (Flintoff, 1993; Rich, 2001). For teacher education, the message is clear: pedagogues who wish to contribute towards more critical reflexive forms of ITT cannot afford to ignore the biographical experiences that student teachers bring with them into PE ITT programmes if we are to move beyond the rhetoric of reform and relate courses to them in meaningful ways (Flintoff, 1993; Brown, 1999; Rich, 2001, 2002; Brown & Rich, 2002).

Wright (1995), who suggests that teachers are fundamental points for change and reproduction, has usefully captured the social significance of such research. Writing in relation to gender, Wright suggests that, in their interactions with pupils, teachers have the potential to not only reproduce dominant gender discourses and practices but might also be productive in challenging them. This is also applicable to culture. Further work may be crucial in these contexts to encourage student teachers to reflect on their own biographies and identities and feed this into developing alternative pedagogies. This might be orientated towards recognizing self and other as 'different' in ways which move beyond binary relationships between two valorized and oppositional halves. The approach advocated here is premised on the qualification that real change happens at the deep level of the subjective self (Sparkes, 1990), although the onus of change should not rest solely on student teachers themselves. If we are to move towards 'subjective dimensions of change' (Sparkes, 1991, p.18) then this synthesis of intervention strategies must be approached holistically: they require professional support, and change at a number of different points, beginning perhaps at the outset of higher education courses and permeating all aspects of ITT's structure, practice and policy, and continuing professional development. Rich (2004) carried out a study on issues of equity and inclusion in contemporary PE and she encouraged third year undergraduate students to write critical reflections on their experiences of PE. Despite all the 'progressivism' of the past two decades, Rich found that many alarming 'gendered practices' were still prevalent within schooling and that for many of these students it was 'the first time they had thought about such issues'. In order to address these issues, there are a number of possible methods which might assist student teachers understanding of cultural issues in PE.

Student teachers are encouraged to keep a journal in which they reflect upon the knowledge and experiences of teacher training. They are then encouraged to make connections by positioning themselves relative to these experiences. Through this medium, student teachers can confront confusion as well as articulate points of relative certainty. The use of students' metaphors of teaching as a basis for reflecting upon their underpinning assumptions, and how these can inform solutions to teaching dilemmas, has also been advocated (Bullough, 1991). This process can stimulate students to demonstrate relationships among concepts and can perhaps include their own experiences. Furthermore, it can demonstrate the relationships between old and new identities and exposure to tools, and theories of deconstruction within their own narrative. Finally, through life histories, narratives, biographies and reflective essays, student teachers can search for critical incidents and begin to unpack their own social positioning. Sparkes (1999) suggests that life history work, which promotes critical reflection, has much to offer, by reflecting over our own narratives might be the medium through which we interrupt or transform hegemonic links between biography and practice. Through the reading of their own or another's narrative, it is an invitation to listen for the disjunctions, inter-discursive gaps, and to address those constraints on teacher's stories regarding, for example, achievement or equality. The potential of these methods should not be understated.

Even more fundamental to the on-going training of teachers are the curricula they teach throughout their careers. Continuing professional development for NQTs is only effective when inclusive issues are supported by whole school policy. Issues and policy are determined by Governing bodies and then implemented by headteachers. Governors are also required to have regard to their responsibilities under the Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000, which requires them to assess the impact of their policies. Collaboration is required if pupils are to be appropriately supported in the PE setting with a coherent policy which all staff are familiar with and implement in a consistent way. Particular attention needs to be drawn to Ramadan, kit and changing facilities. PE teachers need to take account of and be more responsive to the moral values of the children and communities that they serve. In schools where there are communal changing areas, schools can provide a choice for their pupils to change in greater privacy by the use of portable changing partitions, which may also be welcomed by non-Muslim pupils, male as well as female who are embarrassed about

their body in communal changing situations. The basic Islamic requirement for modesty should be met by the provision of a school tracksuit.

While the NCPE has many positives, it still tends to be implemented from a games-dominated standpoint. It may not be enough for schools alone to develop inclusive practice, the PE curriculum needs rethinking. The compulsory nature of PE gives entitlement to a balanced and a broad curriculum it should also be the basis of physical activity life skill for all pupils. Similarly, a less prescriptive National Curriculum would not only be welcomed by PE teachers. More flexible content and ways of working would facilitate respect for difference not only amongst pupils but also staff. Greater dialogue between teachers and pupils and between teachers and parents would be a useful starting point.

Although this study looked at two schools where Muslim pupils were in the minority, the *Every Child Matters* Agenda applies to all, including meeting the needs of Muslim pupils. In relation to Islamophobic comments, schools can make pupils aware of prejudice and enable them to contribute to a more inclusive society. Muslim pupils need to see themselves as an integral part of school life, not on the margins, or as separate. Moreover, to see their culture reflected in the ethos of the school could inspire and motivate pupils to feel that they are part of an institution which values their heritage. It is vital for the school curriculum to build upon the fusion of their faith culture and identity. The use of 'student voice' in schools could determine how extra-curricular PE provision can be effectively addressed to meet religious and cultural needs. Effective home-school liaison is also crucial not only for Muslim families, but also for those indigenous parents who do not come into school. More resources need be put into this service. It will be beneficial for the schools if they pay greater attention to the Muslim community and exploit whatever resources it has to offer. This greater dialogue between the school and parents would also be beneficial to determine the most appropriate type of extra-curricular provision. It is not enough to have the word, 'inclusive' embedded into the mission statement of the school, if this is not matched in practice. The rhetoric has to match the reality. It does not mean major changes, just acknowledgement and greater sensitivity.

v) Suggestions for further research

It needs to be acknowledged that despite the insights gained in this study, further issues remain to be explored. A deeper understanding has been offered of how difference was experienced by a small group of teenage Muslims in a particular time and space. Other issues have been raised and the following are some suggestions for further research.

As stated throughout this thesis, this study is area-specific. A different scenario may be evident in other areas, which have higher proportions of Muslim students. It would also be interesting to compare schools with a more 'traditional' ethos. The focus of this study was Muslim school girls but it would be equally interesting to pursue the PE experiences of Muslim males as the interface of Islam and PE may raise similar problematic issues. Some action research related to awareness courses to increase sensitivity to Muslim students would be useful. The research raises in an interesting way the influence of an ideological and cultural stance of the researchers themselves on the shape of their evidence and the conclusions they draw. For example, a non-Muslim researcher might portray the Muslim culture in an entirely different manner. This could be an important area of investigation.

The present study represents a snapshot of a group of adolescent girls at a certain time in certain school settings. It would be illuminating to engage in a longitudinal study of a similar group of adolescents on entrance to secondary school and followed through to the end of their secondary school to see if their PE experiences change from year 7 to year 11. All of the teachers of Muslim children are white and non-Muslim. It would be of interest to study a situation where this imbalance was corrected. For example, research could be conducted to establish if significant changes took place in a school, with a predominantly Muslim intake such as after the appointment of a headteacher of Muslim origin.

Finally, as Alasuutari (1995) argues:

> The research process never ends with the resolution of the research problem – every answer is always a partial answer, just part of the truth. Research never ends, but has to be ended by writing a report on the results, by putting a period at the end of it all. On the other hand, the answers you obtain on the research to certain questions will usually inspire new questions and theoretical problems (p.175)

Concluding Statement

In this final chapter, the key findings have been discussed in relation to the four main aims. This research has furthered the understanding of how Muslim schoolgirls experience school-based PE. The social categories of ethnicity and religion play a key part in shaping the identity of Muslims schoolgirls. The importance of parental views is clear. Nevertheless, the girls, themselves, are also constantly negotiating their own identities and subsequently creating distinct identities in different contexts without compromising their ethnicity, language and religion. These adolescent Muslim girls are not passive recipients of advice, but are actively participating in creating their identities. The girls are looking at different features of Muslim and British cultures, adopting what they like and rejecting what they dislike, thus creating multiple identities in the process and a subculture to their liking, as most immigrants do. In this way they are able to ensure cultural continuity, which is vital to the identity of ethnic minorities and which in important ways shapes their aspirations. Adolescence, as pointed out earlier, is largely viewed as a period of storm and stress and a problem stage in human development. The present study portrays an interesting picture and refutes the theoretical interpretations of adolescence, like other empirical research. If conflict exists, it is present because of living in a country where PE practices are incongruous with their religio/cultural ethos and being influenced by the media and some peers and teachers that they lead oppressed lives.

The study has confirmed the finding of previous research, which found that issues of kit, fasting during Ramadam and extra-curricular activities pose problems for Muslim pupils and this is especially compounded when teachers are not aware of these issues. The teachers are effective when they understand the dynamics of the Muslim religion and culture to some extent and teach within that framework without exerting implicit pressure on the girls to conform to the majority norm. Teachers are also effective

where they have been trained to teach in multi-ethnic schools and are, therefore, sensitive to the issues involved. Multi-cultural and racism-awareness courses appear to be indispensable for a better understanding of the pupils and making them available to all teachers, regardless of their hierarchical standing, can be advantageous.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Profile of Muslim sample and their parents

Student	Parent	Religion	Occupation	Generation	Ethnic Origin
Madhia *British Muslim*	Father	Islam	Print Worker	First	Pakistan
	Mother	Islam	Homemaker	First	Pakistani
Safath *Pakistani Muslim*	Father	Islam	Ambulance Driver	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Part-time employed (office worker)	Second	Pakistani
Soraya *British Pakistani*	Father	Islam	Taxi driver	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Homemaker	Second	Pakistani
Laila *British Pakistani*	Father	Islam	General Practitioner	Second	
	Mother	Islam	Medical Secretary	Second	Pakistani
Abia *British Muslim*	Father	Islam	Railway worker	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Machinist	Second	Pakistani
Munira *British Pakistani*	Father	Islam	Shop manager	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Homemaker	Second	Pakistani
Lafiza *British Muslim*	Father	Islam	Bus driver	First	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Machinist	First	Pakistani
Pardaj and Rabiya *Pakistani Muslim*	Father	Islam	Businessman (owns textile business)	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Works in family business	Second	Pakistani
Hafsa *British Muslim*	Father	Islam	Unemployed restaurateur	Second	Pakistani
	Mother	Islam	Machinist	Second	Pakistani

Appendix 2

Letters of consent and information to headteachers and teachers

[Date]
[Address]

Dear [Headteacher],

I am writing to you to express my interest in working with your school during my research into Physical Education. Under the supervision of Professor Ken Hardman (University of Worcester) and Professor Dominic Upton (University of Worcester), I am researching the experiences of Muslim schoolgirls within the PE setting.

My interest is in how Muslim females experience school-based PE, and I would like to understand their perceptions of PE. As such, the pupils are the focus of the study and your school will not in any way be identified. All information pertaining to this study will remain anonymous and confidential, and I would like to stress that this research is in no way aiming to pass judgements on your department, your school, or the teachers within it.

If possible, I would like to come to your school and meet with members of your PE department to further discuss my ideas and aims for the project. I have discussed this possibility with [Head of PE], and wanted to now ask for your permission to visit your school in the very near future. I would appreciate confirmation of this permission.

If you would also like to meet with me to discuss the research further, then I would be happy to do so.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely,

Jane McGee
PhD Research Student

Information supplied to Head Teachers

Dear Sir/MadamI am studying for a Ph.D. degree on a topic related to how Muslim females experience physical education in years 10 and 11. In particular, how their religious requirements for modesty may conflict with school-based requirements for a certain kit. Also whether mixed sex lessons are problematic. Certain activities such as swimming may cause conflict.

Why have I chosen this area for my Ph.D.
PE can be a really effective way to include certain groups who may feel marginalised. Also there is increasing emphasis on fitness in order to tackle obesity. I consider this to be a topical and useful area and hopefully will contribute to the literature in the area.

What previous research has found
In a study by Dagkas and Benn (2006), there were encouraging signs of positive changes driven by political sensitivities towards 'inclusion' of marginalised' groups, which allow tracksuits to be worn and increasing single-sex teaching and making showering optional and ensuring that new build facilities have more privacy in changing/showering arrangements. However, in their study Dagkas and Benn (2006) found that teacher understanding of the religious needs of Muslims varied between education authorities and varied from being able to wear track suit bottoms to more traditionalist departments where students used coping strategies such as 'pulling their socks up and their skirts down'. The biggest problems occurred in swimming especially mixed sex where parents would write to exempt their children. The tensions with the public nature of swimming were exacerbated at Ramadan, when some students did not want to swim because they were fasting.

My requirements
I need to carry out research in 2 separate schools. I shall need to interview a small group of Muslim females in Years 10 and 11 about their experiences of school-based PE, *in confidence*. I should emphasise that it will be necessary to build up trust so that they can talk about their experiences, confidence and trust will be developed over a period of time perhaps involving several meetings with the girls either individually and/or collectively.

Initially, I shall need to observe a PE lesson to get a feel for the subject as it has been many years since I participated in school-based PE! Then I shall need to interview the girls, initially alone and then possibly as a group. The time taken to build up trust will obviously vary but it is suggested that I visit on 6 separate occasions. Question items will include:-

1. Level of enjoyment of PE lessons.

2. Factors contributing to higher level of enjoyment of PE.

3. Any dislike about PE.

As I teach full-time I need to visit in my free periods which hopefully will correspond to when the girls and teachers are free

Monday: 11.45

Tuesday: 11.45

Wednesday: 13.00-15.30

Friday 11.45

I also need to interview their PE teachers separately to assess how they perceive the Muslim females and whether they understand their religious requirements. Again this will be in the strictest confidence. Question items will include:

1. Importance of religion to Muslim girls.

2. Any concessions (including adequacy) made during PE to meet religious requirements of Muslim girls.

3. Participation of the Muslim girls in extra-curricular PE activities.

From the teachers, I shall need the PE Departmental policy documents, Departmental Handbooks and mission statements and anything linked to Inclusion. Again, *this information will be treated in the strictest confidence.*

I hope that you will be able to help me with this research and I would be happy to share any of my recommendations with you.

[Address]   [Date]

Ref: Agreement in Principle for Research Involvement

Dear [Head of PE],

Further to our meeting on [Date], I would like to thank you for agreeing to take part in my research.

As explained during our meeting, to truly gain a fair representation of the child's experiences I envisage that case studies will last between six and ten weeks. To this end, this letter confirms in writing an 'agreement in principle' for me to spend time in your school during the next academic year.

I have planned that your school will be my [stage] case study, and as such I anticipate that I will be joining you sometime in [Date]. I will make contact with you again before this date so as to plan the details of my time with you, and to identify the children with which I could work. No further action is required on your part at this time. However, if you foresee any problems with this initial plan, then please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jane E McGee

[Address]

Dear [Head of PE],

Further to our telephone conversation, I am writing to confirm the dates for my visits to [School Name]. These were as follows,

[Dates and times – inc first 'initial contact' meeting].

I look forward to meeting with you on the [date of first visit].

Yours sincerley,

Jane McGee
PhD Research Student

CC: [Head teacher]

Letter of consent to parents

Graduate School
Henwick Grove,
WR2 6AJ
Tel: 01905 855000

Dear parent/guardian

I am a student from the University of Worcester researching Muslim girls' experience of physical education and I want to seek your permission to include your child in my work.

The study aims to present the opinions of Muslim girls taking part in National Curriculum Physical Education and I should very much like to interview your child on this matter. The research has the full backing of the teaching staff involved, however, I should stress that your child's comments will be entirely confidential and their identity will not be revealed in any subsequent use of material obtained.

I hope that you will give your permission for your child to be included in this research. If you are not happy for your child to be involved please return the reply slip below to the physical education department at the school

Yours sincerely

Jane E McGee
PhD Research Student

University of Worcester

INFORMED CONSENT FOR RESEARCH INVOLVEMENT

- Parent Version -

Please read the following statements carefully. Sign only when you have agreed with all of the statements and when you have had any relevant questions answered

- ➢ I understand the aims of this research.
- ➢ I am clear about what my child's involvement will be in this study and I am aware of its purposes.
- ➢ I trust that results will only be used in complete confidentiality and for the academic purposes of this study only. I am satisfied that the results will be stored securely, remain confidential, and if published will not be linked to my child in any way.
- ➢ I have agreed for my child to take part
- ➢ I know I can withdraw my child at any time
- ➢ I have had the chance to ask questions

I have read this form and I understand it. I agree for my child to take part in the study.

Child's Name:

Signed …………………………………………. (Parent/Guardian)   Date:

Appendix 4

Letter of consent (pupils)

University of Worcester

Dear (insert child's name)

I am a student at the University of Worcester and I am going to visit your school every (Tuesday) for the next six weeks. I'm visiting because I want to try to gain an understanding of Muslim girls' experience of PE. Most of the time when a subject is looked at, people ask the teachers what they think, but not the students who actually take part in the lessons! I would like to find out *your* opinions about your PE lessons by talking to you and asking you to write down what you think. I will be the only person who hears and sees what you say, so you can be really honest without upsetting any of your teachers-it's OK, they know what I'm doing and it's fine with them.

I will be coming into school on Tuesday 8th January 2008 and hope to see you in your PE lesson and then to have a brief chat about what I want to do and let you ask any questions that you need to. Obviously, you don't have to be part if you don't want to-just say so, there's no pressure but it would be really helpful to see what you think about PE.

Anyway, please let Mr. Thackery or let any of your PE teachers know if you want to join in and I'll hopefully see you on the 8th

Yours sincerely

Jane McGee

Graduate Research School
jmcgee@oshsch.com
Direct Line: +44 (0) 1384 817327

ASSENT FOR RESEARCH INVOLVEMENT

Please read the following statements. Once you have had everything explained to you, and you understand all of this information, then please sign at the bottom.

➢ I have read the information sheet about this research and I am clear about what Jane is doing in my school.

➢ I understand what my involvement will be in this study

➢ I have agreed to take part

➢ I know I can decide not to take part at any time

➢ I have had the chance to ask questions

  ➢ **I have read this form and I understand it. I agree to take part in the study.**

➢ Name:

➢

➢ Signed ……………………………………. (Participant)   Date:

Appendix 5

Interview Schedules

I am studying for a Ph.D. degree on a topic related to the experiences of Muslim females and school-based PE. Thank you for agreeing to speak to me first, I should explain that anything you say to me will not be revealed to anyone else. PE teachers and other pupils will not be able to hear what is said and in the interests of confidentiality your name and personal details will be kept anonymous.

I shall ask you a few questions about your life and experiences of school and of PE.

How long have you lived in England?

Do you have any brothers and sisters?

What does your father do?

What does your mother do?

How many languages can you speak?

Which one of these is your mother tongue?

Do you see yourself as British or Muslim? Why?

What do you think of religion?

Are you a practising Muslim? Tell me about your religious practices.

Which subjects are you studying at school this year?

Do you like school?

Do you have a favourite subject?

Is there any particular subject/subjects which you don't like?

What about PE as a subject?

What PE activities do you like?

What activities don't you like?

 Do the teachers try to involve you?

Do you think PE is an important subject?

What are the main benefits of PE?

How do you keep fit?

Do you think the PE teachers here make allowances for your religious requirements?

Can you describe the PE kit here?

Do you participate in extra-curricular PE?

Do any of the pupils ask you why you aren't wearing shorts

Do you prefer being taught by a female teacher or a male teacher?

Are your parents OK with you staying behind after school?

How do they see PE as a subject?

Do you parents encourage you to do well in certain subjects?

So you are with your parents on this, there is no disagreement?

Some people disagree with their parents at your age do you have any areas of disagreement?

Who are your friends at school?

Have you ever suffered from racism?

Tell me about your life at home and at school. Is there any difference?

What do you like to do in your free time?

Which Asian customs do you like / dislike?

Which English customs do you like / dislike?

If we go back to look at the PE kit would you want to wear shorts?

What happens in PE during Ramadan?

Do you think the teachers understand why you fast?

What are the changing facilities like here?

Do you prefer single-sex to mixed-sex PE?

Have you ever suffered from any negative remarks from other pupils in PE about your religion?

Do you report these incidents?

If you could suggests things to this particular PE Department to help what would it be?

How do the changing facilities compare to your old school?

Do you mind that they are open plan?

Could the PE teachersdo anything different to meet your needs?

Thank you for your time. I had better let you get back to your lesson we shall speak again soon.

JEM: As you know I am I am studying for a Ph.D. degree on what year 11 Muslim girls think of PE and their perceptions of PE and any religious difficulties they may have, and teachers' perceptions of Muslim girls, to see if what they want is actually being met.

The first question I would like to ask is what were your main reasons for wanting to teach PE?

I would now like to ask you what PE should be about in schools?

How long have you been teaching at this school?

And in the teaching profession?

Do you teach any other subject but PE?

Do you have any other responsibilities other than teaching PE

What influences the way in which you teach?

What are the main influences on how you deliver PE?

Do you tend to draw on how your PE teachers were with you?

What about the NCPE , has that changed the way you have taught?

Moving onto the Muslim girls now how long have you taught Muslim girls?

Do you think that the Muslim girls that you have taught that differ in any way to the non-Muslim girls in terms of their attitude and their participation?

Do you think that the school makes enough concessions for the Muslims girls here?

What about the religious festival Ramadan?

What about when they are fasting?

Water could be an issue with showering if any gets into their mouth. Do they have to shower?

Are the changing rooms open plan?

Do you find that the Muslim girls take part in any extra-curricular activities?

Are there any Muslim girls which you can say were particularly outstanding in the year group?

Do you see any resentment from the other girls to the Muslim girls wearing shorts?

Have any of the Muslim girls opted to wear shorts in the summer?

Does the school provide any INSET opportunities on multi-cultural issues?

Have you had any INSET training while you have been here?

Is there a PE policy to deal with multicultural issues?

Do you have any direct contact with any of the parents of Muslim girls?

Finally could you describe the school ethos?

Yes the ethos of this particular school

Do you think that PE is regarded well by other departments?

Do you think that the Muslim girls enjoy PE?

Do you think there is on activity they like more than others?

Do you think that they follow their religion quite strictly the ones that you teach?

Do the girls mix at all or do they tend to be friends with other Muslim girls in the main?

Thank you very much for your time. Is there anything you want to ask me?

1. **Mark Thackery Director of Sport, Birchincliffe School**

<u>Item 1. Biographical Information</u>

Length of service in current school

Ten years as Head of Sport then as Director

Length of service in the teaching profession

Twenty years I had a gap year straight after qualifying.

Subjects taught

Physical education and English

Other responsibilities at Birchincliffe School

Yes, I am also responsible for Health; I liaise with the school nurse, have responsibility for PSHE, anti bullying, after school activities, school dinners, and looking at healthy eating, healthy options on the menu; I liaise with the community sport development manager.

Main reason(s) for wanting to teach PE

I've always liked working with children, even when I was a kid I was organising activities for the younger children. When I was 10, I was organising the 8 year olds. I've always enjoyed working with kids. Teaching anything would have involved working with kids. I always wanted to teach and PE seemed like a logical extension of this.

I played in my first team at 10 in goal for football. I wasn't from a sporting background.

Teachers who go into teaching for their own love of sport is not the best reason for wanting to teach PE; you've got to enjoy working with kids.

Quality and type of PE experiences

They were a mixture of good and bad. I was fortunate to be exposed to good quality teaching and I still see some of my old teachers socially when I go back home to... (place removed to protect identity). I have a beer with them.

Item 2. PE philosophy

Personal philosophy of PE

I think PE should be about developing the person, development of interpersonal skills and the ability to co-operate and communicate with others in a pressurised situation, to accept decisions to remain calm and focussed, balanced, I think it's about self discipline, to encourage leadership, encourage others to build confidence, work to achieve success together as a team, learning about our own and others' limitations; knowing how to deal with a decision, which goes against us. In life today many kids have everything handed to them on a plate, especially this generation and in some subjects you can't fail these days. In PE you need to accept when a decision goes against you, when someone scores against you.

This helps them to prepare for failure in life like when you lose your job or when your marriage breaks up.

I also think PE is not about developing world class athletes but a well rounded individual who can respect others

Views on the length of PE lessons.

I have pushed for 1and ½ hour lessons. When I coach, I coach for 1and ½ hours. By the time the kids have got changed this gives very little time.

Status of PE in the school

Not favourable, when pupils are late to lessons as they are slow getting changed. But I think that PE is a major department. No other Department does what we do for the kids in terms of helping them to develop leadership skills and how to work as a team. We have developed leadership through the 'step into sport' programme, Junior Sport leadership programme. I agreed with the leadership aspect

Item 3. Attitudes to NCPE

Views on NCPE

What's that? (*Reference to meaning of NCPE acronym, which was clarified*)

Well the National Curriculum took my ideas, they were my ideas before the National Curriculum came along.

Perceived advantages of the NCPE

I think the NCPE is good for developing certain attributes. I was involved in the QCA consultation for this so I do feel more involved. But some teachers may feel that they had it imposed on them.

Item 4. Awareness of issues surrounding Muslim girls and PE

Experience of teaching Muslim Girls

All my teaching career, I've never been at a school where there aren't Muslim girls; this school is the highest proportion. High Wickham when I taught there, there was a high proportion of Muslim girls.

We have lots of Muslim pupils involved in PE than since I joined the school.

Concessions made during PE to meet religious requirements of Muslim girls

We try to be sensitive. In year 9 single sex PE is offered as girls are reaching puberty. In Key stage 4, although single sex-PE is an option, many Muslim girls have opted for mixed sex PE and I think in the time I have been here parents have been less controlling. I get fewer letters now excusing pupils from PE

Advantages or disadvantages of teaching Muslim girls

They are just girls aren't they? Sometimes the Muslim girls have been a little bit harder to reach but no harder than some white girls, but certainly not at the moment in this school.

Well in the past we have had year groups where they were a little more reluctant to be energetic and were a little reluctant to participate, they weren't naughty or anything like that, just getting' them to run was quite difficult (laughs). We had to give them lots of encouragement.

Improvements in participation since the kit change

Well ever since I have been here they have changed the kit, we have never had the Muslim girls having to wear shorts or anything like that, so there has been no improvement since the kit change because it's always been like that. I know that some schools still insist on the wearing of short skits/shorts, well that's a bit short sighted on the part of the school isn't it?

Perception of Muslim females' levels of participation

Well at the moment very much so I would say we have good participation levels among the Asian girls at the moment There's still some who are reluctant but also there are many white girls who are reluctant.

Perceived differences in levels of participation between the white girls and the Muslim girls

Not significant I would say we have had an influx from Darras Hall School of very positive Muslim Girls. The ones I've taught, I'm not teaching a very high proportion this year, but the ones I have been teaching have been very positive. I've been very pleased with them.

Views on how the Muslim girls who have transferred from Darras Hall have managed the transition.

I haven't spoken to the girls about it but they are very 'bright buttons'; they seem to have settled in very quickly they look very happy to me. I would imagine that they are quite pleased to be here. I think it is a positive environment for them to come into; really I don't know what they have told you? (I don't divulge but the girls have not settled in) but from what I, I don't know I haven't been to Darras Hall myself; I have been to Darras Hall for sporting events but have not been there on a school day so I don't know what the environment was like. I know that coming here they have been very welcomed and everything seems to have gone OK.

The importance of Religion to Muslim Girls

Well if they are calling themselves Muslim I'd imagine that's central to their whole life. It's like someone saying I'm a Christian; they are making a statement about what I believe, so I would imagine that it is important to them yes. I'm sure some of them are not so keen on it and some are keen on it. Every religion is interpreted differently - the bible is one book but it's interpreted in a thousand different ways and I'm sure the Qur'an the same. So you know, it's the nature of religion isn't it? People choose to live their life the way they wish to and they often fit their religion into the way they wish to live their life as much as many fit the way they live their life to their religion I'm sure that some bend their religion to live their life the way they want to.

Religious belief is one thing but people have other beliefs that aren't necessarily along the lines of there being a God and all the rest of it; that doesn't mean that they don't have beliefs, it means they don't chose to believe the religious; one has the right to choose don't they? I mean Muslim cultures are far more strict and if you are in a Muslim culture and you say you don't believe, then I would imagine that's more of a big issue, more than in a Western society saying you're not a Christian.

Other area of PE which may cause conflict for Muslim pupils

Showering I suppose... but then there isn't time to shower so most of them don't.

Changing facilities

In the girls changing room, you will find the individual cubicles but the boys have a run through arrangement, but boys should have individual showers as well. It worried the hell out of me when I was a kid, I didn't like it at all

Boys do mind but it's how its been built and it will cost money to change it. There should be showers but when you have got an hour lesson with issues like inclusion children who can hardly walk let alone change and take 15 to 20 minutes to change instead of 10 minutes you haven't got much of a lesson left so the showers are there and it is an option to change. If we go out and get really dirty and muddy and sweaty then we encourage 'em to shower but if they have gone into an indoor lesson and come back and they are not particularly sweaty then, then I'm afraid it's less of a rightful element; we have had girls who complain that they haven't been showering after every lesson but in an hour we can't do absolutely everything especially with a 15 minute

warm up and a 15 minute warm down. You are supposed to do showers at the start and at the end of a lesson and we have got kids who seriously cannot undo their buttons, and able bodied kids, we got gifted and talented kids so it's a high demand and every one makes a demand and you have to go about it and it's not easy.

Issues surrounding Ramadan

Well Ramadan, what happens is when Ramadan happens, the kids don't take part in sport.

They don't *sit out* (emphasis); they don't change and they are not physically active. What we say is at the very start after that after a week or two, or a lesson or two, we expect them to bring some kit and be involved in the lesson in some way but we *never* expect them to be sprinting, running physically exerting themselves when they are fasting. But there are other kids that fast; there aren't just the kids doing Ramadan, there are other kids in the school that fast as well, you got Mormons, you got Jehovahs Witnesses; you got all sorts of people that fast.

Well there are physically exerting activities and we are not going to change the curriculum just because Ramadan, which is twice a year isn't it?

There have been two different celebrations, yeah I thought both was Ramadan, but I'm not totally sure. Um we're not going to change the curriculum totally, but we are certainly understanding: if we have gymnastics, they can do some things; they can do things that don't exert themselves more than anybody else. They have a big breakfast before sun comes up; we have many kids who come here who have no breakfast at all, so yes, they can say I haven't had my breakfast today Sir, they have a big meal once the Sun's gone down. There is no reason in my view to stop physical activity, there is a need for being understanding; they are not eating for a long period during the day during daylight and during that period they are not going to be able to run and sprint and jump and do the same level as other people, so we understand that it is not a problem but we like them to bring their kit and be involved in the lesson in some way. They can learn a sprint start without having to do a sprint; they can do some timing if there is a long distance run gymnastics; they can do a gymnastics routine without killing themselves in any way; they can take part in passing drills in football, without going to the game, so I think there are many aspects during Ramadan which they can still take part in and I don't think we need to overreact to everything. I think people need to be reasonable on both sides. I don't see any problem with that. If we change our curriculum entirely for a minority of children does that reflect fairly on the majority? But if you understand all children and their different needs at different times that's far more acceptable I would say. I don't think that's racist, I think that is common sense.

Extra-curricular PE
Massive improvement certainly in the boys taking part and I've seen Asian girls playing football in extra-curricular clubs and I have never seen that before, and that's in the last two years, Year 7 and in year 8 as well.

At this point Miss Blanchard enters the room.

Miss Blanchard: The problem is some of their parents do not like them doing it after school; it was not a problem during the lunch time but it is after school. The problem is a lot of our Muslim children go the Mosque straight after school learning about the Qur'an and everything else. So we 'ave all our extra-curricular clubs straight after school.

Lunchtime clubs
Yeah, I mean we 'ave lunchtime clubs still but it's not a coaching session for teams. But a lot of the Asian boys attend extra-curricular clubs especially for cricket and football and others as well and it doesn't seem to affect them but sometimes we 'ave kids who just cannot come because of going to the Mosque.

Item 5. School Ethos and Inclusive Practice

Ethos of the school

I think the school focuses on high attainment, academic achievement, care of kids. Some of the kids are challenging and don't come from anywhere near the privileged background of the ones you deal with, but we do our best for them.

Mission statement of the school

Mark Thackery is unable to comment on this as he is not familiar with this area.

School policies on cultural diversity
Yes, I can't actually quote it but we have got all sorts of policies we've got bullying policies anti-racist policies; we've got policies about respecting other cultures, other people on whether they be travellers, middle class, different to you and of the course the anti-racist policies, so we definitely have that and the other thing is we are a language school and a massive part of our thing is to encourage understanding of other countries and communities, the ways they live, you know other cultures?

I've just been teaching life skills to Year 7s and it's looking at different areas of the world and it's looking at how people live and operate, obviously there's poverty involved in that and how we can help.

PE specific policies in relation to cultural diversity

We don't have specific statements that we put out to the world but we certainly make sure within our department that we cater for all our children and the reason we have year 9 as single-sex is totally dictated by the fact that Muslim girls would not supposed to want to mix with boys during puberty, certainly within a situation where they are changing. Also, our Muslim girls, well all our girls, it used to be just the Muslim girls were allowed to wear track suit bottoms, but I thought that was a bit odd that just the Muslim girls wear track suit bottoms, so I thought why not all the girls wear track suit bottoms, well all the boys as well especially when it's cold, they wear track suit bottoms over the top of correct kit; it has to be a certain colour.

Well we have an outdoor kit and an indoor kit for the boys. They wear rugby shirts, blue tops rugby tops, blue shorts and red socks and their shin pads and their boots and when they're indoors they wear polo shirts, their blue shorts and their tops. It used to be in the old days we had red shirts red shorts indoors and blue shorts outdoors, so I have made changes - it is for all the kids. Also specifically to recognise that Muslim girls don't want to show their legs, that's not part of their culture to do so but rather than illuminate that character it's not only the Muslim girls that can wear the track suit bottoms.

Views on diversity and inclusion

It's part of our way of life; I don't think anything of it really. Diversity is good of course. Yes, diversity is a positive thing.

There could be all sorts of things; it could be that being taught by a male teacher is an issue; there are two ways of looking at it. We have looked at the pressures we have had in the past what we had to do to make sure we are including. We haven't put out a prayer room if you like but there are two ways of looking at it: there's the dominant culture, which has existed here for many years, and if people choose to be educated in our system and I believe there are Muslim schools. If people choose to be educated in our system it's because they don't mind and they quite like something that we offer, um, that's not to say we shouldn't bear in mind Muslims and their needs but at the same time they need to adapt slightly to fit in with what's been successful in the past for us, um, it's a balance isn't it? It's a balance for everybody and I don't think we if we go way out of our way for specifically the Muslim girls were gonna go way out of our way for specifically other cultures, erm, other religions, other people and we try to do what we can for everybody to try and have respect for everybody an understanding of everybody, opportunities for everybody and there are classrooms where the kids can go to pray. I'm sure that nobody is in I but don't think we have ever had any demand for it; I don't think any Muslim child has ever asked in this school in the time I've been in. Certainly if they can have a prayer room no never! If they did ask then we would give it to them immediately, there's no issue with that it's not something we would say, no you can't have that it's just never been an issue its just never been raised and hasn't been brought to our attention if you like.

INSET opportunities to help them deal with diversity

We get tons of INSET opportunities we are always developing and improving our teaching.

The multi-cultural aspect has been part of it, it has not been the major part of it. I mean we are teaching individualised, er individual children. There is a massive focus on individualised learning so (pause) there's no major emphasis *here* on the multi-cultural aspect, um, as such. But I mean in the past, I was involved in the Swann Report and that was written and came into the school when I was in High Wickham. And the Swann curriculum said well actually the anti-racist policy came out of the Swann report and I was involved very much in that study; the lady was in our school and so at that time the staff was very much involved in understanding the nature of, I wouldn't say multi-cultural teaching because they actually rebelled against that they

thought it was the wrong term; they said you've got to be specifically anti-racist and fight against racism, which is what I learned through that obviously and what I've always gone with really. It's rather than being multi-cultural and accept everything you also have to stand against, make a stand against racist comments or racist views or racist attitudes and that's been a major part of my learning but I haven't done any of that in this school. It's more they like the multi-cultural every individual is important, every individual needs to be respected every individual has different values and different beliefs and they are all to be respected which is fair enough.

2. Laila – Birchincliffe School

Item 1. Biographical Information

Identity Definition: British Pakistani

Religion: Islam

Occupation of Father: General Practitioner

Occupation of Mother: Medical secretary

Item 2. The meaning of being British or Pakistani

Well the English culture is my culture. I was born here and so that makes me English. I like some of the music and the fashion. You know the 'Goth' fashion. I have got mostly red and black in my wardrobe. My parents think I am into in Devil worship! But they were only joking 'cos they know I'm not.

I am Pakistani because of my religion so I suppose I think of myself as British Pakistani. I like the music here but Pakistani weddings they are much better. Have you seen the bride's dresses?; they are beautiful. We like Asian Music but it can become a bit cheesy! We like hip hop better.

The Importance of religion

How long have you got? (laughs); well, yes it's my whole life! Like if you asked one of my friends who's not Muslim, then they would probably say like What's religion?

It's fasting during Ramadan, praying and reading the Qur'an. My parents sometimes have to remind me to pray but I don't mind 'cos I think it's important.

My parents like they don't force me, you know they just remind me and that's cool.

I'm proud of my religion and I like it the way we follow it in my family: not too strict and not too kind-a-free. I wouldn't say I'm a strict Muslim. I just pray five times a day, read the Qur'an, but I always fast at Ramadan.

Islam as a source of identity

I think religion is very important. It sort of guides you. Religion is very important, because if you don't have a   religion, you just follow anything; you have no morals. It tells you what you can do. It tells you who you are. It's like your name: if you don't have a   name, people call you all sorts of things; you don't belong. When you are in trouble, you can always ask God for help. It gives us peace of mind.

Item 3. Relationships with parents

I sometimes think that English parents give too much freedom to their children. Like the parents don't really care what happens to the children. My parents like, they give me freedom, I can go out and lots of my freinds are non-Muslim. My parents they like to know what time I am coming in, who I am going out with - stuff like that - and that's cool 'cos gives you a nice sort of freedom where you know that they care about you. Yeah, and they don't like the music I like but that's OK.

Relationships with friends in the shaping of identity

Friends understand or try to understand our religion and culture. A friend said 'your fasting that's cool right' and he tried to fast with me; friends are also good in that they don't eat in front of us when we are fasting

If they were my friends they would not force me into bars when I was older anyway and most people's perceptions of Muslims is right that we can't do things 'cos we are Muslim. Well we don't drink but there are lots of other ways to enjoy yourself. Getting drunk and not being able to remember is not my idea of a good night out.

Yeah, like it's not my idea of having a good time if you can't remember what you did 'cos you got drunk. Most think it's cool to drink as much as you can but what's cool about that. I can't see the point.

Item 4. PE Issues

Attitude to PE

It depends on what we are doing, I like netball, hockey and trampoline

The importance of PE

I think PE is important for exercise, which you don't get in other subjects where you are just sitting. But I think the lessons should be longer, the lessons here are too short; by the time we have changed, there is only about 20 minutes left and that doesn't give you enough time for exercise.

Extra-curricular PE
In year 7, 8 and 9, I played rounders.
There is no time in Yr 11 because of coursework.

Attitudes to kit

They let us wear track suit bottoms, and I wouldn't feel right wearing shorts and my parents just wouldn't like it either.

Ways of keeping fit outside school

I play badminton and tennis outside of school.

Allowances made by the school to religious requirements

I think this school is multi-cultural, there is even an Arab here now! The school is OK about girls who want to wear the headscarf but I don't think it is safe to wear it in PE. And the Muslim pinafore is allowed.

I have got a friend at Madison Girls High School (pseudonym) who is Muslim and the school don't let her wear tracksuit bottoms like they do here. If her parents knew they would be angry, but as it's a good school. She is not happy about it and would prefer to do what we do here and wear track suit bottoms

Ramadan

I think teachers should give us the option to sit out; some do but others just get on with it. Like Miss Blanchard she is really nice about it but others not so. I don't mind taking part when it's Ramadan, but some others do and would like to be given the choice, you know.

Changing facilities

They are open plan and some girls change in the toilets, but it doesn't bother me too much but I sometimes change in the toilets.

Single sex

It doesn't bother me too much if there are boys in the lesson, but sometimes they just try and show off, like the other day in volleyball, they had boys against girls and then they always try and beat us; they should like mix the teams more.

culture

religion

identity

embodied faith

Relationships with friends

Relationships with parents

Freedom

Control

Dress code/kit issues

tensions between religious identity and school-based PE

single-sex

changing facilities

Ramadan

Relationships with teachers

extra-curricular activities

teachers' views of Ramadan

teacher philosophies

inclusive PE

social inclusion.

teachers and Inclusive practice

NCPE
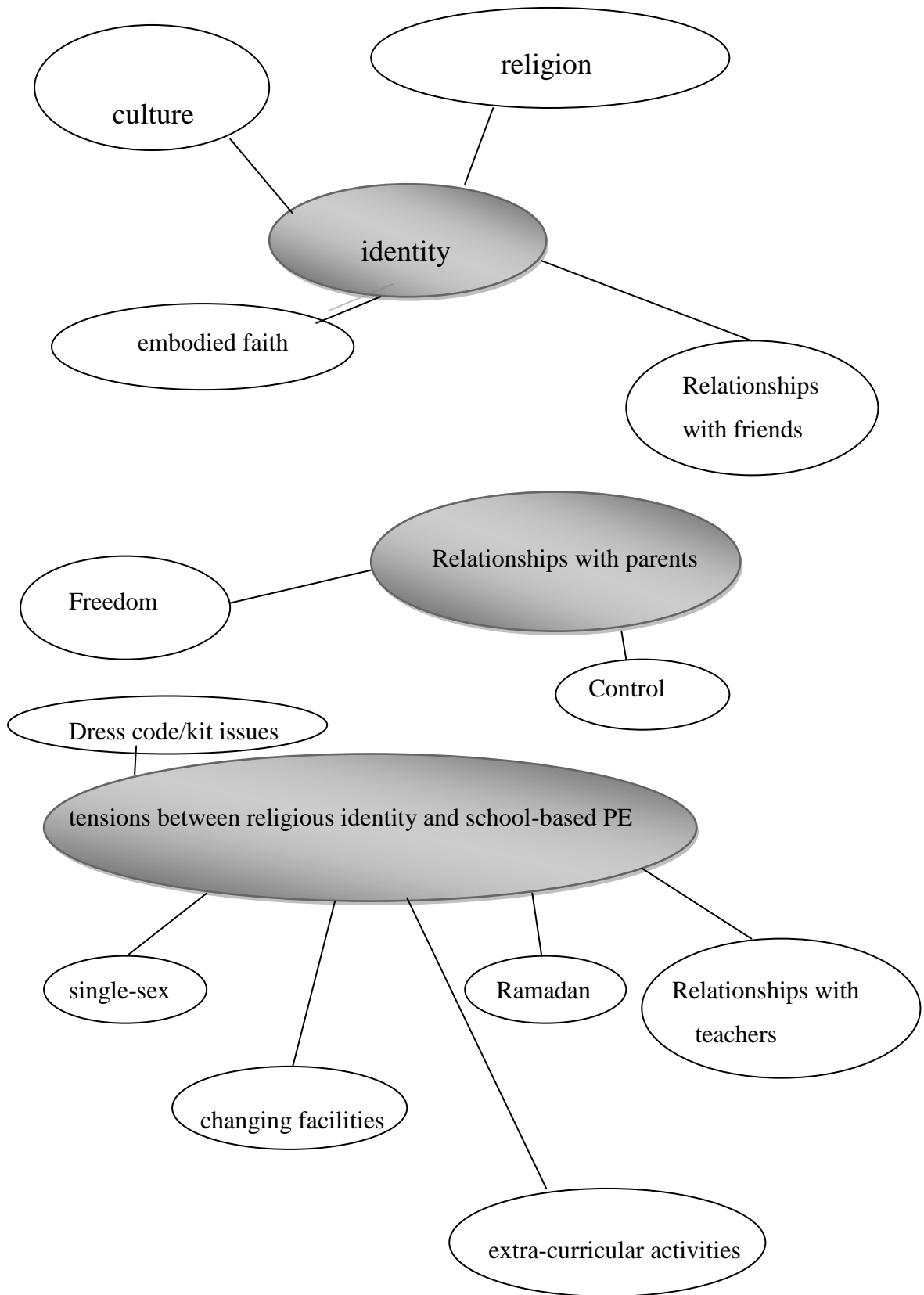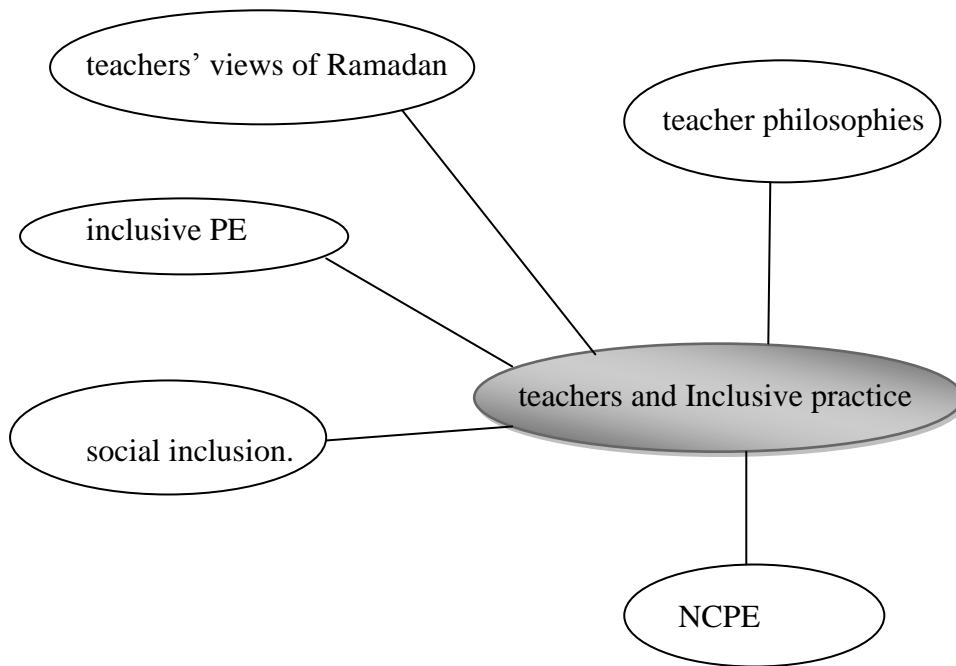
Appendix 7.

Lesson observation checklist exemplar

Checklist for observation of PE lessons Yr 11 Muslim pupils

Date:- 14/10/08
Duration of lesson; registration 11.15, lesson starts with warm up at 11.30, finish 12.15
Content of lesson: mixed badminton activity, 5 nets
Pupil participants: 26 pupils (3 Muslim girls - **Abia**, **Madiha** and **Safath**);
12 girls wear track suit bottoms and 7 do not.
Teacher: (Mark Thackery); Ms Pat Blanchard and Miss Leanne Pegg registered the group of girls. Blanchard: 'I'm not sure what they are doing or who is going to be teaching them'. Then she explained that they were in the Sports hall doing badminton. This seemed unclear, but Mark Thackery explained that 'they should be good now they have been doing badminton for the *past 6 weeks'*.

Structure of the lesson:-
Pupils change and then go to sports hall where 5 badminton nets are erected. Abia and a male pupil help to erect one net and Madiha and Safath help to erect one of the other nets. Then once the nets are erected the group start to play 4 pupils are at each net and it is a mixed group. Mark Thackery explains that the pupils were initially instructed as a group of how to erect and dismantle nets and then they voluntarily offered to do this at the start and the end of the lesson.
10 min warm up during which they hit shuttle cocks back and forth; no teacher present at this time
Mark Thackery then appears and demands their attention; appears to have the group 'under control'
1 min demonstration by Mark Thackery of 'lunge and back'
(very poor acoustics in the sports hall making hearing difficult)
Group sit down and watch the brief demonstration; He then gave direction of how to move towards the net and used the phrases 'lunge and then back'
5 min. practice
1 min. demonstration of how to cover the court and use less energy, needs to tell one of the girls (Madiha) to pay attention
5 min. practice
2 min. demonstration and explanation of long and short shots
5 min. practice
1 min. demonstration of which foot to lead with
5 min. practice
During the above Mark Thackery circulates round the various courts and reinforces his previous instructions and uses humour to rectify a particular problem rather than criticism if the pupil was finding problems with shots or service. At one point he did help Safath with her service shots, which were not making it over the nets. He is mentoring her as she is less successful at PE than the other girls who I am studying.
Then he gave the instruction the instruction to play doubles, which went on for 10 mins. until it was time to change. At this point he took the register while they were playing.
A male in full school uniform was wandering about in an aimless and sometimes disruptive manner; messing with the nets, pulling the nets and sticking his head

through the nets or throwing the shuttlecock out of court. Mark Thackery clarified that 'he was injured'. At one point he walked out of the open fire door in the sports hall into the quad area and then returned after about 2 minutes.

After this doubles' exercise, the same girls then dismantled the nets and went off to change

All three Muslim girls participated with Madiha showing the highest level of participation and persistence at the task. Abia waited in turn more and seemed less interested in the task although more skilled than Safath who did not move a great deal and waited for the shot to come to her rather than moving to reach the shot although she did try.

Teaching organisation

Pupil ID	Description
Accepts feelings, accepts and clarifies an attitude of a pupil in a non-threatening way	**None evident**
Praises or encourages pupil action or behaviour. Jokes that release tension, but not at the expense of another pupil. Nodding head and saying 'um hm' or 'go on' are included	X2- that's better when Madiha improved on a shot X2 – when another pupil improved on a shot
Criticises or justifies authority. Statements intended to change behaviour from non acceptable to acceptable	X 1 a particular shot, tells girls to stop talking, Madiha, Safath
Accepts or uses ideas of pupils, teacher extensions of own ideas.	X2 to two pupils 'that's a useful idea, let's do it'
Asks questions about the content or procedure of the lesson.	X2
Gives direction, commands or orders to which a pupil is intended to comply	X5
Explanation of the purpose of the activity (learning objectives are explained and how the activity relates to the curriculum)	

Pupil activity

Pupil ID	
Pupil task related behaviour	
Shows initiative	All three pupils observed show initiative with their behaviour at the start of the lesson, erecting nets and also at the end
Positive body language	
Negative body language	Madhia hits shuttlecock in an aimless way at the start and does not take the exercise seriously
Persisting at task.	All three persist at the task and show the same amount of participation as the other pupils
Off task behaviour	
Chatting to one	X1 (Abia) x6 Madhia and Safath
Chatting (N+2)	X2 (Abia and Madhia
Non involved resting	
Non involved gazing into space/non engaged	X1 Abia and x1 Safath
Non involved fiddling	
Non involved waiting	
Withdrawn off task watching Distracted by others	(Abia) spends approx 1 min off task talking to another pupil about what appears to be dance steps X2 Madhia and Safath
Physical Activity involvement	
On task physically active on own	
On task physically active working with partner	All three were on task for a significantly higher proportion of the lesson than not
Working in pairs but isolated from group/ class	
On task physically active working with N=2	All three
Waiting in turn	All but Madhia
Non physically active on own	
Non active with another	

Observation checklist for observation of PE lessons Yr 11 Muslim pupils

Date:- 4/11 & 18th Nov.
Duration of lesson – start time 11.40 end 12.10
Register took 4 minutes
Content of lesson – girls' netball with Miss Blanchard.
4 Muslim girls
Girls present **Safath (GK), Abia (GS)**, **Madiha (centre and then later Umpire)** and
Laila (WA)
17 girls in total 3 in shorts 14 in track suit bottoms, same both weeks

1 non-Muslim girl was injured and was not in PE kit

Teaching organisation

Pupil ID	Description
Accepts feelings, accepts and clarifies an attitude of a pupil in a non-threatening way	(4/11) Checked and showed concern when girl with spectacles was hit in the face with the netball and her glasses almost fell off
Praises or encourages pupil action or behaviour. Jokes that release tension, but not at the expense of another pupil. Nodding head and saying 'um hm' or 'go on' are included	Lots of positive reinforcement:- Well tried x3 Good x4 Well done x 6 Good girl Madiha x1, Well done Laila Teacher has a good rapport with the students
Criticises or justifies authority. Statements intended to change behaviour from non acceptable to acceptable	No criticism
Accepts or uses ideas of pupils, teacher extensions of own ideas.	
Asks questions about the content or procedure of the lesson.	
Gives direction, commands or orders to which a pupil is intended to comply	4/11 & 18/11 No explanation prior to warm up Miss Blanchard demonstrates 'you know what you are doing' Warm up consisted of gentle running from side to side of the gym, teacher demonstration, side steps, leg stretches, circle arms Safath the least co-ordinated among the whole group **Team selection:** Line up then systematic selection first in one team second in the other, then they went and chose the bibs with the positions on Procedure for shooting, tactics how high to throw if pupil is tall and has long arms use of humour, back line throw and defence
Explanation of the purpose of the activity (learning objectives are explained and how the activity relates to the curriculum)	

Pupil activity
Some girls were allowed to swap places with others and the majority had a brief rest period however all were fully focused and involved. At 12.00 on 4/11 Miss Blanchard goes to answer the telephone but they play on as if she was still there. She explained

that there was the usual range of ability with one exceptionally talented played 'Charlie'.

No difference in participation on both occasions

Safath was the least active as GK as there was less activity in the area where she was defending but the non-Muslim girl was also comparable in terms of activity levels.

All Muslim gives made positive contributions to the game

Pupil ID	
Pupil task related behaviour	
Shows initiative	Abia and Laila help Miss Blanchard move benches at the beginning of the lesson in order to give more space
Positive body language	
Negative body language	
Persisting at task.	
Off task behaviour	
Chatting to one	X2 Safath briefly with non-Muslim girl (the non-Muslim girl was also less active, Miss Blanchard explained that she ran for the school and so was active in that respect but she was nervous in team games due to an eye problem)
Chatting (N+2)	
Non involved resting	X2 Abia
Non involved gazing into space/non engaged	x2 Safath
Non involved fiddling	
Non involved waiting	X2 Abia, x2 Safath
Withdrawn off task watching Distracted by others	
Physical Activity involvement	
On task physically active on own	Madiha given task as umpire for 10 mins of the game Miss Blanchard said that as Madiha was quite assertive then this was an appropriate role for her Laila did not leave the game and was fully focussed and involved
On task physically active working with partner	
Working in pairs but isolated from group/ class	
On task physically active working with N=2	
Waiting in turn	
Non physically active on own	
Non active with another	

Time spent interviewing

Birchincliffe School

pseudonym	Age	Number of lessons observed (1hr each)	Number of interviews	Total duration of interviews	Time spent together
Madhia	14	6	5	1 hour	11 hours
Safath	14	6	4	1hour	10 hours
Soraya	14	7	3	1hour	10 hours
Laila	13	7	4	1hour	11 hours
Abia	13	5	4	1hour	9 hours

Chamberlain School

pseudonym	Age	Number of lessons observed (1hr each)	Number of interviews	Total duration of interviews	Time spent together
Munira	13	7	6	1 hour	13 hours
Lafiza	14	5	6	1hour	13 hours
Pardaj	14	5	5	1hour	10 hours
Rabina	13	5	4	1hour	9 hours
Hafsa	13	6	5	1hour	11 hours

Appendix 9

PE policies form Birchincliffe & Chamberlain School

PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

HANDBOOK

FOOTBALL

RUGBY

NETBALL

GYMNASTICS

HOCKEY

ATHLETICS

VOLLEYBALL

BASKETBALL

CRICKET

ROUNDERS

TENNIS

ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES

PHYSICAL EDUCATION HANDBOOK
CONTENTS:

1. **WHERE ARE WE NOW?**

2. **DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

3. **THE PE DEPARTMENT RATIONALE**

4. **POLICY STATEMENTS:-** Assessment, Recording, Reporting; Health and Safety; Awards and Sanctions; Equal Opportunities; Cross-Curricular; Citizenship; Literacy, Numeracy and ICT; Marking and Homework; Finance and Resources; Staff Development; Differentiation, Gifted and Talented & Learning Support.

5. *PROCEDURES: Valuables; Kit and Changing; Pupils excused from activity (Lesson Observation sheets); Pupils missing too many lessons; Cover for absent teacher; Procedures to cover inclement weather.*

6. **NATIONAL CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

7. **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME**

Where are we now?

The last base line for our self-review was the 2003 OFSTED inspection. The report outlined the following points as "Key Issues" after the inspection:-

- take steps to ensure the opportunity exists for pupils to evaluate their work
- develop examination opportunities in PE
- use facilities effectively
- Arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' achievements and progress need further development to be brought into line with National Curriculum expectations
- Organise positive experiences for pupils excused from physical activity
- Develop opportunities for coaching and officiating in year 11
- Create a more balanced curriculum
- Develop system of monitoring teaching and learning

Initial action in response to Ofsted inspection (as outlined in the Department Improvement Plan from 1999 onwards):

- All schemes of work have been updated in order to focus on the four main strands identified within the National Curriculum 2000:
  - ➢ Acquiring and developing skills
  - ➢ Selecting and applying skills, tactics and compositional ideas
  - ➢ Knowledge and understanding of Fitness and Health
  - ➢ Evaluating and improving performance
- GCSE PE has been introduced and two cohorts achieved 64% and 61% A* - C respectively. It is developing well.

- Programmes of study have been reorganised to ensure optimum use of facilities.

- An entirely new system of monitoring and assessing pupil performance has been developed to:-
  ➢ ensure staff record relevant information regarding the development of individual pupils
  ➢ focus staff on required learning outcomes when teaching and assessing
  ➢ set challenging targets and provide suitable support for individual pupils
  ➢ ensure reporting to parents is accurate
  ➢ satisfy the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000.

- A lesson observation sheet has been developed by the Department to encourage pupils excused from physical activity to take a purposeful interest in the lesson and further develop their ability to evaluate and improve. Such pupils are also encouraged to take on roles such as officiating., coaching, recording, organising and monitoring others' performance

- KS4 units of work have been developed with a focus on ensuring pupils develop leadership skills through organising, coaching and officiating
- The Programme of Study was changed to ensure a better balance and breadth of experience for our pupils (ie reducing the Games, introducing Adventurous activities and creating more time for Gymnastics and Athletic activities)

Subsequent developments:
Over the last five years the Department has sought continual development and improvement. To keep abreast of national developments in Physical education, an immense number of changes have taken place including:

- Achieving the Sportsmark Award
- Becoming one of the host schools for the School Sport co-ordinator programme within Dudley
- Introducing an annual 'Festival of Sport' for our feeder primaries run by our young leaders in year 10
- Creating sports leadership opportunities for KS4 pupils
- Aquiring a cam-corder to record and review performance during lessons
- Updating ICT provision within the PE Department as part of the Dudley Grid for Learning developments
- Developing links with University School of Worcester and mentoring Postgraduate PE students
- Developing positive links with sports clubs in the community
- Introducing a Fitness for Life element into the KS4 programme to ensure all pupils gain the knowledge and understanding of how to develop a Personal Exercise Programme
- Creating more extra-curricular opportunities for our pupils
- Creating Inter-form sports competitions to ensure all pupils have access to competitive opportunities
- Creating a Summer School for Gifted and Talented pupils (in sport and PE) for pupils from some of our feeder schools

- There has been a focus on opportunities within PE for the development of literacy and communication skills
- Displays have been improved and developed to provide a stimulating environment and to assist the knowledge and awareness of our pupils about the ways in which they can improve in PE
- Many aspects of the citizenship SOW are being addressed within PE lessons

Present Strengths?

- We have received the Sportsmark Award in recognition of our high quality PE and Sport programme, both curricular and extra-curricular
- We believe teaching and learning is a strength within the department as we are a team of very good practitioners
- We are a team of experienced teachers who are highly committed to providing opportunities for physical activity for our pupils.
- We are always looking to introduce new, worthwhile initiatives that may benefit our pupils
- We are adaptable and creative
- We are self-critical and keen to build upon past successes and failures
- We have strong links with many of our primary feeder schools
- Staff have positive attitudes towards Inclusion
- We provide a balanced PE curriculum
- Our pupils are generally very responsive and co-operative
- The pupils achieve high standards within curricular and extra-curricular programmes
- We are actively involved (organising as well as competing) with competitive leagues and cups in a large variety of sports
- GCSE has been successfully introduced and we have achieved at or above the whole school % for A* - C. This is way above the National average.

Further improvements?

We recognise difficulties that can hinder our progress but are totally out of our immediate control such as
- Losing PE areas at examination times
- The provision of only one hour of PE a week at KS4
- The physical environment of the school causes the necessity for the males and females to be in separate areas rather than being able to share offices
- The need for the improvement of the quality of changing and showering facilities at the gymnasium
- Difficulties caused by the poor quality redgra surface and the slippery nature of the tennis / netball courts when wet (mentioned in previous OFSTED report)

Such difficulties are extremely inconvenient and have led to frustrations on occasions but we are always looking for funding initiatives to help improve facilities and we adopt creative methods of programming to minimise the negative effect of such problems. We prefer, however, to focus on aspects of the programme that we can develop.

We are a department that continues to look for improvement to build upon our past successes. Our improvement plan for 2003 focuses on the following:-

- **Target setting and monitoring**:
  - ➢ KS3: Continue to focus on ensuring monitoring files are used effectively by all staff. Enter information into whole-school 'Integris' monitoring programme.
  - ➢ KS4: Develop system for central storage of information – on PE system initially (Excel) then onto the whole school system on the 'Integris' programme.

- **Review Provision of 14-19 curriculum**: KS4 provision to provide Leadership opportunities Two members of the Department have been on a course and are developing plans for the introduction of the Junior Sports Leader Award in September 2003 for our Key Stage four pupils
  - ➢ One member of the Department has recently become a tutor for the FA Football Organisers Award. All our PE staff can therefore be trained to deliver this course. This will also be introduced in September 2003 for our Key Stage four pupils
  - ➢ We are looking for the opportunity to train another member of the department to deliver the Netball Organisers Award
  - ➢ Continue Top Link Festival planning with Year 10 pupils. (All pupils involved have attended a day course at Worcester University and are in the process of planning the festival. Sports Co-ordinators are holding coaching sessions in Primary schools to develop basic skills and understanding).

- **Inclusion / Pupil support:** We have a unit for hearing impaired children in our school and we have other pupils with individual problems such as ADH, partially sighted, wheel-chair bound, dyspraxia, autism etc. All these pupils are entitled to the provision of high quality Physical Education that we try to provide. We have taken the following steps to ensure each child receives their entitlement:-
  - ➢ Pupils with difficulties have been identified and strategies tried out to ensure learning in Physical Education is a positive, enjoyable experience. Two courses on Inclusion in PE were identified and staff designated to attend them. Unfortunately these courses were cancelled so we are still looking for further training opportunities.
  - ➢ Target pupils' progress is discussed within the Department and our provision for them is reviewed and developed.
  - ➢ Advice and help are sought out if and when required
  - ➢ In GCSE PE pupils with learning problems have been identified and groups have been changed. We are now working with three groups in order to reduce distractions for the majority, further extend the most able, offer the required support for the pupils who have been identified as in need of such support.

- **Equal opportunities:**
  - ➢ Focus on our extra-curricular provision to ensure participation among target groups such as girls, ethnic minorities and pupils with disabilities. Registers are now being kept at such clubs to enable accurate analysis.

- **Curriculum update:**
  - ➢ A course in trampolining has been attended by one member of the department (to maintain our provision of gymnastic activities in KS4).

- ➤ Football and Netball have been identified as sports where further professional development would be beneficial to the department.
- ➤ Staff members have been identified to attend courses.
- ➤ One aim is to achieve the FA charter mark for schools.

- **Display of pupils' work:**
- ➤ A digital camcorder has been acquired to record and show pupils' work
- ➤ GCSE pupils are involved in creating displays to demonstrate knowledge of the functioning of body systems during exercise
- ➤ Previous displays have been updated and new ones set up.
- ➤ Tapes have been made for display on open evenings
- ➤ Pupils perform on Open evenings.
- ➤ Photographs are used for displays.

- **Literacy:**
- ➤ Literacy display is used to identify and focus on strategic words and technical language for PE
- ➤ Pupils are encouraged to communicate clearly and in a positive manner throughout all units of work

- **Numeracy:**
- ➤ A planned strategy has been developed to be included in the SOW for athletic activities. This involves pupils measuring, timing, and discussing optimum angles (of release during throwing events and take-off during jumping events).

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL

Head of Department:	Mr Mark Thackery Joined Birchincliffe in September 1998
Head of Girls' PE:	Mrs Patricia Blanchard Joined Birchincliffe in Sept 1988
Teacher of PE:	Mr Barry Slade Joined Birchincliffe in 1997
Teacher of PE: Head of Years 10 and 11.	Mr Neil Haden Joined Birchincliffe in 1984

THE PE DEPARTMENT RATIONALE:

The Programme of Study comprises four Activity areas:-

i. Athletic Activities
ii. Adventure Activities
iii. Games
iv. Gymnastic Activities
The basic philosophy of the Department, in accordance with the National Curriculum 2000, is to encourage involvement in a wide range of activities through Key Stage

three. The focus is on skill development and decision-making in years 7 and 8 with the emphasis changing to developing leadership skills in Year 9 in preparation for Key Stage Four. We offer the opportunity to specialise, acquire more complex skills and knowledge as well as develop leadership qualities in Key Stage four. Each individual component of the programme is designed to equip students with knowledge, skills and understanding enabling maximum enjoyment during participation.

The Department encourage other staff at Birchincliffe School to undertake regular physical activity and we consult with parents/carers, pupils, governors and various outside agencies (such as the School Sport Partnership in South Dudley) to monitor and develop the programmes we offer. The introduction of the 'Activemag' programme in Dudley has given us greater opportunity to seek, listen to and react to 'pupil voice'. This enables us to identify barriers to participation and seek to overcome them.

GCSE PE offers opportunity for students to extend their theoretical knowledge, their skills and their ability to evaluate and improve. Students select four practical activities and follow a compulsory theory programme consisting of the study of the main body systems, factors affecting performance, and fitness and safety in sport.

In addition to ensuring that Physical Education is accessible to all pupils through lessons and Inter-form competition, the Department endeavours to maximise the possibilities of pupils achieving at their full potential. We present opportunities to receive expert coaching within school and direct pupils to outside agencies where the appropriate level of expertise is available. Indeed we are very proud of our extra-curricular clubs and our strong formal links with a large number of community clubs and coaches.

Links with the community (including feeder Primary Schools, Sixth Form Schools, Clubs and Sport Centres) have been enhanced since our involvement in the School Sport Co-ordinator Programme. We greatly value the opportunity afforded us to work with our partner schools and schools to support colleagues and develop greater curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for all pupils in our family schools.

During Physical Education lessons various teaching styles are adopted (see individual Schemes of Work) to give variety and to suit the needs of individual learners. However, the maxim that pupils should feel involved in the process of learning is the one that prevails. Consequently opportunities are given for the pupils to solve problems they encounter through planning, evaluating initial attempts and making subsequent modifications in an atmosphere and environment conducive to enjoyable, safe activity. Knowledge and understanding are thus generally demonstrated through performance.

Great emphasis is placed on physical performance during lessons as this is the essence of the subject. However permeating our work, there is the desire to foster in pupils
- the ability to co-operate and communicate effectively when under perceived pressure,
- to be familiar and at ease with both success and failure
- to develop the capacity to appreciate the abilities and limitations of self and others
- to develop a respect for the conventions of sportsmanship and 'fair play'

- to develop leadership skills

POLICY STATEMENTS:

Assessment, Recording and Reporting:

In line with whole school policy the department makes continuous assessment of all pupils.

Each pupil is assessed against agreed learning outcomes (covering the four strands) that are specific to each activity area and year group. Assessments against each of the learning outcomes are entered into the Monitoring files and a National Curriculum level is recorded.

(It is recognised that we are under no legal obligation to provide performance levels until the end of each Key Stage. However, the school policy is to provide interim levels to be reported to parents during each year of the pupils' time at school ie years 7,8,9,10 and 11. It is the general consensus within the department at present that awarding a level for each activity will enable us to make more objective assessments in each year of the pupils' development).

At the time of each year groups' reports or internal monitoring, the levels for each activity area and the comments are taken into account and an interim or end of key stage level is allotted to each individual. Reports follow the whole school format with tick boxes for subject-specific National Curriculum statements and a hand written report.

We are looking to set up a PE Record of Achievement for future year groups

Awards and Sanctions:

Awards: The PE Department adhere to the Whole School policy of distributing merit stamps to deserving pupils at any time the teacher deems suitable. Certificates are awarded to a selection of pupils during presentation assemblies for years 7, 8 and 9 and at presentation evening for years 10 and 11. A sportsman and sportswoman of each year are also selected and awarded prizes during the presentation events.

In addition:-
Special certificates for 'Most Improved Performer', 'Outstanding Performer' and 'Outstanding Effort' have been developed and are distributed to deserving pupils at the end of the Spring term and the end of the Summer term each year.

Three pupils are identified for each PE group (this includes two forms). It is good practise to ensure that these pupils are not the same on each occasion. At the end of each school year Junior and Intermediate Colours will be awarded to pupils from Year 9 and Year 11 who have made an impressive commitment to School Sports.

Sanctions: The Department adhere to whole school policy, with the class teacher taking immediate action to reprimand pupils and modify behaviour. If a pupil is

disrupting the lesson consistently, the office should be informed and the pupil removed from the lesson by a senior teacher who is 'on call'.

When behaviour problems occur, detentions should be administered and if necessary adverse comment slips should be deployed (in most cases these serve to reduce confrontation). All such cases must be referred to the Head of Girls' PE (for girls) or the Head of PE as well as the form tutor of the pupil concerned. All problems should be noted in the monitoring file.

Equal Opportunities:

It is recognised that powerful influences are exerted on children from outside school that have a profound effect on the formation of their attitudes and beliefs. It is also recognised that teachers have considerable opportunity to influence these attitudes and beliefs.

In line with whole school policy, the PE Department seeks to develop an educational environment in which there is recognition of the positive benefits and opportunities afforded by living in a multicultural society.

We strive to make learning experiences equally attractive to all students and create a positive climate of equality of opportunity where all students can strive to achieve their full potential.

No student should be disadvantaged or discriminated against because of race, gender, disability, or any special need consideration.

We are focused on promoting positive role models among all pupils.

We attempt to challenge prejudice by following a policy of inclusion and support in our teaching, in the structure of our lessons and in the curricular and extra-curricular opportunities we provide for all pupils at Birchincliffe School.

Cross-Curricular Opportunities:

The PE Department has a contribution to make in many cross-curricular issues addressed within the school.

We have a large overlap with Science and GNVQ Health in our KS4 programme.

Literacy, numeracy and ICT feature prominently in the delivery of our subject.

A major component of the Citizenship programme can also be addressed through PE lessons.

(These issues are dealt with separately. Individual policies are planned and delivered through the PE programme of study).

Differentiation

The PE Department appreciates the individual needs of all pupils as well as the importance of ensuring that all pupils achieve success of some kind.

It is important that we enable pupils to develop the skills that will help them achieve success. It is also important that each pupil is faces a suitable challenge, difficult enough to motivate them and encourage them to try hard, but not too difficult in order not to dishearten them.

This is a difficult and challenging target for teachers as all pupils work at different levels. Some require more support, others need to be extended to maintain levels of motivation.

It is therefore vital that planning takes place to ensure differentiation in a variety of ways to allow for the vast and differing needs of a whole class of 30 pupils. The Birchincliffe PE Schemes and Units of Work have therefore been developed to include enabling as well as extension experiences.

Our methods include differentiation in a variety of ways, the most common of which are:-
- in the outcome (different levels of performance expected from different pupils)
- in the task set (easier, directed tasks for the less able, harder, open ended tasks for the more able)
- in the level of information and teacher support the pupil receives
- in the equipment used to complete the task (PE equipment can easily be modified to make the task easier or harder)
- in the work space or playing area provided
- in the time allowed to complete the task.

Individual performance is monitored and individual needs are noted (see monitoring, assessing and reporting policy). As a result we are able to set targets for pupils to ensure they are aware of the expectations we have for them as individuals.

Gifted and talented

In line with national requirements, the PE Department tries to ensure that all pupils achieve at the highest possible standard.

In curriculum time, gifted and talented pupils are identified and monitored along with all other pupils. However, the expectations placed upon them are greater and tasks set should be more challenging.

Differentiation takes place in the variety of ways mentioned above. We also encourage gifted and talented pupils to take on responsibility for their own and others' learning at an earlier stage. Leadership skills such as organising, coaching and encouraging others are also important aspects of their development.

All gifted and talented pupils are encouraged to attend extra-curricular sports clubs within school where they receive high quality coaching and are exposed to competition against other schools. They are also encouraged to link up with clubs in the local

community. In many cases the PE staff actually take pupils to local clubs for introductory coaching sessions or the clubs visit the school and run coaching sessions.

All performers with outstanding ability are encouraged through the school or the clubs, to attend trials at District, County and even National level, or are exposed to high level competition.

It is vital that gifted and talented pupils are protected from over exposure to competitive events and training. The PE Department liaise closely with parents and clubs to ensure a sensible balance is achieved. Whenever it is necessary such performers must be rested.

At Birchincliffe School, we have been very lucky to be involved in the Dudley MBC National pilot scheme, running a Summer School for the gifted and talented in PE and Sport. Gifted and talented pupils from six of our feeder schools are identified and invited to attend an 8-day course during the summer holidays.
The course focuses on skill development as well as theoretical aspects of high level performance; safety in sport, nutrition, basic physiology, fitness testing and improving and psychological elements of sports performance.
This has been a great success and will hopefully become an annual event. As a result, we have already identified and worked with 20 talented pupils starting at Birchincliffe in September 2002.

Learning Support

Pupils with special needs considerations are identified and Individual Action Plans are distributed to Departments in School. The PE Department adheres to the action plans when applicable to PE. We also identify for ourselves those pupils who have movement difficulties or lack of self-confidence in PE.

Once identified, pupils are monitored and assessed on a regular basis. Some department meetings are used to discuss targeted pupils and strategies suggested to help.

We are able to use PE staff to support some lessons which proves to be very useful and other support staff are often assigned to individual pupils or whole classes.

Specific targets for PE should be set at the identified Department meeting and discussed with the individual pupil by the class teacher.

Staff Development

The School has achieved 'Investors in People' status which indicates its level of commitment to individual staff development. The PE Department strives to maintain the whole school commitment towards its staff. Individual staff professional development plans are created along with the Department Improvement plan each year. Immediate and long-term professional development needs are identified for individuals and courses or developmental training opportunities are identified.
The budget available, to some extent, restricts amount of external courses staff can attend. However where external courses are too expensive, all other avenues are

explored to ensure staff members receive training. (Shadowing experienced colleagues, internal courses etc).
The Programme of Study is often adjusted to allow team teaching opportunities that enable staff to develop their teaching skills with colleagues.

Clubs and Fixtures:

All PE clubs at Birchincliffe School are open to all pupils (for the targeted age group) irrespective of ability. Hence the large number of clubs and practises held in the mornings, at lunchtime and after school. (see extra-curricular provision)

During club practises, the focus is on developing and improving skills and tactical awareness.

A full weekly programme of competitive sport exists (see club/fixture programmes) in which our teams play in local, county, regional and national competitions.

Where possible, we also strive to create 'B' fixtures to allow more frequent competition for less able pupils. If a pupil attends practises regularly we try to ensure that s/he is involved in competitive and / or friendly games. We also ensure that where opponents are less challenging we rest our more able performers and give others opportunity to compete.

Our expectations of pupils attending clubs are outlined in the extra-curricular session. We are producing a pamphlet for pupils and parents to explain such expectations. These pamphlets will be mailed to all parents and guardians of year 7 pupils.

Kit and Changing:

Pupils must wear correct kit for the activity in which they are involved.

KIT LIST:-

BOYS ESSENTIAL: Towel, red athletics vest / polo shirt, reversible rugby top, red shorts, navy rugby shorts, red socks, trainers, football boots, shin pads.
OPTIONAL: Cricket whites, plain blue or black track suit and/or sweat top.

GIRLS ESSENTIAL: Towel, red polo shirt, blue or red sweat top, navy shorts, red socks, trainers, football boots, shin pads.
OPTIONAL: Plain blue or black track suit.

Staff should also wear appropriate kit for each activity, setting an example for the pupils.

Spare kit is available for those pupils who have failed to bring kit or have unsuitable kit. If this becomes a persistent problem then contact should *usually be made with home and detentions given.
*In some cases there may be problems at home that make it difficult for pupils to either obtain correct kit or organise themselves to bring correct kit to school on a regular

basis. (These problems could be financial or due to family splits where pupils are regularly living in two different homes).

It is important that the teacher should be sympathetic enough to recognise if such problems may exist. The Department can also help in such cases by lending spare kit (that is reserved for particular pupils) or by keeping a pupil's kit in the PE office so that it is always available for lessons.

If a pupil refuses to wear kit then s/he should be issued with an adverse comment slip and set some written work for the lesson. The HOD should be informed and a detention issued. The parents should be contacted for the issue to be discussed.

Jewellery is totally unsuitable for physical activity. All jewellery must be removed before the lesson and placed in the boxes for valuables.
Correct footwear must be worn and laces tied effectively at all times.
When it is cold, plain blue or black tracksuits can be worn over the top of correct kit but only at the class teacher's discretion.
When showering, swimwear may be worn in the shower.

Pupils excused from activity:

To be excused from any PE lesson, a pupil must have a note from home that explains the nature of the problem and is signed by a parent or guardian.
If the problem persists for more than three weeks then it is common practise to request a note from the medical professional treating the pupil.

If such a note is not forthcoming then the class teacher should arrange a meeting with the parents or guardians of the pupil concerned to discuss the nature of the injury and the action to be taken to ensure positive learning experiences in PE for the pupil.

The HOD should be made aware of such meetings and the outcomes.

Any pupil excused from activity must still be involved fully in the lesson:-

Lesson Observation sheets have been devised to enable such pupils to maintain a focus on the lesson content and develop observation skills required for analysing, evaluating and improving performance.

Other tasks for pupils excused from activity may include officiating, recording, organising equipment and other pupils, coaching, advising etc.

Cover for absent teacher:

If a teacher knows in advance that s/he will be absent then work (usually theory for a classroom-based lesson) should be prepared and left for the cover teacher.

When possible and necessary, specialist PE supply staff are used to cover absent PE staff. This ensures continuity, allowing the department to adhere to the Programme of Study.

When specialist supply staff are unavailable other staff cover the lessons. If the covering teachers are willing, then practical activities are set up for them to supervise.

In some cases, where desirable and/or necessary, other PE specialists within the department will cover the lesson with the non-specialist supervising their class. This depends upon the staff and facilities available.

If none of the above is possible then work sheets, videos and texts are available for the covering staff to use in a classroom.

Inclement weather:

When possible, inclement weather should not prevent outdoor lessons from taking place. The final decision rests with individual teachers however and the indoor facilities can be shared when poor weather or poor ground conditions dictate.

It is department policy to maintain the programme of study for as many groups as possible, when possible. This entails two groups working (on adapted tasks) in the Sports Hall, one in the Gymnasium and one in the weight room or in a classroom.

There are occasions however, when severe weather conditions determine a deviation from the POS with the boys using the Sports Hall and the girls using the Gymnasium (this is dictated by the positions of the respective changing rooms).

Inter-form Competition:

Inter-form competitions are now written into the POS. During the penultimate week of the Autumn half-terms and the Spring term, Inter-form sports competitions take place during the Key Stage three programme. During the penultimate week of the summer term Sports Day takes place.

With the exception of Sports Day, competitions take place within the two lessons in the week, forms C, D, E and F, and forms H, J, K and L compete in two separate leagues in two different games (Football and Rugby for the boys; Netball and Hockey for the girls). The first two placed teams in each half year group then qualify for the semi-finals which, along with the final, are played on a lunch-time of the final week of term.

The time limit of the games is decided by the staff at the time, but 7 – 10 minutes is the norm in order that all games are completed.

The rules of the tournament can be agreed upon by the teachers in liaison with the pupils in Key Stage three. In Key Stage four the pupils are responsible for agreeing on rules. The age and experience of the pupils is a deciding factor.

It is vital that **all pupils** participate in the league games and enforced rolling substitutions are made where necessary to ensure this occurs. When reaching the semi-finals all form members are strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the lunch-time games.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS:

An effective National Curriculum allows the school to meet the individual learning needs of pupils and develop the distinctive character and ethos rooted in the local community. It is the entitlement of all pupils to have the chance to succeed whatever their individual needs and potential barriers to their learning.

At Birchincliffe School the PE Department adheres to the requirements set out in the National Curriculum document, providing a balanced programme of study and using level descriptors and attainment targets for assessment purposes.

Through our programme of physical education we promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

We provide opportunities for pupils to develop key skills such as communication, application of number, use of information technology, the ability to work with others, the ability to evaluate and improve their own performance and the ability to solve problems for themselves.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

We are proud of our extra-curricular traditions and achievements.

It is our aim to provide as many extra-curricular sport opportunities as possible for the pupils at Birchincliffe School. Where possible, teachers run clubs and all interested pupils are encouraged to attend.

Club sessions are run in the morning, before school starts, at lunchtimes and after school if there is no competitive fixture or meeting. The timing of the club practises depends upon the teacher's availability.

Games clubs usually include one practise each week and a competitive fixture each week throughout the season. Such clubs include football, netball, hockey, rugby, basketball, cricket, rounders, tennis and volleyball.

Athletics and cross-country clubs also involve practises and competitive meetings, whilst badminton club runs twice a week and pupils are entered for local competition (usually weekends) if they wish.

Other clubs run in school include gymnastics, boys' dance, GCSE dance, step aerobics, weight training, trampolining and rock climbing. Archery takes place in our sports hall in the evenings and is offered to our pupils.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and the Castle Award offer many pupils the opportunity to practise for and take part in expeditions in local and wild / mountainous country.

It is expected that pupils will make strong commitments towards these clubs in order that they can operate effectively. Such commitment should involve regular attendance,

(even when injured in order to observe and help coach team mates), good behaviour, attendance at team meetings and keeping coaches informed of any problems.

A pamphlet for pupils involved in extra-curricular clubs has been produced and will be distributed to year 7 pupils in September each year.

Appendix 9b: PE POLICY DOCUMENT CHAMBERLAIN SCHOOL

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

The purpose of Physical Education is to enable all pupils to work towards beoming independently active within the school and local community. In achieving this outcome the school aims:

> *"to provide for all students irrespective of ability, culture ofr gender the experiences of equality of opportunity of access to all aspects of the curriculum...to think in a positive way about themselves and to show tolerance and mutual respect towards others".*

At Chamberlain School this is achieved more specifically in the following areas of the department:

KEY STAGE 3
All students will have access to all activities on the curriculum. Student groupings vary according to the year they are in and to maximise learning.Some are grouped in form, some set according to ability and gender, and some have either the same or a different teacher.

KEY STAGE 4
All students have access to all activities on the curriculum. Individual students opt for their two major activities.

RESOURCES
Selection and use of resources make a vital contributionto ensure that all pupils have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. Ongoing development of the programme to give students with disability access to the whole curriculum is occurring through liaison between the class teacher, Head of Department and NNEB'S.

STUDENTS
All students are of equal worth and are encouraged to achieve their full potential in all areas of the curriculum.

STAFF
A policy of employing a balance between male and female staff within the department exists and therefore promotes positive role models for students.
Racist, sexist and other discriminatory behaviour will not be accepted by staff or students.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

The PE Department recognises that students have particular learning needs, some who require special provision to achieve basic requirements and others who require special provison to work beyond basic requirements. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to adopt strategies within lessons which suit the needs of all students.

- Students with an IEP are highlighted pink on the register
- It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure the IEP's are read thoroughly and understood so that work and activities can be planned effectively. Staff may use the department/additional needs department pro-forma for detailed action planning as required.

- Any difficulties should be referred to Rowena Ward in writing
- Special medical considerations for each student are given to staff a to the beginning of each year. These should be highlighted in green on the register and activities/provisions made accordingly.
- Updated information will be distributed as it is received

Rowena Ward July 03

CHAMBERLAIN SCHOOL – PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT INCLUSION POLICY – GENERAL & SEN

In all relevant respects, the PE Department's 'Inclusion Policy' is governed by, and therefore reflects, that of the School. The Department's overall policy is comprehensive, embracing constituent policies on differentiation, special educational needs, multicultural education and gender. In addition to these constituent policies there are several other areas of PE education that need to be separately mentioned in a comprehensive policy on inclusion, i.e

1. Setting/mixed ability
2. Teaching styles
3. Entitlement of access to the whole course of study
4. Progression within the course of study
5. Special educational needs

1. Setting/Mixed ability

Ways needs to be found of catering for the needs of students of all abilities which will fully challenge the most able students, and encourage those of average abilities and below to higher levels of achievement. We have devised a curriculum at Key Stage 3 that we believe is a major strategy towards achieving this aim for PE.

- In Year 7 students are taught in mixed ability, mixed sex groups, 6 groups made from 5 forms. On some occasions a lower group is designed to cater for a large number of physically disabled or SEN students.
- In year 8 and 9 groups are divided to make six groups (half year group), this allows for a more beneficial and safer learning environment when considering student: staff ratios. Within each half year group students are set in the following way; one higher boys group, one higher girls group, one core boys, one core grils group and two foundation groups.
- In years 10 and 11 students opt for two activities in which they feel they will achieve their highest standards. Groups at Key Stage 4 tend to be mixed gender and ability. There may be times during an academic year whn the GCSE group are all taught together ie; during fitness.

Within each group there will be a range of abilities, therefore teachers exercise very considerable care in devising tasks and activities, the nature, features and requirements of which, will enable them to be accessible to students from across the ability range. This means that, when both devisng and implementing tasks for specific groups of students, teachers pay careful attention to a wide range of factors – see later for the plicy on Differentiation.

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2. Teaching Styles

Students should encounter a variety of experiences/activities during a course of study and during a lesson if possible. There should be opportunities for individual and/or group activities. Staff should encourage students to pursue a piece of work over a period of time e.g skills practice. The department staff regularly exchange their experiences of the Scheme of Work at Department meetings- the success and failures of different strategies are a prominent part of this exchange. For further details on the variety of teaching styles see the policy on 'Differentiation' and the Scheme of Work.

3. Entitlement of Access To the Whole Course

All students within a year group follow the same Scheme of Work. Some individuals, groups or classes may work at a faster pace and/or study more extension work than others.

4. Progression within the Course of Study

There is an implication in the way that many National Curriculum subjects are set out, in the apparent hierarchy of levels, that students learn fundamental concepts in a linear fashion. This is not necessarily the case and much care needs to be exercised in the construction of a scheme of work. We accept that some students make what appears to be erratic progress through the levels. For this reason our Scheme of Work for Key Stage 3 is a spiral/progressive system that allows, in as much as possible, for concepts to be revisited. The course is modular with most modules being visited in each of the years. The current scheme of work appears to satisfy the needs of students of all abilities. It is also sufficiently demanding to test the most able students to the full, and encourage those of average abilities and below to new levels of achievement.

5. Special Educational Needs

For P.E teachers working with students who have been formally designated as having Special Educational Needs, the following policy on differentiation which is concerned with devising tasks, teaching in relation to those taskes and assessing students' responses to them, it is equally applicable. Sometimes necessary changes engendered by the particular statement of SEN will need to be made to the teacher's normal tasks, resources, responses, and support or group structure. To ensure that students who have been designated as 'gifted' are appropriately challenged, teachers frequently modify the scale and/or the extent of the tasks with which they are presented. In addition, such students are encouraged to demonstrate their skills to their peers and/or to practice with similarly 'gifted' students, wither from this school or from some other in the locality- this may involve the students in joining a local sports/athletics club.

For the less able, tasks are usually presented or re-presented in several different ways. Teachers tend to afford these students more time, provide them with additional support by way of explanations and extra resources and allow them time to complete their tasks at a relatively slower pace. Pedagogical and related decisions and actions regarding any students who have some sensory impairment, communication problem or physical handicap are taken only after consideration with those in the School who have specific responsibility for their welfare and support. The School and the Department encourages any such students to use their normal aids to speaking, listening, reading or writing. In striving to meet individual needs, teachers make substantial and increasing

efforts to provide any recommended computational, technological or other facilities, in order to adapt work spaces, routines, equipment or furniture.

Inclusion Policy- Differentiation.

In all relevant respects, the P.E. Department's 'Inclusion Policy' is governed by, and therefore reflects that of the school.

Differentiation occurs when there is planned intervention by the teacher with the intention of maximising the achievements of students based on their differing individual needs. Differentiation can be described as having five main components, ie.

1. **Resources**
2. **Tasks**
3. **Response**
4. **Support**
5. **Group structure**

Each of the five components of differentiation are explored in detail below and exemplars of current good practice within the Department are noted. The most important prerequisite of good differentiation is good and accurate knowledge of students. This relies upon cross phase liaison, links within the Deaprtment, links across the whole School and home/school liaison.

1. Resources should

a). Have an appropriate readability level and/or be easily understood.
We provide a word-list for each topic – this aids whole school language development. Staff aim to use familiar language and everyday examples in discussions with the students.

b). be easy to use.
Worksheets are typed/word processed. Instructions are clear to understand and to carry out

c). be well designed.
We provide students with quality worksheets.booklets. We use our own and published materials.

d). be in many different forms.
Sports equipment, gym apparatus, texts (department and library) worksheets, booklets, P.C., C.D. ROM, Tape/Video recording, posters, etc.
Teachers must consider the extent to which, and the means by which students with strong preferences for particular learning styles can be accommodated. More specifically, they consider how they might cater for students who prefer to learn from visual sources (reading from books or viewing slides), those who prefer to learn from auditory sources (listening to a visitor) and those who prefer to be physically involved (engaging in role play).

e). have a scheme of work that indicates a planned use of available resources and that shows progression and continuity within the course.
These features were central in the construction of our scheme of work.

f). be kept in well managed storage/retrieval systems.
Our resources are well mananged and ordered. Our worksheets are kept in the department resource area clearly labelled with their contents. Videas, texts and computer programmes are centrally stored and filed in the department resource area.

g). prepare students for the methods of study that they will be expected to use.
We inform the students at the start of each year as to the Deaprtment's safety rules, policies, procedures and codes of conduct. We provide G.C.S.E students with varius help sheets and information.

h). build study skills into the Scheme of Work. (G.C.S.E).
We return students written work with a slip that clearly shows what we expect to find in their file work. Students may have to revise for tests-these are perceived by the students and parents as important. We go over specific questions from the test as as to clarify the finer pints of 'examination technique'.

2. Tasks

N.B. When both devising and implementing tasks for specific groups of students, teachers pay careful attention to a wide range of factors, including:

- The language in which the briefs for the tasks are presented and explained;
- The way in which that those briefs and explanations are constructed;
- The kinds of key terms and concepts involved
- The cognitive levels at which the students can operate, and their ability to structure information;
- The students' abilities to engage in research and to studey independently
- The students' technical, organisational and physical competencies;
- The nature and relative demands and hazards of the equipment, techniques and other resources to be used.

In some instances, teachers come to the conclusion that, for the most-able or gifted students in a group, they need to devise some related and appropriate extended task(s). On the other hand, teachers frequently find the 'least able' students in a group tasks to be broken down into component parts, require more instruction, and need additional aids and support of one kind or another.

Tasks should:
a) *show variety throughout a topic and within a lesson of possible.*
See the Scheme of Work for a list of suggested activities.

b) *be suitable for the abilities of the students.*
We review and assimilate the responses thet students make on their topic self-assessment sheets regarding the work that they 'found hard'. We have a variety of resources and strategies that can be used to match the students' ability. We make a particular point of starting from a position of existing knowledge and skills, within a familiar context, and then moving on to new activities. Both written and spoken questions/vocabularly are structured to enable students of all abilities to understand and respond.

c) have a structure that enables the student to stay on task.
Lists of the tasks can be written on the board, e.g. circuit training and practice routines. We can display additional source material for students to refer to, e.g posters. We provide structured briefs, often as printed sheets for theory work in GCSE.

identify possible outcomes.
Demonstrations by staff, students and visitors can be used to illustrate possible outcomes and to inform and motivate students. GCSE project work should be accompanied by a brief to illustrate the areas that must be covered and to show the types of outcomes that might arise, e.g a report, a presentation or a magazine article.

d) *match the students' interests.*
We review and assimilate the seponses that students make on their topic self-assessment sheets regarding the work that they enjoyed or 'did well at'.

e) *allow for some choices to be made by the student.*
Students may, with the teacher's guidance, choose in a variety of formats, e.g.
   i.   their role in a team game;
  ii.   the order in which to research various features of GCSE;
 iii.   a choice of activities within a module, e.g. football or tramplolining.

f) *allow the teacher to build a learning route through a study topic*
The scheme of work is designed to allow for continuity and progression. The teacher can pick his/her own route through the topic within the limitations set by seasonal weather, accommodation and equipment.

3. The **Response**
N.B. The need for teachers to become appropriately familiar with their students' ability levels in the different areas and aspects of their P.E is fundamental to successful differentiation. Until teachers do attain that degree of familiarity they may onlty be able to identify their students' ablity levels with any certainty after, though sometimes also during, the completion of their responses.

The **Response** should:

a). *make course objectives clear to students.*
Each course has a clear content list that detailes the topics studied in each year.

b). *make assessment criteria clear to students and include a learning log.*
We involve students in their own achievements in the National Curriculum by 'user friendly' versions of the 'End of Key Stage' descriptors.

c). *create an atmosphere where students discuss their own work and each other's work .*
We encourage students to comment on and discuss each other's work in positive ways. Effective pieces of work may be read out or shown to the class as an example and sensible comments invited.

d). *be given to students in small groups.*

During lessons students may work individually or in small groups of two, three or four. The formation of small groups allows students to discuss matters and problems. It allows staff more personal contact with students and greater opportunities to build confidence and direct students.

e). *allow for individual action plans to be built for students.*
The self assessment sheets allow the students to review their own work and to set targets for an individual action plan. There is insufficient time for staff to effectively work with all students in formulatin individual action plans.

f). *reflect what the student has achieved and consider the student's previous achievements*
We endeavour to use constructive criticism and advice at all pertinent opportunities.

4. Support can be

a) *from other students.*
We encourage students who finish a task quickly to help others

b) *from the teacher*
This can occur during a lesson or often in staff's own time, e.g. at break times and lunch time.

c) *From appropriate resources.*
Sports equipment, gym apparatus, texts 9department and library), worksheets, booklets, P.C., C.D.ROM, Tape/Video recordings are all well integrated into the scheme of work.

d) *By celebrating achievement*
We celebrate achievement in many different ways especially through the commendation system. The presentation of trophies and medlas to high achieving individual students during awards evenings and assemblies is an occasion that the whole School population and parents enjoy. For further details see the Department policy on rewards and sanctions.

5. Group Structure
N.B. The advantages, or otherwise, of teaching the students individually, in small groups or as a whole class is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Group Structure can support differentiation if:
a). *we examine the structure of the teaching groups*
Groups are set in years 8 and 9 to accommodate high achievers and a number of students with Special Educational Needs.

b). *we teach in small groups.*
During some GCSE classwork and many physical activities students work in small groups of two, three or four students. This helps to support the co-operation between the students and builds up the confidence of the less confident student. The need to express their thoughts to others often helps students to prepare for project work and the more open ended tasks.

c).we are flexible within the group when setting tasks and responding to individual needs.

Students will be able to develop their independent working methods and increase their progress if some aspects of the course are taught in this way. The more able will benefit from the intensity of such work. The less able and less confident student will benefit from the privacy if she/he is making errors. It is important to match the task to the students' ability in each case if progression is to occur.

INCLUSION –MULTICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

The growing number of contemporary sportsmen and women from different ethnic groups achieving success in a variety of sports helps to present a positive image of the different culture. The camaraderie and equality of sport at all levels is also used to further enhance the sense of equality of different races, ethnic groups and cultures.

1. Teachers operate within the whole School Multicultural Policy, ensuring that the P.E.Department reflects this policy as closely as possible.
2. Teachers use all appropriate opportunities to challenge prejudice as it arises and a consistent approach to dealing with racist incidents.
3. Teachers help students to acquire the knowledge and to develop the skills and attitudes that are necessary to engender an understanding of, and a respect and support for,cultural differences and thereby, helping to further cultural and racial harmony and social cohesion in a multicultural community. Along with playing its part in the realisation of these general aspirations, the Department seeks to promote a greater understanding of the nature and significance of P.E., whatever and wherever its origins.
4. Teachers will accordingly, wherever appropriate and feasible:
   - refer, and help their students to respond, to examples from a diverse range of cultures, and in particular, to those that are represented in the community/student group. Dance is a good vehicle by which one can explore anti-racist topics and various forms of discrimination;
   - draw upon the relevant 'first-hand' knowledge, understanding and experiences of the students in a group who, typically, are of diverse cultural origins
5. Teachers are encouraged to visit sporting events with their students, and to invite visiting sportsmen/women. The visitors will provide exemplars, expertise and insights pertinent to a culturally diverse society.
6. Members of the Department, when choosing and developing their resources, strive to ensure that:
   a) they portray a world view as seen from different cultural perspectives and thereby communicate how it feels to be of another ethnic or cultural group;
   b) they are factually accurate and use up-to-date text and illustrations;
   c) they don not:
      - stereotype individuals or groups;
      - equate the white man with "civilisation";
      - use paternalistic approaches to other people or cultures;
      - reduce all non-western societies to the exotic, picturesque and primitive;
   d) they show the achievements and attributes of different societies, both past and present, e.g. Ancient Greece and Zulu warriors;
   e) they show children of different ethnic groups involved in the activities;
   f) they positively and realistically portray children from a variety of ethnic and cultural groups and class backgrounds;

g) they have illustrations that avoid caricature
h) they actually reflect the population of Britain today.
7. Teachers draw attention to ways in which evidence can be misused to assert a point of view.
8. Teachers use self-evaluation by departmental discussion to assess the implementation of this policy.
9. The teachers can, by careful use of language, also avoid reinforcing stereotypical views of society.