



# Muslims in the EU:

## Cities Report

Preliminary research report  
and literature survey

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**Researchers:**

**Dr Serena Hussain,**

Research Fellow, School of Geography, University of Leeds,  
LS2 9JT, United Kingdom

Email address: [serena.hussain@gmail.com](mailto:serena.hussain@gmail.com)

and

**Tufyal Choudhury,**

Lecturer in International Human Rights Law, Durham University and Senior Policy  
Advisor to Muslims in EU Cities Project, Open Society Institute

Email address: [t.a.choudhury@durham.ac.uk](mailto:t.a.choudhury@durham.ac.uk)

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### **List of acronyms and abbreviations**

FNSEM	Fourth National survey of National Minorities
FAIR	Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism
MCB	Muslim Council of Britain
MAB	Muslim Association of Britain
BMF	British Muslim Forum
PSA	Public Service Agreement
BNP	British National Party
YMO	Young Muslim Organisation
NHS	National Health Service
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
COMPAS	Centre on Migration Policy and Society, University of Oxford

## Background

This research paper, focusing on the situation of Muslims in the United Kingdom (UK), was commissioned by the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP)<sup>1</sup>, of the Open Society Institute (OSI).<sup>2</sup> Similar reports have also been prepared for Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden.

The overall aim of this series of research papers is to provide a comprehensive review of available research on Muslims in each of these countries, including a bibliography covering the most recent relevant publications. Another aim is to facilitate the selection of a number of EU cities for inclusion in the new OSI monitoring project initiated in 2007 – ‘Muslims in EU Cities’ previously known as ‘Muslims in the EU: Cities Reports.’ This project will address policy on Muslims at the city, or municipal, level as opposed to the national level, which is the more usual level of analysis for cross-country monitoring. It follows on from previous EUMAP reports, addressing the situation of Muslims in Europe, in particular the 2004 report, *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens*.<sup>3</sup>

Each of the research reports follows the same methodology, to provide comparative information, across the countries covered, according to a common methodology prepared by EUMAP.<sup>4</sup> Part I of the report evaluates the availability of data and other information on the situation of – specifically – Muslims in the United Kingdom, in the following areas: population, identity, education, employment, housing, health and social protection, policing and security, and participation and citizenship. Part II addresses the policy context in the United Kingdom, in particular with regard to the perception of Muslims, media portrayal and perception, and integration policies. Part III looks more specifically at the potential suitability of six cities and towns in the United Kingdom with significant Muslim populations for inclusion in the OSI ‘Muslims in EU Cities’ monitoring project.

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<sup>1</sup> Full details on the EU Monitoring and Advocacy Program (EUMAP) can be found at <http://www.eumap.org>.

<sup>2</sup> Full details on the Open Society Institute (OSI) can be found at <http://www.soros.org>.

<sup>3</sup> The full report, as well as previous EUMAP reports on the situation of Muslims in France and Italy, can be found here: <http://www.eumap.org/topics/minority/reports/britishmuslims>.

<sup>4</sup> The methodology for the research papers is available on the EUMAP website ([www.eumap.org](http://www.eumap.org)).

## Executive Summary

While a Muslim presence in Britain can be traced back over 300 years to the sailors from the Indian subcontinent that were employed by the British East India Company, large scale migration of unskilled male workers from South Asia took place in the 1960s. Many of these men were later joined by their families. A significant number of Muslims were also among the East African Asians who began arriving in the late 1960s and early 1970s under pressure from the 'Africanisation' policies in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Since the 1980s, Muslims also began to arrive in the UK in significant numbers as refugees from the Balkans, East Africa, the Middle East, and Turkey.

Since the 1980s, research studies have tracked the growing salience of religion in the identity of Muslims. These studies provide a picture of the complex and diverse reasons for the foregrounding of religion in the identity of Muslims. These range from the impact of experiences of discrimination, prejudice, violence and disparagement of religion in creating in-group solidarity, through to the role of Muslim identity in the empowerment of young women and men.

The question in the 2001 Census on religious identity provides a rich source of data on Muslims. It shows that in 2001 there were 1.6 million Muslims in Great Britain. In terms of age structure, Muslims have the youngest demographic profile as a faith group in England and Wales. Over 60 per cent of all Muslims are under the age of 30. Approximately half of Muslims living in Britain were born in the UK. The Census data demonstrated that there are Muslims in every local authority in the UK except the Isle of Scilly. 75 per cent live in 24 cities or authorities, in the five major conurbations of Greater London, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, and the East Midlands. Birmingham is the local authority area with the largest number of Muslims in absolute terms. The five local authorities with the highest proportions of Muslims are Tower Hamlets, Newham, Blackburn, Bradford, and Waltham Forest. Muslims in the UK are disproportionately represented in the most deprived urban communities. One third of the Muslim population live in the 10 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods.

Most academic research on minorities in education has focused on ethnic groups rather than Muslims as a group. Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, who constitute 50 per cent of Britain's Muslim population, have been the main reference groups in research when looking at the educational attainment of Muslims. Research in education, on Muslims as a religious group, rather than ethnic groups, has focused largely on state-funded faith schools and the experiences of Muslim women in education. Literature on the latter has explored Muslim women's aspirations, the value placed on educational qualifications for women by Muslim communities and within Islam, single sex schools and obstacles faced by Muslim women within the education system. The Census does provide some baseline data on levels of education among the UK population which can be disaggregated by religion.

In education, Muslims have a higher than average rate of participation in post-compulsory education and at the same time have the highest rate of young people without qualifications. A large part of this, of course, reflects the lack of educational

qualifications among the first generation of migrants. The key debates surrounding differences in attainment seem to point towards socio-economic status, differential effects of cultural discrimination and social capital in the form of family encouragement and expectations as the main factors for the diversity in educational attainment.

Many Muslims feel that various key arguments against state-funded Muslim schools demonstrate the level of prejudice towards Muslims and Islam, and myths surrounding the goals Muslims have for their community's educational welfare. Key criticisms of Muslim schools are that they are monolithic and that children who attend such schools will not appreciate or understand diversity. Johnson and Castelli's (2002) research on Muslim schools in England described most as multiethnic schools, drawing children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. They argued that although such schools are mono-faith they portray diverse interpretations of Islam. They point out that some establishments are increasingly gaining reputations for educational excellence.

According to the 2001 Census, Muslims demonstrate the highest levels of economic inactivity when compared with all other groups. Among young people aged 16–24, Muslim men reported the highest proportions of unemployment (three times greater than the national average). Muslim women in this age cohort have unemployment levels that are twice that of the national average. Muslims are concentrated in jobs such as cooks, sales assistants/retail cashiers/checkout operators, process plant and machine operatives, assemblers and routine operatives, sewing machinists, taxi/cab drivers, labourers in foundries, waiting staff and security guards. They are also concentrated in professions including restaurant and catering managers, software professionals, medical practitioners, chartered and certified accountants and civil service administrators and assistants.

Discrimination is one of the factors that are identified as impacting on the employment position of Muslims. Others include the unequal impact of the decline in certain industries in producing long-term unemployment. Many Muslim communities are concentrated in areas that faced the greatest decline of traditional industries. They were therefore among the most severely affected in terms of loss of jobs. This, coupled with the fact that the majority of these communities had no formal training or skills (human capital), meant that they were unable to find opportunities in other sectors.

Just as post war commonwealth migrants were at the bottom end of the labour market, they also found themselves at the poorest end of the private sector housing market. Chain migration led to clusters of communities on both regional and intra-urban levels. There is however, little evidence to support any claims of 'normative' self-segregation; of Muslims preferring to live in Muslim only areas. A study of census data shows that all Muslims in England live in wards with mixed populations.

The 2001 Census found that in respect of housing tenure, approximately half of Muslims reported owner occupation, compared with 68 per cent of the population as a whole. A practice of pooling together their limited resources mean that Pakistani Muslims report high levels of owner occupation although often in over-crowded housing in undesirable areas. In addition, Muslims reported the highest percentage



living in social rented accommodation, at just under a quarter of respondents, compared with one in five in the general population.

Some studies suggest that discrimination and Islamophobia ‘contributes to health disparities – “difference in the incidence, prevalence, mortality and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist” - among Muslim minorities’. They argue that ‘societal forces of marginalisation and “faith-blind” health policies challenge the health of Muslim families and their access to culturally appropriate care’ (Laird *et. al* 2007: 924). The 1999 Health Survey for England includes data on religious affiliation and the 2001 National Census also included cross-tabulations of data on health by religion. When controlling for age, Muslims reported the highest proportion of males (13 per cent) and females (16 per cent) stating that their health was ‘not good’. Females were more likely to report that their health was not good across all groups, however the groups with the largest gender gaps were Muslims, Sikhs and then Hindus. Muslims also have the highest rates of disability when controlling for age structure. Almost a quarter of females (24 per cent) reported having a disability, as did 21 per cent of males.

One key area of debate within the area of health and services is the low take-up of services by ethnic minorities. This is of particular relevance to Muslims as they demonstrate higher proportions of poor health and disability, suggesting greater need and support from outside formal services. Some research suggests that the low take up rate of family support services was not due to a lack of willingness to share the care of their children but because the services offered were either not fully articulated to the parents or were found to be inappropriate. Some service providers view the issue as being more related to group preferences than any other factor. Stereotypes of extended family life and minority communities feed the assumption among service planners and providers that South Asian people are more willing to look after their own than the White majority. This is an assumption that not only relies on the fact that those in need of support have extended families members at hand, but also that such families members are willing, if able, to provide support.

Research around issues such as policing, community and criminal justice and victimisation have focused on ethnic communities. British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely than other groups to be the victims of household crime and of racially motivated attacks. More recently there has been research focusing on the experience of Muslims in prison.

Studies that examine the impact of anti-terrorism laws on the actions, behaviours, perceptions and attitudes of Muslims contends that anti-terrorism measures construct Muslims as the ‘enemy within’ and are a form of anti-Muslim racism. Some suggest that measures to deal with the financing of terrorism negatively impact on opportunities for remittance payments by Muslim migrants, ‘criminalise’ the use of the *hawala* money transfer system and place Islamic charities under suspicion and thereby reduce the level of donations they receive. There is also concern about the impact of the increased use of stop and search powers in increasing a sense among Muslims of being ‘under siege’.

Muslims have been politically active in the UK and have mobilised on the basis of religious identity to secure protection from religious discrimination and

accommodation of religious needs. Over time they have also developed a variety of umbrella advocacy and representative organisations. The discourse of participation in national bodies first shifted from participation from the good of the 'ethnic community' towards the good of the 'Muslim community' and is now shifting from the good of the Muslim community towards the 'common good' of wider society.

A survey exploring people's prejudices, carried out in early 2005 found that around 58 per cent of people did think it was important for society to respond the needs of Muslims. In that survey, the majority (66 per cent) of people were supportive to equal employment opportunity measures toward Muslims, while 19 per cent thought that such measures had gone too far. The majority expressed positive (38 per cent) or neutral (43 per cent) feelings towards Muslims, although one fifth expressed negative feelings about Muslims. A quarter of respondents said that they did sometimes feel prejudiced against Muslims but would not let it show, while nine per cent said they did not mind if they came across as prejudiced against Muslims. When asked whether particular groups were accepted as British, Arabs were the ethnic group and Muslims the religious group that people felt were least likely to be regarded as British. Around one third of respondents viewed Muslims as posing a cultural and physical threat to the UK.

The negative portrayal of Muslims in the media has been the subject of several studies and reports. A study by the Institute of Race Relations explores how press reporting around anti-terrorism arrests contributes towards an atmosphere of Islamophobia, they note that 'in numerous occasions there is great media fanfare as the police herald the arrest of a so-called terrorist cell, only for the cases to be quietly dropped days, weeks or months later.'

A key element of the government's integration strategy is to ensure protection from religious discrimination and violence. In relation to discrimination, the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1660) came into force on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003. The regulations aim to implement the Employment Directive 2000/78/EC. The regulations prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on grounds of religion and belief, in respect of employment and vocational training. They also apply to discrimination by institutions (including universities) which provide further or higher education. The Equality Act 2006 extends the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief to the provision of goods, services and facilities. In addition to this, the Equality Act 2006 creates a new Equality and Human Rights Commission, which is tasked with the responsibility of enforcing this legislation.

'Community cohesion' emerged as a central aspect of integration policy that has developed as part of the response to the disorder that occurred in several northern mill towns during the summer of 2001. Commissions of inquiry into the riots identified the lack of 'community cohesion' as underlying the breakdown in order. Following the London Bombings of July 2005, a Commission on Integration and Cohesion was created to consider how local areas can play a role in 'forging cohesive and resilient communities. A key proposal in the Commission's final report is for 'a new national campaign that promotes our shared future based on a number of key principles – those of rights and responsibilities, visible social justice, and the somewhat old fashioned sounding ethics of hospitality'. It also warns that the goals of building integration and

cohesion cannot be met if the discrimination experienced by some groups within society continues.

# PART I: RESEARCH AND LITERATURE ON MUSLIMS

## 1. POPULATION

### 1.1 Patterns of Muslim migration in Britain

A Muslim presence in Britain can be traced back over 300 years to the sailors from the Indian subcontinent that were employed by the British East India Company. More arrived following the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the subsequent recruitment of sailors from Yemen into the merchant navy (Sherif 2002, Ansari 2004). Significant Muslim communities developed in port cities such as London, Cardiff, Liverpool, Hull and South Shields, the oldest of which is the Yemeni community (Halliday 1992). The British Nationality Act 1948 gave members of the Commonwealth the right to freely enter, work and settle with their families in the UK. Migration of Muslims to the UK increased significantly from 1960 onwards as a result of labour shortages in the post-World War II period. Britain invited citizens of the Commonwealth to fill vacancies, resulting in many of today's British Muslims having South Asian descent. A clear demonstration of the growth of British Muslims since the 1960s is the rise in the number of mosques. In 1963 there were only 13 mosques registered in Britain. The number grew to 49 in 1970 and doubled in the space of five years to 99 in 1975, and again to 203 in 1980 and almost doubling yet again to 338 in 1985 (Vertovec 2002).<sup>5</sup>

Ansari (2004) describes the large scale Muslim settlement to Britain as occurring in two broad phases: firstly 1945 to the early 1970s; and then the second phase from 1973 to the present. Lewis describes four phases, 'first the pioneers, then what is known as "chain migration" of generally unskilled male workers, followed by migration of wives and children and finally the emergence of a British born generation.' Hussain suggests that a three-fold division is more useful. First, the period from 1945 to approximately 1970, this is characterised by the arrival of young male migrant workers. Secondly, the period from around 1970 to approximately 1990 with family formation and the establishment of a generation born in Britain. A third section covers those who arrived from the 1990s as asylum seekers and refugees rather than economic migrants (Hussain 2005).

The first phase of migration was to fulfil the needs of Britain's post-war economy. The expansion of production relied upon large numbers of migrant workers, many of whom were Muslim, mainly from Pakistan. Muslim migrants were attracted by the opportunities for financial gain this otherwise undesirable employment offered. The pay in Britain for manual labour was up to 30 times greater than for equivalent jobs in some of the countries of origin (Shaw 1988). However, when considering events occurring prior to or during peaks of migration it is clear that poverty was not the main motivation for uprooting and settling overseas.

The building of the Mangla dam in 1960 had left some 250 villages submerged, displacing 100,000 *Mirpuris* who, although they might previously have been cautious

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<sup>5</sup> Since 1854 there has been an official register of places of worship for England and Wales. However, registration is voluntary.

about migrating, took up the opportunity offered by the British Government to assist in rebuilding the UK economy. Similarly, the Bengali Muslims, who moved from Sylhet to Assam prior to partition did so to take up more advantageous land tenure. However, once Assam became a province in the new India, they returned to Sylhet (then East Pakistan, now Bangladesh) as refugees finding themselves with little or no other opportunity for economic betterment than migration. However, Lewis (2002) argues that migrants did not come from the poorest areas, but rather from prosperous farming areas and places with a tradition of emigration.

Many of those who arrived initially as pioneers were joined by members of their villages, and *biraderi* clans or kin networks, who often helped motivate prospective migrants to take the risks involved. This process is often described as ‘chain migration’. Ballard (2004) argues that the majority of migrants made their journeys to specific localities for settlement as a result of acquiring information about the opportunities within those towns and cities prior to migration. The knowledge of such opportunities was passed back to the villages left behind through channels of kinship, friendship and clientship. Ballard writes, ‘As a result what may seem at first sight to be mass migratory movements invariably turn out on closer inspection, to be grounded in a multitude of kin – and locality-specific processes of chain migration.’ (2004:1). It is therefore not uncommon to find communities who resided in the same villages re-established in neighbourhoods within the UK.

Not surprisingly, due to the availability of work in the industrial sectors, early pioneers headed for some of the main industrial conurbations and, when joined by other migrants, Muslim communities began to emerge in areas such as: Greater London, the South East, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Lancashire in England; in Scotland, central Clydeside; the ports of South Wales; and in Northern Ireland, the capital, Belfast.

In the early 1960s, immigration legislation, influenced by growing racial tensions, aimed to halt the inflow of migrants. However, this paradoxically led to an enormous rush to ‘beat the ban’. Migrants saw this as a crucial period in which to take the decision to migrate and to bring over their families, wives and children. Once the Immigration Act 1970 was in place, the stream of migrants decreased although this was far from the end of Muslim settlement in Britain.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, East African Asians began arriving under pressure from the ‘Africanisation’ policies in Kenya and Tanzania, and in the case of Uganda, as a result of forced expulsion (Hansen 2000, Twaddle 1990). The East African Asians were highly skilled urban middle-class professionals and entrepreneurs; they tended to settle in London and the Midlands. Their experience of living in urban centres combined with their business and professional background ensured faster integration into economic and social structures. It is estimated that 20,000 of the group of 150,000 East African Asians were Muslims, mainly Islamali Shias with family roots in Pakistan or the Indian state of Gujarat (The Runnymede Trust 1997).

While Muslims from South Asia constitute 68 per cent of the Muslim population in the UK, there are other significant Muslim populations in Britain. However, there is more limited research and literature focused on these groups. There are for example, estimated to be around 120,000 Turkish Cypriots and 80,000 mainland Turkish and

Kurdish people in the UK (Enneli *et al.* 2005). These three groups, while connected, have very different migration histories. The earliest to settle in the UK were the Turkish Cypriots. Tensions between Turkish and Greek communities in Cyprus created pressure for migration in the early 1960s. Turkish migration from Turkey of largely male migrant workers started from the late 1960s and early 1970s and family reunions began in the late 1970s (Ali 2001). Finally, Kurds arrived mainly as political refugees in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Muslims from the Middle East in Britain appear to have a much more diverse profile, coming from various national and class backgrounds (El-Sohl 1992). There were Arabs who had taken advantage of their financial gain from the oil crisis of 1973–4 and invested in property and businesses in Britain seeing it as a safer option than their home countries, which were undergoing uncertain political developments and regime changes. In addition to this, Muslim professionals in states experiencing political unrest took advantage of employment opportunities in their fields in Britain to work and settle here. Ansari (2004:160) writes about this latter type of migrant:

The needs that many of these migrants have striven to satisfy went beyond physical survival. Lack of material and intellectual fulfilment and a sense of alienation from the operations of newly emerging society were often more important in prompting these Muslims to migrate.

The number of refugees began to grow as a result of ethno-religious and communal conflict, famines and natural disasters. Refugees came from areas such as Somalia and East Africa as well as the Middle East. A more apparent arrival of asylum seeker communities began in the 1990s, which has resulted in a hostile culture towards asylum seekers in the UK (for a review of the evidence on attitudes on asylum and immigration see Crawley (2005)). These included large numbers of applications for asylum from Bosnia following the steady breakup of the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Of course, these Muslims differed significantly from previous Muslim communities. First, these were not economic migrants, and therefore taking up positions within the labour market was not their primary motivation for migrating, but rather it was to flee from persecution. Second, this group is European. There have been steady establishments of other Muslim communities who have arrived as asylum seekers, including Kurds, Afghans – for whom asylum applications steadily rose by over 1,000 per year from 1996 (675) to 2001 (8,920) and more recently Iraqis – for whom the number of asylum applicants rose from 930 during 1995 to 14,570 for 2002<sup>6</sup> (Heath *et al.* 2004).

As described above, Muslim settlement in Britain occurred periodically, in that different communities arrived in higher concentrations according to the pull-push factors facing them at any given time. This has resulted in communities being formed along ethnic lines that have come to be concentrated in different parts of Britain. Clearly, chain migration played a key role in the development of ‘pockets’ of communities and the reproduction of village and kin networks. These have further been strengthened by trans-national marriages where spouses are often from the area of original migration (Ballard 2004).

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<sup>6</sup> These figures for asylum applications exclude dependent children.

Lewis (2002) argues that Muslim communities in Britain, whether from the Middle East or South Asian, were extremely successful in reproducing many of their traditional cultural and social norms. Religion initially had little impact on their decisions to settle, and the way they organised themselves in Britain.

## **1.2 Attempts at estimating Britain's Muslim population**

The absence of an agreed figure for the number of Muslims in the UK was a key reason for Muslims campaigning for the inclusion of a question on religious affiliation in the 2001 Census (Hussain 2005). The Census statistics provide an important baseline of data on Muslims in the UK. It provides the most comprehensive data on the size, settlement pattern, demographics and some aspects of employment for Muslims in the UK. But important areas were outside the scope of the Census, for example, experiences of education, policing and criminal justice. While the Census provides a baseline of information from which data collection in these areas could be developed, for the moment, most data in these areas are disaggregated by ethnicity alone and do not cover religion.

There have been numerous attempts, using various methods of calculation and sources to estimate the figure of Muslims not only in Britain, but also in Europe (Anwar 1993, Peach 1990, Wahhab 1989, Kettani 1986). Muslims are often stated to be the largest 'minority religious group' in Britain and various sources have estimated the Muslim population to fall between 550,000 and 3 million. In the early 1990s, figures over 1.5 million were normally mentioned by Muslim organisations. However, the most common estimate of the Muslim population was 1 million.

The heterogeneous nature of British Muslims makes it particularly difficult to calculate their numbers. British Muslims, other than being Muslim had no other common denominator with regards to identifiers such as ethnicity or language. Despite this, the most common methods used to estimate the number of Muslims in Britain has been from minority groups' countries of birth and from data on ethnicity. Prior to 1991, when the Census introduced, for the first time, a question on ethnic identity, data from large surveys such as those conducted by the Policy Studies Institute and the Labour Force Survey, relied on country of origin data to provide data on British Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims (Brown 2000).

Hai (1999) conducted research on the size of the South Asian Muslim population in Britain, and inferred a figure by taking into account the percentage of Muslims in the country of origin, for each ethnic group. Hai acknowledged that 98 per cent of the population of Pakistan are Muslim, compared with 85 per cent of the population of Bangladesh and 11 per cent of that of India. However, he argued against using percentages of Muslims in the country of origin as the basis for estimations of Muslims within a particular ethnic group in the UK. As Brown (2000:97) points out:

It may be inaccurate to presume that a population living in Europe will simply mirror the religious composition of the source country, even assuming the latter can be accurately ascertained.

When looking at specific geographical areas or regions from which migrants originated, Hai acknowledged this issue and took into consideration that the proportions of Muslims in such regions were higher than the national averages. Therefore, the area from which the majority of British Bangladeshis originate from, Sylhet, is likely to be closer to 90 per cent Muslim and, for Indians, Gujarat is estimated as having a Muslim population of around 20 per cent. Through understanding the cultural make up of South Asian Muslims, Hai was able to provide a more realistic calculation based on ethnic background.

Clearly, any estimation on the number of Muslims in Britain derived by looking solely at South Asian Muslims will be flawed as it excludes Muslims from outside South Asia. Prior to the 2001 Census, estimates of the proportion of the Muslim population that was from South Asia ranged from 60–80 per cent. Ansari (2004) argues that in addition to the figures on South Asian Muslims, the 1991 Census found that the Turkish-born population of Britain was 26,600. Kucukcan (1996) estimated it to be as high as 125,000. Estimations of other ethnic groups, such as Somalis and Moroccans (El-Solh 1992) and Yemenis (Halliday 1992) are difficult to confirm using data on country of birth only. Furthermore, these groups did not constitute their own ethnic categories in large-scale surveys, including the 2001 Census.

Ansari (2004) argues that Muslims from the Middle East living in Britain pose further problems when estimating the total numbers of Muslims in Britain, as their resident statuses are often ambiguous. He provides one of the most comprehensive published reviews of estimations from previous studies, conducted by a number of researchers, on identifiable Muslim communities, mainly using data on country of birth for head of household and ethnicity data for South Asians. In doing so, he presents an approximate Muslim population of 2 million.

### **1.3 The 2001 Census**

The 2001 Census provides the most comprehensive and accurate data source on Muslims to date. All the tables on religion to be released by the Office for National Statistics are now available. Hussain's (2003) introduction to *Muslims in the Census* provides an overview of the demographic profile of Muslims in England and Wales. According to the data, there are just over 1.5 million Muslims in England and Wales. In addition to this, the 2001 Census for Scotland found that there are 42,600 Muslim in Scotland. Muslims constitute 3 per cent of the total population of Great Britain (57.1 million). At 41 million, Christians are the largest faith groups. Muslims are the largest minority faith groups, they represent over half the non-Christian religious population. There are also 558,000 Hindus, 336,000 Sikhs, 267,000 Jews and 149,000 Buddhists. There are also 8.5 million that stated that they have no religion and a further 4.4 million that do not answer the question on religion.

The Census reveals that, in terms of age structure, Muslims have the youngest demographic profile as a faith group in England and Wales. Over 60 per cent of all Muslims are under the age of 30. At the opposite end of the scale, Muslims have the lowest proportion of elderly people when compared with all other groups.



Clearly, migration processes contribute to the age structures of groups, since the majority of migrants arrived as young adults and have only recently approached retirement ages. Although this migration pattern is true for Sikhs and Hindus, as Ansari (2004) has argued, for Muslims there has been a second and more recent phase of migration which has not been mirrored by these other communities.

Approximately half of Muslims living in England and Wales were born in the UK.<sup>7</sup> Despite their concentration in the younger age cohorts there are proportionately less Muslims born in the UK than Sikhs. This may be the consequence of later family reunion in the Bangladeshi community, combined with more recent arrival of Muslims as refugees from Eastern Europe and East Africa.

#### 1.4 Settlement patterns

The Census data demonstrated that there are Muslims in every local authority in the UK except the Isle of Scilly; however, some local authorities have counts as low as 10 such as Berwick-upon-Tweed. The results showed some expected clusters in and around London, the West Midlands, Lancashire and West Yorkshire. They also reveal some unexpected clusters in the North East (for example, Middlesbrough and Newcastle) and at the opposite end of the country in the South West (Gloucester and Bristol). Areas such as these have remained largely outside the academic and public imagination when discussing Muslims in England and Wales.

The five local authorities with the highest proportions of Muslims are Tower Hamlets, Newham, Blackburn, Bradford, and Waltham Forest as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Local authorities with the highest counts and percentages of Muslims in England and Wales, taken from the 2001 National Census

Local Authority	Muslim Count	Local Authority	Muslim Percentage
Birmingham	140,033	Tower Hamlets	36
Bradford	75,188	Newham	24
Tower Hamlets	71,389	Blackburn	19
Newham	59,293	Bradford	16
Kirklees	39,319	Waltham forest	15

In terms of concentrations and ‘pockets’, a quarter of all Muslims in England live in Inner London, and 22 per cent live in Outer London. 10 per cent live in Greater Manchester, 15 per cent in the West Midlands and 11 per cent in West Yorkshire. Such areas also provide insight into the ethnic diversity of Muslims.

London has the most ethnically diverse Muslim population; Bangladeshis are the largest group among Muslims in Inner London. In Outer London, however, Muslims of Pakistani origin make up around a third of the Muslim population, while only 8 per cent of Muslims are of Bangladeshi origin. The figures for White, other White and Black Africans remain similar to their respective figures for Inner London. Nearly 60

<sup>7</sup> This is also true for Scotland, see: Office of Chief Statistician, 2005.

per cent of Muslims in Greater Manchester are of Pakistani origin. 15 per cent are of Bangladeshi origin. The third largest Muslim ethnic group here is Indian (11 per cent). Muslims from other ethnic categories are less than 5 per cent of the Muslim population in Greater Manchester. There is a similar Muslim ethnic make up in the West Midlands, where the majority of Muslims are of Pakistani origin (nearly 70 per cent) followed by those of Bangladeshi origin (14 per cent). Compared to Greater Manchester, those of Indian origin are a smaller proportion of the Muslim population in the West Midlands, at 5 per cent. All other ethnic categories each report 5 per cent or less for this area also. Three quarters of Muslims in West Yorkshire are of Pakistani origin, compared with only 5 per cent of Bangladeshi and 10 per cent Indian. Areas which demonstrated the highest concentrations of Muslims of Indian origin, when compared with all other Muslim ethnic groups, were Gloucestershire and Warwickshire, where over 40 per cent of Muslims in these counties were of Indian origin. In Scotland, two thirds of Muslims are of Pakistani origin (Office of Chief Statistician 2005). There were no counties in which Black Africans are the largest ethnic group among Muslims, however, Merseyside came close. Here 17 per cent of the Muslim community were from the White ethnic category, which was the largest, and 14 per cent were Black African.

## 2. IDENTITY

### 2.1 Religion and identity

The Policy Studies Institute's Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNSEM), conducted in 1994, interviewed almost 8,000 individuals (Modood *et al.* 1997). Its sample included 1,200 Pakistanis and 600 Bangladeshis.<sup>8</sup> In relation to religion and identity, the survey found that minorities have been viewing themselves in much more defined ways than was previously thought. Discourse on race had been increasingly criticised for being too simplistic since the 1980s and it was acknowledged that many minority communities did not view themselves as falling under the umbrella term of 'Black' but asserted more specific ethnic labels. Many commentators have used the shift in language on race and identity to support the argument that identity is constantly under construction. The identity asserted by members of a group at any given time is dependent on what is most functional in promoting the empowerment of that group as a minority in a majority setting. As Saeed *et al.* (1999:826) describes it, this is a 'mechanism which allows the minority group to increase inter-group differentiation and to maintain its self-esteem.'

Several other studies have demonstrated this. Self-identification surveys in particular have been useful in ascertaining how minorities view themselves. Hutnik (1985) pioneered this type of self-reported identity among British Muslims. It was found that Muslim identity was listed by 80 per cent of the South Asian Muslims as an important identity item. Here, 83 per cent of Pakistanis mention religion as an important self-attribute. The study also indicated that 74 per cent of the sample asserted that religion was an important aspect of their lives.

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<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the methodology of the survey see P. Smith and G. Prior, *The Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities: technical report*, National Centre for Social Research, London, 1997.

Saeed *et al.* (1999:831) conducted self-identification surveys in Glasgow amongst 63 second and third generation Pakistani Muslims. Their findings were consistent with the previous studies. The ‘Muslim’ and ‘Pakistani’ identities were the top two categories mentioned, with ‘Muslim’ (85 per cent) being chosen nearly three times as often as ‘Pakistani’ (30 per cent). This strengthens the argument that these young respondents were, indeed, identifying with their Muslim background (in the sense of belonging) rather than merely superficially labelling themselves in terms of ‘identification of’. Saeed *et al.* went on to write:

Through our inclusion within some categories and exclusion from others (which involves both self-definition and definition by others), together with the values and emotional significance of these memberships, we define our social identity. A person emphasising his/her Muslim identity wishes to share common ground with other Muslims, and also acknowledges (not necessarily willingly) that certain characteristics will be ascribed to him/her by non-Muslims.

The 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey indicated that, for Muslims, religion was the most important factor in describing themselves after their family. For Christians, religion ranked seventh (O’Beirne 2004). However, a study of 250 young Kurds and Turks in London found that 68 per cent did not subscribe to any religious identity at all. The authors suggest that this low figure, compared to other studies, may partly be because for some of these young people ‘being Turkish, or Kurdish or Turkish Cypriot already included a sense of religious belonging’ (Enneli *et al.* 2005: 40).

## **2.2 The shift towards a religious identity**

The Rushdie affair was a key moment in the development of Muslim identity in the UK. Khan (2000) and Ballard (1996b) describe how the reactions to *The Satanic Verses* by Muslims reinforced the public view of Muslims and Islam as anti-Western and anti-democratic. It is argued by Ballard that far from holding an ‘orthodox’ stance on Islam, most Muslims who came from South Asia practised a much more ‘Sufi’ Islam, with most of these Muslims belonging to the Berlavi tradition. Here, the Prophet Mohammed is held as a figure of devotional reverence. Ballard argued that *The Satanic Verses* was extremely hurtful to this community particularly due to the way it portrayed the Prophet. Ballard argues that the demonstrations were not about the ‘fundamentalism’ associated with Iran and Khomeini, as the media so often portrays the reaction.

Khan finds that the Muslim reaction was interpreted as reflecting an ideological negation of the freedom of speech, and contributed to the construction of ‘Muslims’ as ‘an alien minority, with social and cultural values and belief systems diametrically opposed to those in the West’ (2000:30). He argues that such perceptions may have the effect of encouraging the majority of Muslims to remain more insular, resulting in the wider society having to face greater challenges in its relations with this community.

It is important to understand the complex and diverse reasons for the foregrounding of religious identity by some Muslims. Ballard (1996a) describes the increasing self-

identification of second and subsequent generations as Muslim, rather than Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Turkish or Somali, as a reaction to the external rejection, which they face from the White majority. First, because it is the Muslim aspect of their identity that they feel is under attack, and second, as described further below, that Islam is a more useful vehicle for political mobilisation. Similarly, Gardener and Shuker (1994: 164) find that 'Islam provides both a positive identity, in which solidarity can be found, together with an escape from the oppressive tedium of being constantly identified in negative term.' Samad (2004) suggests that the loss of linguistic skills, the fluency of the second generation to speak the language of their parents, has a role to play. He argues that, 'as South Asian linguistic skills are lost, identification with Pakistan and Bangladesh – countries that young people may only briefly visit – becomes less significant and Muslim as an identity becomes more important' (Samad 2004: 17). Samad goes on to argue that the 'emergence of Muslim identification is not related to an increase in religiosity or to the rise of 'Islamic Fundamentalism' but becomes prominent, paradoxically, as people become 'British'. This appears to be supported in part by research on young Turks and Kurds in London, which found that 'two-thirds of the young people who pray and fast do not identify in religious terms; yet, on the other hand, a quarter of those who do not fast do use a religious identity' (Enneli *et al.* 2005: 41). Modood (2003) views Muslim political activism as part of the 'politics of 'catching-up' with racial equality and feminism'. Archer's (2003) study of young Muslim men suggests that a strong Muslim identity is a way in which they are able to resist stereotypes of 'weak passive Asians'; it can provide a positive role model as an alternative identity that they can have pride in, in contrast to their parents (who are seen as economically weak and disempowered) and as an alternative to the gang and drug cultures of the 'street'.

The 1994 Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNSEM) found that all ethnic groups under study believed that the most prejudice is directed at Asians and/or Muslims (Modood *et al.* 1997). The events of 11 September 2001 and, more recently, 7 July 2005 clearly further aggravated the relationship between the wider society and British Muslims. An opinion poll in *The Guardian* newspaper demonstrated the isolation that Muslims believe they are facing, with nearly 70 per cent stating that they felt 'the rest of society does not regard them as an integral part of life in Britain' (Kelso and Vasagar 2002). This is reinforced by results from the 2005 Home Office Citizenship Survey, which reveal that Muslims were the most likely to feel that there was 'a lot' of religious prejudice in Britain today, with 33 per cent of Muslims stating this view, compared to 24 per cent of Christians. 57 per cent of Muslims in the survey said they felt there was more religious prejudice in the UK today compared to five years ago. 13 per cent of Muslims said that they had experienced discrimination because of their religion from public bodies, with six per cent reporting experiencing discrimination by the police. 22 per cent of Muslims said they feared being attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion. Among Muslims who had experienced unfair treatment in the labour market with regard to promotion or progression, 44 per cent said this treatment was on the grounds of their religion (Kitchen *et al.* 2006). The 2004 Home Office Citizenship Survey (103) found that the ethnic group most likely to report facing religious discrimination in gaining employment were Bangladeshis (13 per cent) and Pakistanis (9 per cent). 27 per cent of Pakistanis, 12 per cent of Indians and 7 per cent of Africans cited religion as a reason for being refused a promotion in the past five years (Green *et al.* 2004: 104). In a national survey of prejudice in the UK, carried out for the Cabinet Office in early

2005, 46 per cent of Muslims reported experiencing discrimination on the grounds of religion. Among other non-Christian faiths, 31 per cent reported experiences of discrimination (Abrams and Houston 2005:42). Blick *et al.* (2006) in their analysis of 10 opinion polls since 2002, found that where Muslims have been asked if they have experienced hostility and discrimination, around 30 per cent of Muslims consistently report experiencing some form of hostility directed at them (the actual figures range from 20–38 per cent). A poll in July 2005 asked Muslims about the kinds of adverse treatment they might experience:

- 14 per cent said they had experienced verbal abuse
- 3 per cent reported physical violence
- 5 per cent said they had been stopped and searched by police
- 32 per cent felt they had been the object of hostility
- 42 per cent felt they had been the object of suspicion.

The need for protection from religious discrimination has been a key demand of Muslim communities for over 20 years. The 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey indicates that one third of Muslims feel the government is doing too little to protect the rights of people belonging to different faith groups in Britain (O’Beirne 2004).<sup>9</sup> Levels of dissatisfaction were higher among young Muslims (16-24 year olds), of whom 37 per cent felt that the government was doing ‘too little.’<sup>10</sup> In Sheridan and Gillett’s (2005) study of the impact of international events on discrimination experienced by seven ethnic groups in the UK, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis reported the greatest increase of post-event discrimination. They concluded that the bombing of the Twin Towers in New York and the activities of al-Qaeda had resulted in the greatest increase of group discrimination against Muslims in the UK. For further discussion of the research literature on identity and discrimination see Modood 2003, Ahmed 2006, and Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins 2006.

### 2.3 Internal empowerment

As well as constructing identities in response to external factors, identity is also constructed to suit the position of those who adopt it at any given time. European Muslims, who find themselves in the position of a minority, can opt for an ‘interscholastic eclecticism’ that consists of choosing the opinion of legal schools that appear to be the most appropriate to their own set of social issues and questions. An example of this is Ballard’s argument that amongst British Muslims there has been shift from the more ‘Sufi’ Islam, which was the Islam the majority of first generation Muslims practised to a neo-orthodox Islam, which has been adopted increasingly by the second and subsequent generations, and has also been an important factor in the development of a ‘religious’ identity rather than a ‘cultural’ identity. This is for two reasons. First, this form of Islam places greater emphasis on a universal Islam and

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<sup>9</sup> Five per cent of Muslims said the government was doing ‘too much’ and 62 per cent ‘the right amount’. However, this overall figure masks significant differences by gender and age: Muslim women (37 per cent) were more likely than Muslim men (30 per cent) to feel the government was doing ‘too little’. This gender difference is also found in the Christian, Hindu and Sikh groups. Among all respondents the response was: ‘too much’ (20 per cent); ‘right amount’ (54 per cent); and ‘too little’ (27 per cent). See O’Beirne, 2004, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> However, this is lower than for others in this age group. See O’Beirne, 2004, p. 26.

downplays cultural differences. In this view, for many Muslims, Islam provides a solution:

Given that Islam is manifestly a sophisticated world religion which is at the very least a match for Christianity, and better still its long historical role as Christianity's 'bête noire', it provides a wonderfully effective alternative with which to identify in response to White, European post-Christian denigration. (Ballard 1996b:124)

Second, it served as a means of distancing the second and subsequent generations of British-born Muslims from the perceived 'backwardness' of the first generation, in turn equipping them with the necessary ammunition to 'fight their corner' on the domestic front (Ansari 2002).

The research literature suggests that there are important gender differences in relation to Muslim identity. The impact of education and class on the religious identity of women has been examined by Bhopal (1998), Ahmed (2001) and Abbas (2003). Bhopal (1998) explores religion and identity among Hindu, Sikh and Muslim women in East London. The study, based on interviews with women aged 25-30 of varying educational qualification, of whom 20 were Muslim, as well as on participant observation of living with a South Asian community for a period of six months, suggests a difference between the experience of Muslim women who were married and those who were single. It found that among married women and those with low levels of education there was a strong commitment and identification with religion. By contrast, Bhopal argues, single women and those with higher levels of education did not participate in religious life and rejected any faith identity. Bhopal's conclusion, that education and upward social mobility lead to the rejection of religion and religious identity, has been challenged by Ahmed (2001) and Abbas (2003). Ahmed's (2001) study is based on interviews with 15 South Asian Muslim women aged 19-30 who are, or had recently participated in university education in London. The women were from predominately working class backgrounds. She found that their "Muslimness" was a deeply embedded sense of both conscious and unconsciousness, governing and prevailing upon their thoughts, behaviours and choices'.

Khokher (1993) found that many young South Asian Muslim women are conceptually establishing a firm distinction between 'religion' and 'culture', which were largely indistinguishable realms for their parents. Further, they are rejecting their parents' conformity to ethnic traditions, which are considered as emblematic of religiosity (such as manner of dress) while wholly embracing a Muslim identity in and of itself. Among these young women, Khokher argues, is a necessary self-conscious exploration of religion which was not relevant to their parents' generation.

Jacobson (1997) has also commented on how this gives second and subsequent generations greater bargaining power within their families and communities. Many young women who adopted the *hijab* and other Islamic symbols argued that parents found it increasingly difficult to refuse their daughter's requests of pursuing their education and deferring marriage, as Islamically they had every right to do so (see also Dywer 1999a, 1999b and 1997)

Saint-Blancat (2002:142) also supports this view. She argues:

The descendants of immigrants of Muslim origin are witnesses par excellence of an active form of subjectivity, of autonomy that they do not always risk acquiring. In evaluating their family and community past, they are helping to create a memory that will also forge their own identity. They distance themselves from the stereotypes of host cultures that demand from them a social and cultural conformity to the principle of individual and sexual emancipation, but also from fidelity to a family genealogy, which they criticise even though they will not tolerate its being disparaged.

## **2.4 The identification with a Muslim diaspora**

As well as the recognition of a growing preference to be identified in terms of religion amongst South Asian Muslims in Britain, it has been argued that Muslim minorities in the West, whatever their ethnic origin, are increasingly presenting themselves as being part of a Muslim diaspora, as well as, and some in cases instead of, an ethnic or national diaspora. The concept of a united Muslim community within Islam, known as 'the Ummah', has been discussed as being a contributing factor in the mindset of many Muslims who identify themselves as being part of a Muslim diaspora (Werbner 2003).

Saint-Blancat (2002) has written about this identification of European Muslims with a Muslim diaspora, arguing that the creation of such a diaspora is one which various Muslim minority groups are striving to adopt as a result of the recognition that as minorities in present day Europe they all share increasing hostility on the grounds of one common denominator – Islam. It is argued however that the Muslim diaspora is not a result of the natural state of being, or a concept which is easily applied without complications. Shuval (2000:43) describes common definitions of diasporic communities as sharing some of the following elements:

A history of dispersal, myths/memories of the homeland, alienation in the host country, desire for eventual return (which can be ambivalent, eschatological or utopian), ongoing support of the homeland, and a collective identity defined by the above relationship.

Clearly, Muslims in Europe do not share a common homeland; they have origins in numerous countries, resulting in cultural heterogeneity. The association with a shared 'homeland' is not, however, problematic for Vertovec (1999). When discussing approaches to diaspora, he argues that an alternative definition is through common experience, such as discrimination and exclusion, and a shared common denominator, such as historical heritage or a contemporary world culture.

Saint-Blancat, however, argues that:

the instrumental use of the morphological configuration of settlements in migration and the inter-polarity of relationships do not mean that a Birmingham Pakistani and a Strasbourg Turk feel they belong to the same diaspora. Only self-definition and interaction with the gaze of the other, in its turn creates a model for their identity. (2002:141)

Therefore, in this view a single Muslim diaspora in Europe is reactionary and a result of the initial grouping together of communities by the discriminator and that these communities would perhaps not have otherwise viewed themselves as a unit or community in this way.

Strength in numbers is, of course, an important motivation for minority groups in attempting to unify with other minority groups, as demonstrated by minorities in Britain attempting to mobilise by uniting themselves under their common feature of 'non-Whiteness' in the 1980s. The attractiveness for Muslims, then, in uniting themselves with other Muslims by asserting this element of their identity, is that it serves to empower them due to the possibility of their minority status being transformed into a global counter-force (Khan 2000).

## **3. EDUCATION**

### **3.1 Educational attainment**

Most academic research on minorities in education has focused on ethnic groups rather than Muslims as a group. Muslims of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, who constitute 50 per cent of Britain's Muslim population have been the main reference groups in research when looking at the educational attainment of Muslims. Research in education, on Muslims as a religious group, rather than ethnic groups, has focused largely on state-funded faith schools and the experiences of Muslim women in education. Literature on the latter has explored Muslim women's aspirations, the value placed on educational qualifications for women by Muslim communities and within Islam, single sex schools and obstacles faced by Muslim women within the education system. The Census does provide some baseline data on levels of education among the UK population which can be disaggregated by religion.

The 2001 Census data shows that almost one third of Muslims of working age have no qualifications, the highest proportion for any faith group. When the number of Muslims without qualifications is compared to that of Hindus and Sikhs we see differences among the different age cohorts. For 35–49 years olds, Muslims are 10 per cent more likely than Sikhs, and over 20 per cent more likely than Hindus, to be without a qualification. This gap widens even further for the 25–34 year olds. Here, the percentage of Muslims with no qualifications is over double that of Sikhs and over three times that of Hindus. The gap closes for the 16–24 year olds, but only marginally. Therefore, although all three groups have made progress, and this is no doubt related to the availability of free state education in Britain, the rates of progress are far from similar. The data shows that Muslims, like other minority faith groups, have a higher percentage of people with higher level qualifications, compared with the national average (Hussain 2003). This, coupled with the higher rates in participation in post compulsory education, supports the argument that for Muslims, family educational expectations and determination is high. In 2001, 52 per cent of Muslims aged 16–24 were participating in post-compulsory education. The rate of participation in higher education is above the national figure (41 per cent), but below that of the other minority faith groups. Furthermore, the gender gap in rates of participation in post-compulsory education for Muslims, at 10 per cent, is the greatest



of any group. Although this could be taken as evidence of less emphasis being placed by Muslims on a women's pursuit of qualifications, it should be noted that the figures for Muslim women (47 per cent) are still higher than for women nationally (42 per cent), as well as Christian women (42 per cent) and women with no religion (38 per cent).

The apparent paradox is that Muslims have a higher than average rate of participation in post-compulsory education and at the same time have the highest rate of young people without qualifications. A large part of this, of course, reflects the lack of educational qualifications among the first generation of migrants. However, Dale *et al.* (2002) suggest that Muslim groups, such as Pakistani and Bangladeshis, are most likely to have to retake exams to gain qualifications.

Although there is now an array of literature pointing towards the differential success of minority groups with the education system it was Modood *et al.* (1997) that clearly demonstrated how some minority groups were performing significantly better than others. There appears to be an Asian polarisation with pupils of Indian origin doing very well and pupils of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin performing poorly in comparison to other minority groups while at the same time doing better than their socio-economic position would suggest. Government targets on educational attainment are measured in terms of student attainments in tests taken at Key Stage 1 and 2 and achieving five passes at grades A\*–C in the General Certificate of Secondary Education Exams, which is taken by most pupils at the age of 16. Figures for 2006 show that Bangladeshi and Pakistani pupils perform below the national average at Key Stages 1 and 2, and at GCSE attainment including English and mathematics. For example, at Key Stage 1 Reading, 77 per cent of Pakistani pupils and 78 per cent of Bangladeshi pupils achieved the expected level compared to 84 per cent nationally. Bangladeshi pupils' relative attainment is closer to the national average at GCSE and equivalent, with 56.2 per cent at five or more A\*–C grades compared to 56.9 per cent nationally. When looking at five or more A\*–C grades including English and mathematics, there is a gap of five percentage points between Bangladeshi pupils and all pupils. Pakistani pupils' relative attainment at GCSE and equivalent is six percentage points below the national figure, 50.9 per cent compared with 56.9 per cent, rising to nine per cent when English and mathematics are included. The results also show that other minority ethnic groups Chinese, pupils of Mixed-White and Asian heritage, Irish and Indian pupils consistently achieve above the national average across (Department for Education and Skills 2006).

Since the analysis of the Fourth National Survey for Ethnic Minorities, attempts have been made to explain differences in attainment between different ethnic groups. Hopkins (2004) and Richardson (2004) argue that, while all visible minorities face racism and discrimination, some are more prone to group specific negative stereotyping and racial harassment within schools.

Socio-economic status has also been found to play a significant role in the educational paths of ethnic groups. However, class alone does not explain the education performance of different ethnic groups. Modood (2004) suggests that 'in the case of minorities, there will be factors distinctive to particular minorities or to the condition of being a minority in Britain today, such as racialised exclusion. Some of these distinctive factors will work to reinforce or deepen class effects; others to lessen

them.’ Thus, one study of young people which systematically controlled for social class attributes found that the likelihood of achieving five GCSEs at A\*–C for Pakistanis and Indians (analysed separately) was 10 per cent higher than their White social class peers; for Black Caribbeans it was eight per cent less (Taylor and Bradley 2004). In fact, Modood’s analysis of university entrance data finds that, with most ethnic groups, class is a significant determinant in university entrance. Thus, when making a comparison within an ethnic group, children whose parents were manual workers or unemployed were significantly less likely to go to university than children whose parents were non-manual workers. This however does not hold true for the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian groups. Modood suggests that the fact that many students from such households are enthusiastic in pursuing their education post-16 suggests that the communities from which they come greatly value educational qualifications and indicates the existence of positive forms of social capital (Modood 2004). Dale’s research among over 80 young Pakistani and Bangladeshi women in Oldham found that there were high aspirations particularly in relation to the education and occupational level of their parents. They found that post-16 participation rates were considerably higher than for White young people. Among the factors they identified to explain this are the cultural value of education among Asian groups, the desire by parents coming as economic migrants to achieve success, the fear of an ethnic penalty in seeking employment and the desire by young people to succeed against the odds (Dale *et al.* 2002:962). Research suggests that these communities value education no less than any other and have as high expectations as parents from other ethnic groups (Abbas 2003). Abbas argues that the lack of success of Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities is not due to their lack of willingness and determination (Abbas 2003).

The importance of language ability is also discussed in literature on attainment and although many children whose mother tongue is not English do begin relatively disadvantaged, there is evidence to suggest that significant progress can be made in order to catch up with other children before it has a real effect – namely on GCSE results (Kendall 1998).

The key debates surrounding differences in attainment therefore seem to point towards socio-economic status, differential effects of cultural discrimination and social capital in the form of family encouragement and expectations as the main factors for the diversity in educational attainment.

### **3.2. Issues specific to Muslim students**

State funding of Muslim schools however is a subject that has largely been discussed in terms of religion specifically and an issue relevant to Muslims as a religious community rather than in terms of ethnicity. Muslims have been portrayed as having somewhat definite practical needs within schools. Ghuman (1997:24) has commented on this:

There can be a source of tension between home and school, particularly in Muslim communities, in the teaching of physical education and drama and over such matters as school uniform and dietary matters.

Although, of course, the above could easily be true for other groups such as Hindus and Sikhs, Muslims have additional needs such as provisions within schools for formal worship in the form of obligatory prayer. Others such as Walford (2003) and Halstead (2005) have commented on the fact that some Muslim parents' feel that Christian-orientated worship is unacceptable and exercise their right to withdraw their children. Such issues raise important questions, such as the extent to which education can and should reflect cultural differences in society and whether it is still possible to provide a common core curriculum adequate to meet the requirements of all children. There have been publicised examples of Muslim parents choosing to withdraw their children from schools entirely, evoking their right to educate their child outside the state education system, either with home tutoring or within the private education sector including, of course, Muslim schools.

Those arguing for state-funded Muslim schools assert that if British state-funded schools cannot meet Muslim educational needs, then Muslims should have the right to their own state-funded schools. Although there are currently five state-funded Muslim schools, when initial applications for state funding were declined for some schools, many viewed the decision as discriminatory due to the fact that Christian denominations and Jewish schools have been granted State funding (Molokotos Liederman 2000)

Opinions on state-funded schools are divided. Those who support such initiatives based their arguments on multiculturalism and respect for diversity. Those who were against them felt that such schools would reinforce segregation, there was also concern over the equality women would have in such schools, and since 11 September 2001, there have been debates around the compatibility of Islamic values and state values within schools (Panjwani 2005).

The Swann Report (1985) recommended the avoidance of separate schools due to the belief that the presence of ethnic minority children are needed within state schools in order for White children to learn about minority communities and to eliminate prejudice. Advocates of faith schools, however, argue that such views are wholly unfair. In this view, to use the group with less power, essentially to the detriment of that group (and in this case Muslim students) in order to provide a possible solution to prejudice (which essentially belongs to the group with more power, in this case non-Muslim students and staff) is irresponsible (Richardson 2004, Tomlinson 2005).

There have also been vigorous debates within Muslim communities surrounding separate schooling for Muslim children. Councillor Ajeeb, Bradford's first Asian Lord Mayor, spoke for some Muslims who disagreed with separate schooling during a speech in which he said 'what we want is accommodation for our cultural needs, especially in the education system' (cited in Cumper 1990:5). Taylor and Hegarty (1985) in their study on Cypriot Muslims in England found that members of this community, when the subject of separate schooling was discussed, voiced opposition, believing them to be counterproductive.

Many Muslims feel that various key arguments against state-funded Muslim schools demonstrate the level of prejudice towards Muslims and Islam, and myths surrounding the goals Muslims have for their community's educational welfare. A key criticism of Muslim schools is that they are monolithic and that children who attend

such schools will not appreciate or understand diversity. Johnson and Castelli's (2002) research on Muslim schools in England described most as multiethnic schools, drawing children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. They argued that although such schools are mono-faith they portray diverse interpretations of Islam. They point out that such establishments are increasingly gaining reputations for educational excellence. For example, Faversham College in Bradford came at the top of education league tables for 'value added'. Many argue that if such schools facilitate the learning of children in a more productive manner they should be seen in terms of 'social solutions' and in this view faith schools should be regarded as a productive expression of a co-operative multicultural society.

### 3.3 Discrimination in schools

Although in the past racism may have affected all Asian groups similarly, this is no longer the case and Muslims are disproportionately affected by discrimination due to recent surges of Islamophobia (Sheridan *et al.* 2005). Differential levels of discrimination, however, can only explain differences to an extent. Whilst it has become more apparent due to recent global events that Islam and Muslims have become far more politicised than any other faith group, this cannot be argued with any conviction to have resulted in greater levels of discrimination for Muslim over any other group within British institutions 20 or even 10 years ago. Therefore, acquisition of human capital, economic geography, period of settlement as well as gender participation have also contributed to the positions for the various communities to date.

As discussed in the previous section, anxiety over Islamic values potentially negating state-school values is at the centre of the debate on separate Muslim schools. Within schools, however, concerns have also been articulated over growing agitation of an increasingly more politicised and assertive Muslim community, and among students themselves (Molokotos Liederman 2000, Halstead 2005, Tomlinson 2005). Researchers have pointed to how young British Muslims are increasingly defining themselves in terms of their religion, as opposed, for example, to their parents' country of birth (as discussed in the section on identity). Archer (2001), in her interviews with young Muslim men from various South Asian ethnic groups, found that within every discussion group, all of the young men identified themselves first and foremost as 'Muslim'.

Archer (2001) argues that, increasingly, Muslim students are encountering very specific stereotyping in schools, as a result of both a growing portrayal of Muslims as a problematic group in relation to 'the West' by the media and the assertion of Muslim identities by young Muslims. This has been echoed in more recent work conducted by Hopkins (2004) of young Scottish Muslim men aged 16–25. These stereotypes differ from those of Asian students discussed in earlier works, such as Mac and Ghail (1988). Archer (2001:81) writes:

It has been argued that Muslim young men are increasingly being constructed as militant and aggressive, intrinsically fundamentalist 'ultimate Others' [...] In contrast to the public discourse around Muslim masculinity, 'Asian' young men have been conceptualised as effeminate, as more 'middle-class' and as 'behavers and achievers' in school.

It has been argued that expression of such identities among young Muslims is a means of articulating their space, and belonging within a system that is increasingly viewing them as, at the very least, somehow associated with an undesirable worldview (Richardson 2004, Tomlinson 2005).

In seeking to assess the extent to which the differences in educational attainment between Muslims and other South Asian groups (i.e., Hindus and Sikhs) is due to differential discrimination, it should be noted that it is very difficult to distinguish between Muslims and other South Asian groups, all being visibly of non-European origin. Ballard (1996) argues however that whilst Muslim Asians – Pakistani and Bangladeshi – have achieved much less upward mobility than British Indians, it is difficult to prove that most members of the White majority would be able to distinguish a Muslim from a non-Muslim, or be fully aware of what that would even mean. It is true that in larger society it would be extremely difficult for a layperson to distinguish between a Indian Hindu and Pakistani Muslim on the street or in a public setting. However, in a school setting, where staff and pupils are more than aware of the affiliation – indeed identity - of perhaps their only non-White student group, anti Muslim stereotypes could well be adopted, as argued by Phoenix (1997), just as numerous studies of Caribbean male pupils have found that teachers adopt very group-specific stereotypes for this group.

Although there is a long and deep history of anti-Muslim sentiment in Europe, it has been argued that the most recent wave of Islamophobia can be detected as re-emerging as a result of key global and local events. (Ahmed 2006, Harb and Bessaiso 2006, Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins 2006, Sheridan and Gillett 2005).

The research discussed here suggests that Muslims have been viewed as a group who have very specific needs within schools and have been portrayed as being vocal in asserting their rights within the education system (Richardson *et al.* 2004, Molokotos Liederman 2000, Ghuman 1997). It could be argued that Muslims are therefore viewed as being particularly demanding and difficult. Although there is little qualitative research looking at teachers' perceptions of Muslim communities, sociologists have commented on the attention Muslim educational matters have received in the media, suggesting they are at the forefront of debates surrounding religious communities and schools. Molokotos Liederman (2000:368) writes:

The schooling of Muslim children, particularly the display of their Islamic identity within the education system, has been perceived as problematic enough to become a focal point of the public and media attention and there have been controversial debates in the press.

When discussing the differing discourses on Asian male students, more research on how males from the different Asian faith communities are viewed within schools is required. An explanation for the differences in discourse on Muslim males is that stereotypes have altered as a result of changes in perceptions within wider society. Perhaps in answering such questions, the area of differential educational attainment could gain an even clearer picture of whether some groups remain underachievers when compared to others, as a result of differential treatment within the education process.

## 4. EMPLOYMENT

The 2001 National Census collected information on employment, but did not include a question on income. According to the 2001 Census, Muslims demonstrate the highest levels of economic inactivity when compared with all other groups (Hussain 2003, Lindley 2002, Brown 2000). Hussain (2003) argued that this was due to higher proportions of dependent children within the Muslim community, which in turn meant that a larger percentage of women and men were taking care of the young families.

Among young people aged 16–24, Muslims shared the highest figure for unemployment with those in the category of ‘any other religion’. Muslim men in this age group reported the highest proportions of unemployment (three times greater than the national average). Muslim women in this age cohort, along with Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus and those with ‘any other religion’ have unemployment levels that are twice that of the national average.

Those who are unemployed (as opposed to those who are economically inactive) are ‘actively seeking employment’. Muslim men who are seeking employment are not only the least likely to have been successful in obtaining employment but three times less likely to be so than the national average.

Apart from the Census data, there is little information available on the types of industries Muslims are employed in, and the types of work they do. The Census data shows that Muslims are concentrated in certain industries and in some of the lowest-paid occupations (Hussain 2005).

Muslims are most highly concentrated in retail trade, restaurants, health and social work, ‘other business activities’ and education. When broken down further, however, it is possible to see areas in which Muslims have higher concentrations than the national average. These include some more ‘prosperous’ categories, such as restaurant and catering managers, software professionals, medical practitioners, chartered and certified accountants and civil service administrators and assistants. However, the largest percentage differences begin to appear in areas such as cooks, sales assistants/retail cashiers/checkout operators, process plant and machine operatives, assemblers and routine operatives, sewing machinists, taxi/cab drivers, labourers in foundries, waiting staff and security guards and related occupations.

### 4.1 Explaining poor employment levels

The research literature on Muslims in the labour market focus on Muslim women and on the two predominately Muslim ethnic groups: Pakistanis and Bangladeshis. In Berthoud’s study of household income of ethnic minorities, when taking out effects of age and family structure for the analysis, comparing like with like, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (as well as Africans) were two and a half times more likely to have no earners in the family than White people (Berthoud 2000).

Blackaby *et al.* (1999) describe, in their study of the differential unemployment rates of ethnic minority groups, how for the decade prior to their study, the unemployment figures for Britain’s non-White population have consistently been double that of the

indigenous population. Just as with the case for educational attainment and housing profiles however, when broken down by specific ethnic categories, the various non-White groups show different employment profiles:

Ethnic minorities have experienced higher levels of unemployment than whites, and yet a striking feature is the diversity of experience across minority groups. Pakistanis/Bangladeshis generally have experienced the highest levels of unemployment, roughly double that of the Indian group. (Blackaby *et al* 1999: 2)

Some theories for the differential position of some groups within the labour market argue that discrimination is more prevalent for some communities (ethnic penalty), and that those who have succeeded started off on a better footing in terms of human capital, which accelerated their upward mobility despite initial downgrading on arrival. There are various well-known studies attempting to measure levels and impact of discrimination on selection for vacancies, including Brown (1984), Brown and Gay (1985), and Smith (1991). Here it is argued that when applicants from ethnic-minority backgrounds applied for jobs with similar qualifications as White applicants, they were much less likely to be successful in obtaining a position.

Blackaby *et al.* (1999) found that the presence of educational qualifications for Pakistanis and Bangladeshis did not reduce the probability of unemployment to as great an extent as it did for other groups, such as African Caribbeans, for whom the presence of qualifications had the most positive impact. This would suggest that, when comparing like with like, some groups, in this case Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, do still appear to face greater barriers into employment than other non-White groups. As Blackaby *et al.* (1999:17) point out:

The considerable differences between the predominately Muslim Pakistani/Bangladeshi and the predominately non-Muslim Indian communities were the particular examples designed to illustrate the fact that it is not simply a matter of a fixed amount of white prejudice directed against all.

Brown (2000) used the 1994 FNSEM data to conduct analysis on whether there were significant differences between South Asian religious sub-groups. His analysis did find substantial difference in economic activity by religion, which was only partially visible through conventional ethnic group categories (namely Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi). Hindus and Sikhs were more successful in the labour market, however, Indian Muslims demonstrated a far more optimistic economic profile compared with other South Asian Muslims. Brown argues that a simple Muslim/non-Muslim dichotomy is difficult to apply as a result.

Building on the above study, Lindley (2002) also conducted analysis using the FNSEM on the impact of religion on employment and earnings. She also included Whites in the sample for comparative purposes. The results, confirming Brown, show that there were substantial differences within ethnic groups, depending on religious affiliation. Indian Hindus appeared to be the most successful in the labour market. The study showed that Indian Muslims did indeed appear to experience some unexplainable employment penalty, relative to all other religions and controlling for all other characteristics such as language differences and ethnic group.

Analysis of Census data by Berthoud and Blekesaune (2007) finds that Muslim women experience 'much larger employment penalties than their male counterparts relative to other religious groups' (70). Muslim women also have 'low probabilities of moving into employment once out of employment' (72). While for some time now, data has recorded the employment disadvantage experienced by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis' the 2001 Census data on religion show that 'Muslim men and women of *any* ethnic origin are in a similar position to Pakistani/Bangladeshi men and women.' (72). This, they suggest 'could mean that religion rather than ethnicity is the characteristic associated with employment disadvantage' (72). A cross referencing of ethnicity and religion shows that 'when investigating religious groups within different ethnic groups, we find that all Muslim groups are in a disadvantageous employment position irrespective of which ethnic group they belong to' (76). Thus, the employment penalty faced by Indian Muslims was greater than that of Indian Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. When comparing across minority groups, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims experience a greater employment penalty than Caribbean or Black African Christians.

According to the results of the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey, Asian and Black people considered racial discrimination to be the main obstacle to obtaining a job or promotion. Of those who had been refused a job in the past five years, Black Africans were the most likely (35 per cent) to cite race as the reason, followed by Bangladeshi (24 per cent), Indians (23 per cent), Mixed Race (23 per cent), Black Caribbeans (15 per cent) and Pakistanis (12 per cent). Only one per cent of White respondents cited racial discrimination as a reason for being refused a job. Perceptions of religious discrimination, whilst lower than perceptions of racial discrimination, were highest for Bangladeshi (13 per cent) and Pakistanis (nine per cent) (Home Office 2004).

Racial discrimination was seen as more significant in relation to refusals for promotion, than securing a job in the first place. Over half of Pakistanis, Indians, and Africans cited racial discrimination in relation to promotion. The figure was lowest for Black Caribbeans (44 per cent) and workers in the Mixed Race group (40 per cent). 27 per cent of Pakistanis, 12 per cent of Indians and 7 per cent of Africans cited religion as a reason for being refused promotion in the past five years (Home Office 2004).

A BBC survey seems to indicate that religious discrimination does impact significantly on Muslims. In 2004, the BBC conducted a survey in which fictitious applications were made for jobs using applicants with the same qualification and work experience, but different names. One in four applicants with traditionally English sounding names secured an interview, compared with 13 per cent of applicants with Black African names and only nine per cent for applicants with Muslim names. The 2004 Home Office Citizenship Survey found that the ethnic group most likely to report facing religious discrimination in gaining employment were Bangladeshi (13 per cent) and Pakistanis (nine per cent). 27 per cent of Pakistanis, 12 per cent of Indians and seven per cent of Africans cited religion as a reason for being refused a promotion in the past five years.

Discrimination is clearly a factor for the lack of success some groups find within the labour market. However, it is not yet obvious whether discrimination is the only, or



even main, factor in differential unemployment rates, and commentators have argued that other factors should also be explored when trying to understand the differential positions for Muslim groups.

Higher rates of unemployment amongst some communities have already been discussed, and a core element of the debate on differential levels of unemployment is discrimination within the labour market. There is now legislation within the UK that prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief in employment and training. This covers recruitment, appointment, any treatment during employment and dismissal. However, as with other legislation the real test will be in areas of indirect discrimination, which in effect requires employers to consider reasonable accommodation of the observation of faith within the workplace. The aim here is to counter practices which do not directly discriminate against Muslims, but have an adverse impact on members of this group.

A common explanation for higher rates of unemployment among Muslims is that of the unequal impact the decline certain industries had in producing long-term unemployment among some communities. As Iganski and Payne (1999:195–196) argue:

The outcome [of economic restructuring] has taken different forms, according to people's employment status, industry, geographical location, age, occupational class and gender. That this had a differential impact on ethnic groups would seem naturally to follow.

Key variables in this differential impact for the Muslim groups were industry and geographical location. Many Muslim communities are concentrated in areas which faced the greatest decline of traditional industries, meaning that they were among the most severely affected in terms of loss of jobs. This, coupled with the fact that the majority of these communities had no formal training or skills (human capital), meant that they were unable to find opportunities in other sectors. This led to long-term unemployment (Brown 2000).

There have also been debates surrounding the extent to which such communities actually strive towards their betterment in terms of increasing human capital, through the pursuit of education and training. Thomas (1998), when looking to explore explanations for higher rates of unemployment amongst some communities, attempted to measure how cultural or neighbourhood sociological models of behaviour impacted on differential unemployment rates. In this view, in response to discrimination and low employment opportunities, some communities have become comparatively more tolerant of joblessness. Thomas writes:

Many live in communities where unemployment is prevalent among their peers which engenders forms of what psychologists call 'resigned adapting' with restricted aspirations and a decreased desire for work. This is reinforced by the high probability that employment may not result in any financial gain compared to the benefit or other non-market income [...] as joblessness becomes less extraordinary, the incentive to acquire human capital and skills to help offset discrimination becomes less important. (139)

In this view, some communities accept their position and show little will, motivation or belief in their abilities to change their employment status.

Thomas used attitudinal data to assess whether there is a correlation between attitudes towards living conditions and employment and actual employment status. The data showed that higher unemployment rates among minority groups such as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis could not be explained by attitude or behaviour and lack of aspirations within these communities. Thomas describes this:

Using a hazard model we test one central implication of this culture-based view; namely, that excess minority unemployment spells can be explained, at least partially by such attitudes. However, our findings run counter to this prediction. Not only are ethnic spell differentials more robust to the inclusion of attitudes but they actually widen. (148)

Blackaby *et al.* (1999) explain the higher levels of unemployment amongst Pakistanis as a combination of higher levels of discrimination in society towards these group and responses to discrimination in the form of 'isolation'. In this view, Pakistanis remain more 'enclaved' and that isolation has more to do with choice than necessity, although the presence of racism and hostility would intensify any such inclination. A result of such isolation is that these groups cannot participate fully within society. This view is in keeping with the negative impact of bonding social capital as described by Portes (1998). It was argued that there is a threat that such communities by remaining 'insular' and isolated can reproduce social disadvantage instead of promoting mobility.

## 5. HOUSING

The 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey for England found that:

For the most part, respondents with a religious affiliation lived in places with low to moderate level area deprivation; the exception to this was that of respondents affiliated to the Muslim faith community. A significantly larger proportion of Muslim respondents lived in areas with the highest levels of area deprivation. (O'Beirne, viii)

Muslims in the UK are disproportionately represented in the most deprived urban communities – 75 per cent live in 24 cities or authorities, in the five major conurbations of Greater London, the West Midlands, West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, and the East Midlands (Richardson 2004). One third of the Muslim population live in the 10 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods (Beckford *et al.* 2006). A historical understanding of community settlement and socio-economic profiles are key in understanding these patterns. However, it has also been suggested that preferences for types of residential areas and tenure are equally important when discussing minority communities and housing.

When most ethnic minority communities arrived in Britain after World War II to take up work, they were forced into a *de facto* segregated labour market, taking on poorly paid manual and unskilled jobs that were difficult to fill using the indigenous workforce. Just as they were at the bottom end of the labour market, they also found

themselves at the poorest end of the private sector housing market. Chain migration led to clusters of communities on both regional and intra-urban levels. The reality of long-term residence in the UK became apparent as restrictions on immigration control, following the Immigration Act 1970, ended large scale chain migration. As families then joining their relatives in the UK, communities began to evaluate their housing situations and the various communities dealt with their needs differently (Anwar 1979).

Peach's (1998) study on neighbourhoods and clustering of ethnic groups argued that certain communities opted to purchase accommodation, whilst others opted for private and social renting. The option of buying was tied into economic activity. Here, it is argued that British Indian communities were in a more advantaged economic position when compared to other minority groups. However, there appears to be evidence that purchasing is also a cultural preference. Although Pakistanis were not as financially successful, Ballard (1990) argues that there was a trend for pooling together resources among this community and this often resulted in over-crowding. However, the areas in which housing was purchased by British Pakistanis was largely undesirable. The main reason for this was that communities had already settled into these areas, and to remain clustered allowed a certain degree of cultural autonomy and safety in numbers.

The Local Authority housing sector, which ironically had not been an option for these communities who were amongst those most in need, was opened up to applicants from ethnic minorities in the late 1960s. This brought some deconcentration of communities, particularly amongst British Caribbeans who had previously been living in the private rented sector. Ethnic minority applicants, however, were often given the poorest choice, in run down estates that indigenous communities refused to accept (Phillips 1998).

This had long-term repercussions on the pattern of minority community settlement. In addition, many minority households were to find themselves trapped in marginal urban areas in regions of industrial decline. Research conducted by Owen and Johnson (1996) and Phillips (1998) has demonstrated that there has been little significant change in the types of areas of residence for many groups and therefore no considerable decline in concentration has occurred. Indeed, where groups have been mobile, such as British Pakistanis in search of employment, it had not resulted in deconcentration of communities. The trend was, rather, to join other Pakistani communities in conurbations.

There is however, no evidence to support any claims of 'normative' self segregation; of Muslims preferring to live in Muslim only areas or even predominately Muslim areas. Research evidence question the claim of self segregation, even in relation to Bradford where, following an inquiry into community relations, the Bradford Review Team suggested that 'there was a worrying drift towards self-segregation' among South Asian communities (Community Cohesion Review Team 2001:9). A recent study at Manchester University examining segregation using the indices of segregation found that levels of segregation had not increased over the past decade (Simpson 2003). The study found clusters and concentrations of South Asian Muslims in particular areas of Bradford. While the study accepted that these concentrations have grown, it found that half the growth in the Muslim population in these areas is

accounted for by natural growth in the population, as new migrants have families and are not old enough to suffer many deaths. At the same time, Simpson notes that:

there has been movement out from those clusters by individuals and families. The movers are those who can afford something other than the inadequate housing associated with low income; they have avoided the unemployment endemic where once-welcoming industries have failed.

This picture is confirmed by Philips who finds that, by 2000, 10 per cent of Muslims in Bradford are living in the more affluent suburban areas. This, she argues, is indicative of growing class differentiation within the British Muslim population of Bradford. She believes her findings challenge the pervasive myth of inner-city segregation. It shows growing inner-city clustering is being accompanied by the slow outward movement of British Muslim people. Philips concludes that, 'given ethnic inequalities in access to power and resources, the sustained patterns of settlement in deprived inner-city living are more likely to reflect the choices of White, non-Muslim people and institutions'. Her focus groups suggest that there were 'White' areas where Bradford's Asian Muslims would not go, but that reasons for this were not related to a desire for self-segregation but due to fear of racism, ethnic tensions and racial harassment:

Fear [...] continues to act as a powerful constraint on spatial mobility, and many families, including some middle-class households, opt to remain in the inner-city ethnic clusters for defensive reasons [...] many British Muslim families value residential clustering, for reasons of culture and tradition, familiarity, identity, and security, the desire for separation from others is not self-evident. Their spatial segregation in poorer neighbourhoods largely reflects bounded choices, constrained by structural disadvantage, inequalities in the housing market (past and present), worries about racism, and, as we have seen above, racist harassment. The geographies of British Muslim settlement in Bradford reflect the intersection of class and 'race', with poverty as well as racism providing a brake on mobility for many. (Philips 2006:33–34)

In Oldham, one of the cities that experienced urban disturbances in the summer of 2001, a CRE investigation in the early 1990s found that segregation was the consequence of racial discrimination in the allocation of housing by the Council. Arguments supporting self-segregation become more difficult to sustain if we look beyond the particular Northern mill towns to London, home to 40 per cent of the UK's Muslim population. Professor Ceri Peach notes that 'all Muslims [...] in England are currently living in wards with mixed populations' (Peach 2006: 651).

Of all ethnic minorities' communities, British Bangladeshis have remained the most clustered, not only from both the White ethnic majority but other ethnic minority groups. The FNSEM found that many ethnic minority individuals preferred to live in close proximity to people from other ethnic minorities and particularly people from their own ethnic group. This suggests that for many, concentration in itself is not the problem, but that essentially it is the disadvantaged areas that they are concentrated in that is the concern (Modood *et al.* 1997).

According to the Health Survey of England 1999, Muslims have the highest proportion of people living in urban areas when compared to all faith groups. 59 per

cent of Muslims, compared with 30 per cent of Christians, were classed as having residence in urban settings. 40 per cent of Muslims live in suburban areas compared with 69 per cent of Hindus and 71 per cent of Sikhs. Both Muslims and Sikhs had proportions close to zero per cent living in rural areas compared with one per cent of Hindus and six per cent of Christians (Hussain, 2005). One third of the Muslim population live in the 10 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods (Beckford 2006:39). The concentration of Muslims in the poorest city areas indicates not only how far they are marginalised, but also tends to create confrontational inter-faith and inter-ethnic interactions, resulting from fear and mistrust of the 'other side' (Pauly 2004).

Amongst South Asian Muslims, Bangladeshis are most likely to live in urban areas, both compared with the other two Muslim groups and in absolute terms, with 85 per cent of Bangladeshi Muslims in the survey, compared to 48 per cent of Indians Muslims and 39 per cent of Pakistanis. Pakistanis had the highest proportion of households in suburban areas with 61 per cent compared with 52 per cent of Indians and 14.5 per cent of Bangladeshis. Less than one per cent of all groups lived in rural areas, however Indians were most likely to do so than the other groups (Hussain 2005).

The Citizenship Survey also looks at degrees of urbanisation and includes an 'inner-city' category. Muslims are found to have the highest proportions of households residing within inner cities, with 62 per cent. This is closely followed by Jews, with 61 per cent. All other groups reported less than 50 per cent within this category.

Muslims are more likely to live in urban areas when compared with all other groups. There is intra-Muslim differentiation, however, with Bangladeshi Muslims having the highest proportion of households in urban areas, when compared with Pakistani and Indian Muslims. Although there are Muslims in more prosperous areas, it should not be assumed that they are better off than Muslims living in disadvantaged or poor areas. In the 1970s, the Education Priority Areas demonstrated that there were pockets of deprivation in otherwise affluent areas. Thus, children suffering from the greatest levels of deprivation did not necessarily live in the most disadvantaged areas (Berthoud and Gershury 2000).

The process of suburbanisation is one often associated with the length of settlement of an ethnic minority population, as successive generations are often better-equipped when entering the work place than their parents. For ethnic minorities on the whole, those second and subsequent generations who are in work do appear to be doing equally well or better than their parents' generation. Some communities do appear to be experiencing greater rates of suburbanisation and deconcentration, namely British Indians and African Asians, yet the proportions are still relatively low, when compared to the ethnic majority. Research by Wallace and Denham (1996) found that all minority groups were underrepresented in the most affluent Local Authorities.

It is here where debates about choice and constraint in housing type and location are particularly vocal, as some research suggests ethnic or cultural preferences are in force rather than simple constraints of economic disadvantage and racial discrimination. Peach (1998:1658) writes:

Discrimination is not the preserve of a single group. Housing patterns may be understood much more as the product of autonomous ethnic culture and choice, moderated by chain migration and differing rates of diffusion.

Here it is argued that due to different levels of possession of human capital in the form of skills and qualifications for different communities, some groups, namely British Indians and Asian Africans had speedier economic advancements compared with British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Ballard 1990, Peach 1998). High rates of unemployment amongst some ethnic groups, however, plays a key role in their continued cycle of disadvantage and poor housing. This throws doubt on the level of choice available to such communities when opting to live in other areas or property types.

## **5.1 Tenure**

The findings from the FNSEM showed that the two main Muslim groups had different tenure profiles: Muslims of Pakistani origin had higher rates of owner occupation, whereas British Bangladeshis had a higher percentage of households living in social rented accommodation. The 2001 Census found that approximately half of Muslims reported owner occupation, compared with 68 per cent of the population as a whole. In addition, Muslims reported the highest percentage living in social rented accommodation, at just under a quarter of respondents, compared with one in five in the general population.

According to the 2001 National Census, a larger percentage of Muslims owned their accommodation with a loan or mortgage than any other tenure type, and this is similar to the percentage for all people nationally. When looking at intra-Muslim differences, British Bangladeshis were most likely to report this tenure type and British Pakistanis least likely. Therefore, Muslims are far from having a unified tenure profile. While there is diversity in the types of accommodation Muslim occupy, Muslims as a group share the experience of living in poor quality housing, whether owned or rented from the social or private sector (Hussain 2003).

Lahey (1997) argues that although owner occupation is often seen as the most attractive option, and the promotion of ownership has been an important feature of housing policy, home owners from Pakistani backgrounds were found to have poorer living conditions than those in social rented accommodation.

## **5.2 Housing quality**

The FNSEM found that, although all minority groups lived in poorer housing conditions than the majority group, the latter were more likely than most minorities to express dissatisfaction with their local area and their accommodation. The survey also showed that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have the highest levels of overcrowding when compared with all other groups. Lahey (1997:223) describes:

The size of household was more important than is tenure in determining the likelihood of overcrowding, suggesting that this problem was associated with the

general inability to access accommodation spacious enough for the needs of large households.

This is supported by evidence from the English Housing Survey which found that ethnic minorities tend to have much less living space on average than White households – 32 square metres per person compared to 45 square metres. The figure is worst for Pakistani and Bangladeshi households averaging only 22 square meters per person. Black households have the least space per person when comparing like-sized households. This is mainly because of their concentration in social housing and in flats. However, Pakistani and Bangladeshi households, half of which tend to be of five or more persons, are most likely to have insufficient bedrooms to meet their needs because suitably sized households are either unavailable or unaffordable (English Housing Condition Survey 2003).

In many respects, the results from data on Muslims as a category, do correspond with findings on the two main Muslim ethnic groups. This is particularly the case for poor housing and amenities in which Muslims have the highest proportion of households with overcrowding, the lowest proportion of households with central heating and the highest percentage of children living in accommodation on high floor levels. Where Muslims did not have the highest poverty indicator, they were often second highest after Buddhist or those with ‘any other religion’. Muslims are also shown to reside in areas which would suggest poor amenities (Hussain 2003, Sellick 2003).

Harrison (1998:795) argues that service providers, although working in a multicultural setting, often accept some lifestyles over others and that ‘differences may serve as a denigrating label’. It is argued that this is a key issue which service providers should address; those households that are seen as difficult because they do not fit the conventional model, in this case due to their size, are stigmatised and viewed as problematic instead of being sufficiently catered for. Ansari (2002:9) also comments on this: ‘One form of discrimination is prejudicial and stereotypical assessment of need by personnel, resulting in policies that create differential access to housing.’ A report by the Islamic Human Rights Commission after the Oldham riots described how British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis spent longer on waiting lists, were more likely to be offered lower quality housing and were segregated into specific estates around the centre of the town (Ahmad *et al.* 2001).

## 6. Health and Social Protection

Religion and health, particularly Muslims and health, generate far less academic attention than Muslims and employment or education. In terms of studies conducted on Muslims or Muslim groups, the focus is on specific health-related subject areas such as epilepsy, cancer detection, organ transplantation or mental illness. Many of these studies are attitudinal: they measure and explore attitudes and experiences of Muslims and Muslim communities in relation to a particular illness. There have also been many attempts to make links between theological and spiritual influences, and group experiences. Research also examines the risks that arise from specific religious practices, including the risks of exposure to infectious diseases and heat during *Hajj* and the impact on fasting on the management of chronic diseases. Laird *et al.* (2007:

924) suggest that discrimination and Islamophobia ‘contributes to health disparities – “difference in the incidence, prevalence, mortality and burden of diseases and other adverse health conditions that exist” - among Muslim minorities’. They argue that ‘societal forces of marginalisation and “faith-blind” health policies challenge the health of Muslim families and their access to culturally appropriate care’ (2007: 924). Research from Bhui *et al.* (2005) suggests that experiences and perceptions of discrimination is a risk factor to common mental disorders.

Santi’s (2006) study focuses on how Bangladeshi Muslims in the UK make sense of genetically related diseases. The study explored how this community negotiates the potentially conflicting messages they may receive from health professionals and Islamic authorities, and whether Islam plays a role in accounting for genetic disorders and helping families care for affected members. Small’s *et al.* (2005) study looked at the experiences of epilepsy among Pakistani Muslims from Bradford. The key findings were that people might simultaneously seek assistance from medical practitioners and spiritual leaders and offer explanations for seizures that include neurological and spiritual components.

Larissa’s study (2006) explored barriers to early breast examination among women from ‘traditional communities’ in the West. She argued that as decisions and actions are controlled by men among certain communities, and Muslims in particular, many women are prevented from attending screening due to lack of understanding of the importance of doing so by their men folk.

Al Khawari *et al.* (2005) explored attitudes towards transplantation among South Asian Muslims in the UK. They found high levels of alienation from health care systems in general, not only with regards to the subject being explored and these included a lack of appreciation, on the part of medical practitioners, of the sense of sacredness of the body emphasised in Islam.

Literature describing the overall health profile/s of Muslims in Britain is far more difficult to access, however. There are two data sources that provide an exception to this. The 1999 Health Survey for England includes data on religious affiliation and the 2001 National Census also included cross-tabulations of data on health by religion. When controlling for age, Muslims reported the highest proportion of males (13 per cent) and females (16 per cent) stating that their health was ‘not good’. Females were more likely to report that their health was not good across all groups, however the groups with the largest gender gaps were Muslims, Sikhs and then Hindus. Muslims also have the highest rates of disability when controlling for age structure. Almost a quarter of females (24 per cent) reported having a disability, as did 21 per cent of males.

Further information on the health profiles of Muslims is available through health promotion initiatives and non-governmental organisations working with the community such as the Muslim Health Network (MHN). The network launched in 2004 stated that the three most common fatal diseases effecting Muslims in Britain are coronary heart disease, diabetes and cancer.

One key area of debate within the area of health and services is the low take-up of services by ethnic minorities. This is of particular relevance to Muslims as they



demonstrate higher proportions of poor health and disability, suggesting greater need and support from outside formal services. In O'Neale's (2000) study of service provision for ethnic minority families and children, an inspection of eight local authorities with substantial numbers of non-White communities was conducted. One of the primary objectives of the study was to understand why Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Caribbean families, despite facing greater pressures, (such as higher numbers of dependants or higher proportions of lone parent families and lower incomes and amenities), had lower take-up rates for family support services than the White community. O'Neale's study has been supported by other research which has identified ethnic minorities as being underrepresented in terms of usage of community support services such as day care facilities (Blakemore 2000). In addition, research by Bywaters *et al.* (2003) on ethnic minority parents of children with disabilities found that there was low service take-up by these parents in comparison with parents of White disabled children. An important finding in this study, however, was that some ethnic minority families did request respite support in a variety of kinds other than overnight care away from home, such as day time care in the school holidays or care support at home, but that these services had not been made available. In short, the authors found little evidence that it was the families' lack of willingness to share the care of their children that resulted in low uptake. The services offered were either not fully articulated to the parents or were found to be inappropriate.

Ansari also supports this view. He writes, 'cultural barriers in Health and Social Services can also disadvantage ethnic minority groups, including Muslims. Instances of discrimination raise concerns that neither Health nor Social Services departments adequately meet the needs of Muslims in Britain.' (2002:18) O'Neale's report demonstrates that all but one of the Local Authorities lacked any kind of monitoring of staff decisions, in terms of service provision for ethnic minorities. They found that whilst authorities had anti-racist and equal opportunities policies and strategies, there was little evidence that they had been implemented. There was only one council that had taken race issues seriously. Many authorities talked about 'mainstreaming' the issues, but in practice this often meant that no one took responsibility for them and they were ignored. Furthermore, on the monitoring of information on service users there appeared to be lack of clarity about what should be collected, by whom and more importantly, why it should be collected at all. This basic lack of understanding of the rationale for ethnic monitoring by some has led to their services for ethnic minority families being poorly planned, poorly delivered and poorly considered at a strategic level (O'Neale 2000:43). The study acknowledged that, whilst ethnicity in various forms is recorded by most councils across the country, language and religion is documented to a lesser extent.

This is, of course, particularly important for Muslims when, for example, considering placement issues for children who are in public care. Understanding the religious needs of families and children is essential in providing culturally appropriate services. Becher *et al.* (2003:8) write:

Previous research has repeatedly highlighted the importance of 'cultural sensitivity' in providing services for minority ethnic groups. However, within this broader theme, the importance of religious sensitivity has received less attention.

Failure to provide placements which recognised the religious needs of children was highlighted in O’Neale’s study. Some young people were concerned that staff in residential units who were atheists did not fully support and encourage them to fulfil their religious duties.

O’Neale’s study also reveals mixed levels of satisfaction with the range and type of service provided with regards to religious adherence. There were concerns about how the religious needs of children were being met. A frequently quoted example was the unavailability of halal meat. There were some children’s homes that would provide halal meat for everyone. However, this was most likely to be the case for those with higher numbers of Muslims in the locality.

Vydelingum (2000) also argued that areas of dissatisfaction found in his study of hospital services and after-care provision have similarly been reported previously and consistently demonstrated levels of dissatisfaction with utilisation of hospital services by South Asian patients in relation to the provision of meals to meet religious needs.

O’Neale notes that ‘the 1989 Children Act (section 22(5) (c)) is clear that on issues of service delivery councils should ‘give due consideration to the child’s religious persuasion, racial origins and cultural and linguistic backgrounds’. This Act has not been repealed nor has the guidance changed. There was therefore an expectation that close attention would be given to such issues.’ (O’Neale 2003:15)

In his study of Pakistani and Bangladeshi families, Bywaters *et al.* (2003) also found that many parents had very little idea about what caused their child’s disability. The study argued that there was clear evidence of the impact of language barriers to understanding with the absence of interpreters in many medical consultations. In addition, he argued that parents were also missing essential support and information by voluntary organisations. There was no evidence of any of the families in this study having been touched by the wider disability rights movement or that they were linked with any organisation of and for families with disabled children. This seems to be further evidence of the predominately White membership and the orientation of the movement.

When discussing low levels of service take-up, it was highlighted above that some service providers view the issue as being more related to group preferences than any other factor. With particular reference to Muslims, issues such as preferences for the utilisation of available informal care, in the shape of extended family members, is often cited. Blakemore (2000) argues that stereotypes of extended family life and minority communities feed the assumption among service planners and providers that South Asian people are more willing to look after their own than is the White majority. This is an assumption that not only relies on the fact that those in need of support have extended families members at hand, but also that such families members are willing if able to provide support. In addition, some studies have argued that the presence of extended family members only adds to the difficulties of those needing additional support, for example young mothers who care for elder family members as well as young children (Pels 2000, Ginn and Arber 2001).

Despite the fact that the presence of extended families should not be relied on by service providers to offer the support they are meant to, some studies have shown that

extended family support can be extremely beneficial within some communities, as has been argued by Coleman (1998) when discussing social capital. Hackett *et al.* (1991) attributed the greater well-being of South Asian children to structural features of the traditional Asian family. They suggest that the protective nature of South Asian families generally, and extended families in particular, promotes psychological well-being in children.

This is in line with the large body of literature that suggests that extended family living is beneficial for children. This traditional extended family type holds benefits for other dependants also, such as grandparents. Mistry (2000) argues that in those studies in which South Asian adults do display higher levels of disorder than their indigenous counterparts, this tends not to be reflected in the well being of their children who are often better adjusted than their classmates.

Although the above studies demonstrate that extended families can be beneficial for their members in a variety of ways, what is also emphasised is that this most certainly is not always the case and therefore should not be assumed to be a valid reason for low take-up of services. Furthermore, whether or not such informal care appears to be successful in the maintenance of dependants, the expectations of women in particular (either by family members or service providers) to provide such care could be unfair if not detrimental.

When exploring the issue of informal care in minority communities, Ginn and Arber (2001) argue that due to the higher rates of unemployment among economically active British Pakistanis and Bangladeshi women (being even higher than among their male counterparts) some service providers conclude that despite problems of poverty, the presence of these women at home implies a plentiful supply of potential carers. The paper points out several objections to this argument. Firstly, it cannot be assumed that traditional expectations of unconditional support for older people will or should be maintained indefinitely. Furthermore, the 'plentiful supply of care' assumption also implies that older women will be cared for as well as older men. But given the ambivalent or uncertain position that some women occupy in their husband's families (widows with no sons to protect their interests) age in itself is not always the guarantee of devoted care. Such older women are particularly disadvantaged in terms of being able to seek help outside the family if they are ill or distressed (Ginn and Arber 2001). Another objection pointed out by Ginn and Arber is that this assumption is essentially sexist, in that women are expected to shoulder the burden of caring. One study that explores the benefits of extended family living is Mistry's (2000) work on South Asian Hindu and Muslim women coping with depression. This paper suggests that extended family living is not beneficial to some family members, namely mothers. Mothers in extended families had significantly higher levels of depression and anxiety than those in nuclear families. In this view, in extended families where social support was likely to be most available, mothers were at greatest risk, while their children profited and this advantage seemed to be linked to the grand maternal presence. Blakemore's study of Muslim parents with disabled children found that only two families were receiving significant support from their extended families, although most were in contact with other adult family members, it was clear that the burden of care again fell largely on the mothers.

When discussing community preference specifically for the use of services providing support and advice on childcare and related matters data from the 2001 Citizenship Survey found that Muslims like other groups stated their preferred sources of advice and information on child rearing came from professionals. Approximately 50 per cent of all groups stated that their GP was one of three preferred sources of advice. Support for advice from health visitors, nurses and other health professionals were similar for all groups. However, two groups had higher figures for preferences for information from religious leaders and organisations, with 25 per cent for Jews and 15 per cent for Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs followed with 8.5 per cent and seven per cent respectively. Of all groups, Muslims gave the lowest ranking to the media as a preferred source of information. Only three per cent identified magazines and newspapers and one per cent for websites and TV and radio as a source of advice and information. Schools and colleges were ranked highest as a source of advice and information by Sikhs and Christians (37 per cent) for Muslim they came second, 22 per cent. Voluntary organisations were a low preference for all groups, and those with no religion had the highest percentage reporting this type of source as a preference with only four per cent. Here, it appears that Muslims do value the information and advice from health professionals and those who are believed to be trained to understand child-rearing issues, such as teachers and those working within educational establishments. Religious leaders are also a key source of information and advice, however this is also the case for Jews and does not appear to undermine the importance placed on other professionals by Muslims and Jews.

## 7. POLICING AND SECURITY

Spalek (2005) notes that in the criminal justice arena, a particular focus on the needs and experiences of Muslims as a group has been missing. Debates around issues such as policing, community and criminal justice and victimisation have focused on ethnic communities. More recently there has been research focusing on the experience of Muslims in prison (Beckford *et al.* 2005). Spalek (2005) observes that the majority of Muslims that come into contact with the criminal justice system will have been affected by crime either as a direct or indirect victim of crime.

Evidence from the British Crime Survey (Clancy *et al.* 2001) suggests that British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are more likely than White or other minority ethnic groups to be the victims of household crime and of racially motivated attacks. Pakistanis are more likely than other groups to perceive the attacks as racially motivated. The impact of racist crimes is particularly severe. Findings from the British Crime Survey 2000 indicate that a much larger proportion of victims of racial incidents said they were very much affected by the incident (42 per cent) than victims of other sorts of incidents (19 per cent). The British Crime Survey also indicates that British Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have the lowest level of satisfaction with public initiated police contact and the lowest levels of confidence in the police. McManus (2001) notes that, Muslim involvement in mainstream criminal justice related initiatives is low.

Research exploring the impact of the anti-terrorism legislation on individuals and communities in the UK is limited and focuses on experiences arising out of the

situation in Northern Ireland. The seminal work in this area is Hillyard's *Suspect Community: People's Experiences of the Prevention of Terrorism Acts in Britain*. The study examined the experience of the Irish community in London and revealed the ways in which stop, search, exclusion and arrest powers were used against them. It examined the operation of the legislation from below by focusing on the impact on those directly affected by the legislation. The study identified the ways in which the enforcement of the legislation and the powers that it created contributed towards the construction of Irish people living in Britain and travelling between Ireland and Britain as a 'suspect community'.

Extrapolating from the experience in Northern Ireland, Campbell and Connolly (2006: 957) suggest that the indiscriminate use of anti-terrorism powers in the UK against Muslims 'could be expected to enhance the sense of solidarity of the outgroup (British Muslims) and thus generating a greater risk of radicalisation.' There are only a limited number of studies that examine the impact of anti-terrorism laws on the actions, behaviours, perceptions and attitudes of Muslims. Fekete's (2004) study contends that anti-terrorism measures construct Muslims as the 'enemy within' and are a form of anti-Muslim racism. The study examines policy discourse and does not involve empirical research. McCulloch and Pickering (2005) suggest that measures to deal with the financing of terrorism negatively impact on opportunities for remittance payments by Muslim migrants. While Amoore and De Goede (2005) argue that these laws 'criminalise' the use of the *hawala* money transfer system and place Islamic charities under suspicion and thereby reduce the level of donations they receive. Sproat (2005) criticises both studies for the lack of evidence in support of their claims.

According to the human rights NGO Liberty, Muslims report that they face religious profiling, and that they are being stopped and searched on the basis of their appearance (Liberty 2004). It is difficult to obtain direct statistical evidence to support this, as data are not collected on the basis of religion. However, data on ethnicity show, for example, that between 2001–02 and 2002–03, the number of White people stopped and searched under the Terrorism Act 2000 increased by 118 per cent, while the corresponding increase for Black people was 230 per cent and for Asian people 302 per cent (Home Office 2004b: 28). The higher number of stop and searches – and the gap between the number of stop and searches and that of actual arrests, charges and convictions – is leading to a perception among British Muslims of being unfairly policed, and is fuelling a strong disaffection and a sense of being 'under siege' (Liberty 2004).

According to Kundnani, in the year 2002/03, 60 people a day on average were stopped and searched under terrorism legislation in England and Wales. He noted that while 13 per cent of stop and searches under normal police powers resulted in an arrest, the arrest rate for stop and searches on suspicion of terrorism was just 1.7 per cent and in the majority of instances the arrests were not related to terrorism. Only 18 arrests in 2002/03 were made as a result of the stop and searches carried out. Of those convicted, only three have been Muslim, six of those convicted were White and their offences related to Northern Ireland (Kundnani 2004).

According to the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR), the enforcement of anti-terrorism legislation 'has lead to the victimisation and stigmatisation of the

Muslim community.’ FAIR also found that, ‘victimisation of Muslims under the anti-terrorism legislation has led to increased incidence of Islamophobia and racism against Muslims. This has manifested itself in the form of vandalism of Mosques, Muslim graves and homes’ and that ‘the increased hostility towards Muslims has also seen an increase in hate campaigns against Islam and Muslims from far right groups’ (FAIR 2004: 4). Human Rights Watch has also found that the enforcement of the legislation ‘has harmed race and community relations’ and undermined the willingness of Muslims in the United Kingdom to cooperate with police and security services (Human Rights Watch, 2004: 14–15).

There were significant fears of a backlash after the 7 July bombings due to public perceptions that the Muslim community as a whole were somehow responsible for the attacks. The government, after witnessing the backlash post 11 September took the 7 July backlash seriously with a series of meetings with senior figures and government officials across the UK (Dodd and Travis, 2005).

## 8. PARTICIPATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Webner (2003) describes how most South Asian settlers arrived in Britain earlier than other visible minority groups, and were more diverse in terms of key linguistic, national and religious characteristics. As a result, South Asian Muslims, particularly Pakistanis, dominate national Islamic organisations and create the public Islamic discourse with, and responses to, British wider society. Modood (2003) argues that this also occurred due to their participation in race equality campaigns, whereas migrants from the Middle East tend to classify themselves as ‘White’ and were not given their own ethnic categories to mobilise under during race equality movements.

Despite this participation, Webner argues that until the publication of *The Satanic Verses*, Muslims in Britain were ‘a silent, apparently compliant and quiescent law-abiding minority’ (2003:905). She maps the development of local and global events concerning Muslims over a 12-year period, which resulted in a far more vocal political position.

Far from the previous image of a passive community, Muslims have taken to the streets and been at the forefront of recent campaigns, most notably the anti-war campaigns in which the Muslim Association of Britain have allied themselves with non-Muslim organisations, united against by a common issue.

Modood (2003:101) argues that Muslims ‘have the most extensive and developed discourses of unity, common circumstance and common victimhood among non-EU origin peoples in the EU.’ Against this backdrop it is no surprise then that the Muslim community in Britain has been attempting to establish a body to represent their interests as a community (Vertovec 2002). A number of organisations have attempted to fill the role of ‘representative’ of the Muslim community to the mainstream and an umbrella body organising the community (Hellyer 2005). Ansari (2004) provides an overview of the history of Muslim umbrella organisations in Britain. Among the most prominent national Muslim umbrella organisations are the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) and the British Muslim Forum

(BMF). Of these, the MCB, has until recently, been regarded as the most successful as an advocacy organisation.

Lewis (2003) notes the emergence of a generation of British-born Muslims, educated and socialised in Britain and embedded in communities whose future is in Britain. He argues that this generation are making space for themselves in civic and public life. Evidence of this includes the increasing numbers of Muslim councillors and the emergence of Muslim civil society organisations including associations of Muslim professionals. In his view, Britain allows more space for Muslim self-expression than most other European states. This, he says, is facilitated by the multinational nature of the state and the Christian influences in public and civic life. The accepted presence of one faith in public life allows Muslims to argue for the acceptance of other faiths to take their place alongside it.

Lewis (2003) also highlights the critical debates taking places within active Muslim groups of this generation about what it means to be a British or European Muslim. He finds that there is an 'emerging constituency of British educated professionals' for Muslim thinkers that are engaged in developing an Islam that has social relevance to life in Britain. He argues that this represents an important generational shift from the agenda of a 'defensive South Asian Muslim community' and notes that within key Muslim organisations the discussion has shifted from encouraging participation for the 'good of the Muslim community' towards encouraging participation for the 'common good' and the good of wider society. He finds that the groups draw on wider and growing constituency of Muslim professionals and business men educated and socialised in Britain, with a stake in the country, and willing to spend time embodying Islamic perspectives to improve the situation of Muslims in Britain. He identifies this as a shift from isolationism to 'active citizenship'.

McLoughling (2002) also notes that the discourse of participation in national bodies first shifted from participation from the good of the 'ethnic community' towards the good of the 'Muslim community' and is now shifting from the good of the Muslim community towards the 'common good' of wider society. Similarly, Malik (2004) notes that within Muslim organisations 'the debate is no longer centred on rights, it has moved on to responsibilities in the broader context of Islamic altruism.'

## PART II: POLICY CONTEXT

### 1.1 Perception of Muslims

Muslim communities have come under increasing focus in recent times both due to their articulation of the importance of their faith (in what have been commonly described as ‘secular’ societies) and also because of local and global events involving Muslims. The Runnymede Trust Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia coined the term ‘Islamophobia’ to describe the hostility and Muslim-specific discrimination that has developed in response to the new wave of Muslim settlement after World War II (The Runnymede Trust (1997) see also Richardson (2004)).

Discourse surrounding Asian communities and in particular, Muslims, has altered significantly since early studies on race relations and ethnic minority communities in Britain. The Asian community, in comparison to the Afro-Caribbean community were often described as being viewed by wider society as achievers and behaviours (Mac an Ghail 1988) and as ‘a silent, apparently compliant and quiescent law abiding minority’ (Webner 2003:905). It was not until the further ethnic breakdown of the Asian category into sub-categories namely Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi that researchers such as Modood *et al.* (1997) argued that there were in fact differences within the South Asian groups with Indians achieving better than their White counterparts in terms of education and employment and Pakistani and Bangladeshis, the predominately Muslims groups underachieving. Therefore much of the changes in discourse surrounding Asians can be explained by the further differentiation of diverse communities that fall under the single heading ‘Asian’ comprising of groups from a variety of national, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds (Hussain 2005).

More recently, young Muslims have been portrayed as increasing more problematic by wider society as a result of reactions to various global and local events (Modood 2003). The public burning of *The Satanic Verses*, the 1991 Gulf War, Bosnia, Palestine, Kashmir, Chechnya, 11 September 2001, the nuclear confrontation between Pakistan and India, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have all resulted in responses at a local level. Modood argues that, ‘Muslims [now] have the most extensive and developed discourses of unity, common circumstance and common victimhood among non-EU origin peoples in the EU’ (2003:101).

The results of the 2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey provide detailed evidence of people’s perceptions of racial prejudice and discrimination. The survey shows that the proportion of people feeling that there is now more racial prejudice in Britain than five years ago increased from 43 per cent in 2001 to 47 per cent in 2003. When people who said there was more racial prejudice today were asked whom this prejudice was likely to be against. 55 per cent said there was more prejudice against ‘asylum seekers’ or ‘refugees’, 38 per cent identified Asian people, 19 per cent Black people, 18 per cent cited prejudice against ‘new immigrants’ and 17 per cent against Muslims. (Home Office 2004a:74–75).



A survey exploring people's prejudices, carried out in early 2005 found that around 58 per cent of people did think it was important for society to respond the needs of Muslims (Abrams and Houston 2005: 28). In that survey, the majority (66 per cent) of people were supportive to equal employment opportunity measures toward Muslims, while 19 per cent thought that such measures had gone too far (Abrams and Houston 2005: 29). The majority expressed positive (38 per cent) or neutral (43 per cent) feelings towards Muslims, although one fifth expressed negative feelings about Muslims (Abrams and Houston 2005: 34). A quarter of respondents said that they did sometimes feel prejudiced against Muslims but would not let it show, while nine per cent said they did not mind if they came across as prejudiced against Muslims (Abrams and Houston 2005:54). When asked whether particular groups were accepted as British, Arabs were the ethnic group and Muslims the religious that people felt were least likely to be regarded as British (Abrams and Houston 2005: 56). Around one third of respondents viewed Muslims as posing a cultural and physical threat to the UK (Abrams and Houston 2005: 67).

An opinion poll by the polling company Populus of 1,005 adults in the UK, taken in June 2006 found that 60 per cent of people felt that Muslims made a valuable contribution to British society. 60 percent also felt that Muslims were viewed with suspicion by their fellow citizens. A similar percentage felt it was unacceptable for police to view Muslims with greater suspicion because the 7 July bombers were Muslim. 45 per cent disagreed with the statement that Islam encourages more violence than other religions compared to 30 per cent who agreed with the statement. A majority, 54 per cent, disagreed with the statement that Islam is a threat to Britain's way of life. Almost three quarters (74 per cent) felt that Muslims needed to do more to integrate into mainstream British culture.<sup>11</sup> Blick *et al.* in their analysis of polling data suggest that 'public attitudes towards Islam and Muslims in general are deteriorating' (Blick *et al.* 2006: 38).

## 1.2 The British media and perceptions of Muslims

The negative portrayal of Muslims in the media has been the subject of several studies and reports. A study of news press coverage of Islam between 1994–96 revealed an underlying discourse by which Islam was presented as a threat to British society and its values, and Muslims were seen as deviant, irrational, different and unable to fit in with British society (Poole 2002). In a study conducted of Welsh Arab Muslim audiences in Cardiff, Harb and Ehab (2006) explored respondents' reactions to the events of 11 September and their opinions of media representations of Islam and Muslims. Access to Arab satellite television channels in the United Kingdom meant that respondents were able to challenge dominant Western media narratives about the causes and consequences of major events such as the bombing of the Twin Towers. The sample of Muslims in this study largely verbalised a lack of trust in what the Western media produced. Ahmed (2006) conducted a study with a sample of self-identified British Muslims from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and age groups. Her research found that among respondents were distinct perceptions of Eurocentric and US bias in the Western media. There was an increase in alternative media sources sought by respondents as a result of the reporting post-11 September. In addition,

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<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.populuslimited.com/pdf/2006\\_07\\_04\\_Times\\_ITV\\_General.pdf](http://www.populuslimited.com/pdf/2006_07_04_Times_ITV_General.pdf)

many respondents believed that the ‘clash of civilisation’ thesis was propagated by the media. In a national survey of prejudice in the UK, nearly half of respondents thought images of Muslims in the media were mostly or nearly all negative (Abrams and Houston 2005:49).

A study by the Institute of Race Relations explores how press reporting around anti-terrorism arrests contributes towards an atmosphere of Islamophobia, they note that ‘in numerous occasions there is great media fanfare as the police herald the arrest of a so-called terrorist cell, only for the cases to be quietly dropped days, weeks or months later.’ They give the example of ten Iraqi and North African men who were arrested in April 2004 in Manchester, Staffordshire and Yorkshire and the West Midlands on suspicion of involvement in a plot to bomb Old Trafford football ground. Details of the alleged attack plan were leaked to the media, making for extensive coverage. The men were held for eight days for questioning: yet no terrorism charges were brought. It later emerges that the so-called terrorists were ardent Manchester United fans. Furthermore, while arrests receive significant coverage, the conviction of non-Muslims is not widely reported and so ‘the public is left with the impression that the criminal justice system is successfully prosecuting Muslim terrorists in Britain. The reality is that large numbers of Muslims are being arrested, questioned and released while the majority of those actually convicted in an open criminal trial are non-Muslims.’<sup>12</sup>

### 1.3 Integration

A key element of the government’s integration strategy is to ensure protection from religious discrimination and violence. In relation to discrimination, the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1660) came into force on 2 December 2003. The regulations aim to implement the Employment Directive 2000/78/EC. The regulations prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation on grounds of religion and belief, in respect of employment and vocational training. They also apply to discrimination by institutions (including universities), which provide further or higher education. The Equality Act 2006 extends the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief to the provision of goods, services and facilities. In addition to this, the Equality Act 2006 creates a new Equality and Human Rights Commission, which is tasked with the responsibility of enforcing this legislation. During 2008, the government will publish its proposals for a move towards a new single Equality Act.

In addition to legislation to provide protection from discrimination, the Government set out its race equality strategy in *Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society* (Home Office 2005). The document states that at the heart of the Government’s strategy is ‘an overarching objective to reduce race inequalities’. The reduction of race inequalities is tied in to Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets for the period 2005–2008. The PSA targets will include specific goals to reduce perceptions of discrimination in a wide range of public services, reduce employment inequalities and monitor the progress of minority ethnic communities across major public services,

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<sup>12</sup> “New study highlights discrimination in use of anti-terror laws”, Press Release, Institute of Race Relations (2 September 2004). See also L. Fekete, “Anti-Muslim racism and the European Security State”, *Race and Class* 46(1) (2004), pp.3-29.

from education to health (Home Office 2005:9). The strategy also acknowledges that ‘generic programmes of support are important but not always sufficient’ and that ‘focused support is often appropriate in helping disadvantaged Black and minority ethnic groups’ (Home Office 2005:16).

The Attorney General’s powers to challenge unduly lenient sentences were extended in October 2003 to include racially and religiously aggravated offences, following a recommendation by the Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate. In March 2004 the Court Appeal increased the sentence of an offender for a racially aggravated violence following an appeal by the Attorney General.<sup>13</sup>

The Public Order Act 1986 created an offence of incitement to racial hatred. The gaps and anomalies that arise from the present law on incitement to racial hatred have been apparent for some time. Some religious groups (e.g., Jews and Sikhs) are covered by existing incitement to racial hatred laws as a result of decisions made by the courts. However this is on the basis of those groups also having a distinct ethnic origin. The existing law does not protect individuals belonging to other religions that do not have distinct ethnic origins (e.g., Christians or Muslims).

There is evidence that organisations, such as the BNP, are specifically exploiting this loophole in their campaign strategy by focusing their attacks on Muslims rather than any particular minority ethnic groups. In evidence to the 2003 House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences, many organisations, including the Association of Chief Police Officers, gave examples of problems where they faced difficulties responding under existing legislation alone and where the extension of the incitement provision to religious hatred would help them combat extremism.

Attempts were initially made by the government to introduce legislation on incitement to religious hatred after 11 September in the Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Bill 2001. Proposals were withdrawn after opposition in the House of Lords. Some members of the House of Lords felt that the context of a package of emergency anti-terrorism measures, brought in the aftermath of the 11 September atrocities, was not an appropriate place to introduce such a measure. There were also concerns about the need for more time for debate about the impact on free speech of an incitement to religious hatred provision, and that it should be pursued as part of a wider package of measures to address discrimination on religious grounds. In 2002, an attempt was made to introduce the offence of incitement to religious hatred by Lord Avebury in a Private Member’s Bill. In 2003 evidence and arguments for and against the creation of such an offence was also considered by a House of Lords Select Committee on Religious Offences. Incitement to religious hatred is now an offence under the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006.

‘Community cohesion’ emerged as a central aspect of integration policy that has developed as part of the response to the disorder that occurred in several northern mill towns during the summer of 2001. Commissions of inquiry in to the riots identified the lack of ‘community cohesion’ as underlying the breakdown in order. The government responded with the creation of a ‘Community Cohesion Unit’, later

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<sup>13</sup> “Hate crime data show confidence building efforts are yielding results”, Press Release, Attorney General’s Chambers (6 April 2004), available at [http://www.lslo.gov.uk/pressreleases/rims\\_comment\\_06\\_04\\_04.doc](http://www.lslo.gov.uk/pressreleases/rims_comment_06_04_04.doc)

renamed the 'Faith and Cohesion Unit', within the Race Equality Directorate of the Home Office. In May 2006, this moved to the newly created Department for Communities and Local Government.

Following the London Bombings of July 2005 a Commission on Integration and Cohesion, was created to consider how local areas can play a role in 'forging cohesive and resilient communities'.<sup>14</sup> The Commission's final report identifies a cohesive community as a condition where:

- there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country;
- there is a strong sense of an individual's rights and responsibilities when living in a particular place – people know what everyone expects of them, and what they can expect in turn;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, access to services and treatment;
- there is a strong sense of trust in institutions locally to act fairly in arbitrating between different interests and for their role and justifications to be subject to public scrutiny;
- there is a strong recognition of the contribution of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common;
- there are strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods.

A key proposal of the Commission is for 'a new national campaign that promotes our shared future based on a number of key principles – those of rights and responsibilities, visible social justice, and the somewhat old fashioned sounding ethics of hospitality' (CIC, 2007, p. 5). It warns that the goals of building integration and cohesion cannot be met if the discrimination experienced by some groups within society continues.

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<sup>14</sup> See Terms of Reference for the Commission at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1501522>

## **PART III: CITIES**

### **1. Cardiff**

Population of Cardiff: 305,353  
Number of Muslims: 11,261  
Percentage of Muslims: 3.69 per cent

Islam is the second largest faith in Cardiff after Christianity. The city has the largest Muslim concentration in the whole of Wales, where at the national level, Muslims account for less than 1 per cent of the population (22,000 people). Among other faiths in Cardiff, the next largest groups are Hindus (over 4,000) and Buddhists (3,000), followed by Jews and Sikhs (both about 2,000). There are therefore nearly three times more Muslims in the city than the next minority faith group.

Most Muslims in Cardiff are from South Asian backgrounds, including 7,000 Pakistani Muslims and 5,000 Bangladeshi Muslims, although nearly 3,000 White people living in the city also described themselves as Muslim. It is likely this figure contains a high proportion of people from the Middle East and other Muslim countries such as Turkey, rather than reflecting the number of indigenous White British Muslims who may have converted to Islam (Hussain 2005).

Cardiff also has a long established Somali community. Some of Cardiff's Somalis arrived in Cardiff as seamen in the 1880s, working for the Royal Navy (as Somaliland was a British protectorate) and on the docks in Cardiff. Since then Somali refugees have made up the majority of Cardiff's Somali community.

Cardiff's Muslims are largely concentrated in Grangetown, Riverside and Butetown and remain in relatively poorer neighbourhoods. Cardiff City Council has attempted to address this with urban regeneration and with increased monitoring of areas with higher concentrations of minority groups. However despite the visible regeneration in areas such as Butetown, they remain poor areas with high levels of unemployment.

The city now has 12 registered mosques in Cardiff and the city has one of the longest standing Muslim presences in Britain. It is perhaps due to this that Cardiff has been described as a 'better place to live' for Muslims with a more tolerant population and less discrimination than other areas in the UK (El-Menshawy 2006). Whether or not this is the case, it is true that there have been fewer reports of 'racial tensions' as a result of events such as the 7 July 2005 bombings.

Cardiff is a particularly worthy place for study due to being the home of one of the oldest Muslim communities in Britain. Similar to the Yemenis in South Shields, parts of the community are now well into the fifth generation of settlement and therefore provide a particularly interesting case study for integration processes.

## 2. Glasgow

Population of Glasgow: 867,150

Number of Muslims: 20,902

Percentage of Muslims: 2.41 per cent

There has been a visible Muslim presence in Glasgow since the 1940s when the first Muslim organisation in Glasgow 'Jamiat Ittehadul Muslimin' was established. By the 1960s there were 3,000 Asians in Glasgow, and by the 1970s the figure had risen to 12,000, of which the largest subgroup was Muslims. Nearly half of all Muslims in Scotland live in the Greater Glasgow area. Today 50 per cent of Glasgow's Muslims were born in the UK, figures that are replicated elsewhere in Britain.

The second wave of Muslim settlers has largely arrived as asylum seekers and refugees. It is estimated that there are nearly 6,000 asylum seekers living in Glasgow.

The vast majority of Glasgow's Muslims are Pakistani (84 per cent) with six per cent White and 9.5 per cent other. Areas within Glasgow, such as the Royston ward including the Sighthill district, are now home to a significant asylum-seeker community and those Muslims who reported their ethnicity as White or 'other'. The Southside Wards and Woodlands remain the homes of the majority of Pakistanis and other South Asian Muslims in the city.

Despite the diversity in terms of groups and areas of residents, Glasgow's Muslim community is disadvantaged according to Census data and measure of deprivation.

The 2001 Census data for Scotland asked an additional question on religion which allows an attempt at mapping the importance of religious identity for Muslims in the city. When looking at data on religious community 'retention rates', Muslims were the most 'loyal' to their faith in terms of remaining in the faith they were raised in. 96 per cent of Muslims in Glasgow have been brought up as Muslims and remained so as adults, compared with 87 per cent of Jews in the city. Muslims also had markedly high rates of in-marriage; 93 per cent of Muslims marrying within the same faith, compared with 86 per cent of Hindus.

The Glaswegian Muslim community gives the impression of an assertive and self-assured community. There are numerous examples of community organisation, lobbying and campaigning to speak of.

The Glasgow central mosque provides an elderly day care centre, and in 2004 extended its service to provide a mediation review clinic, as a result of discovering that Muslims in the city had poorer health on many measures when compared with other communities (a finding apparent for all Muslims across the UK). The clinics run once a week for two hours. Each patient receives a basic medical, along with health promotion advice. GPs are informed about the service provided through letters from the mosque. This demonstrates the extent to which Glasgow's central mosque is not only a place of worship, but also a natural hub for community life and services.

After the events of 11 September 2001 and 7 July 2005, the community swiftly organised responses and strategies to the anti-Muslim abuse experienced by some Glaswegian Muslims. After 11 September in the Glasgow Pollokshields area, posters of Osama bin Laden, taken from newspapers were said to have been put up with the word 'revenge' written on them. High concentrations of Muslims live in the area and as a result, their leaders lobbied politicians, councillors and police to help them combat the abuse.

Glasgow's Muslims appear to demonstrate a real sense of organisation at less pressing times also. The community's protest over a restaurant's proposal to put out tables and seats is an example. Muslims argued it would be unpleasant for those living in the area to walk past people drinking on the pavement. Javed Gill of UK Islamic Mission said, 'this area is the second largest for Muslims in this city and we look after 1,500 young people and provide activities for them. We've no objection if it's being done inside but selling alcohol on the footpath is a temptation to our young people.' (Murry 2005)

A recent example of Glasgow's Muslims successful lobbying was their campaign to boycott Glasgow airport for high incidents of Muslim travellers being stopped and questioned. As a result of the boycott, the airport representatives attended a meeting with the Muslim community and pledged to address the issue, providing further training for officers and raising awareness of cultural and religious sensitivity (Buaras 2006).

### **3. Leicester**

Population of Leicester: 280,000

Number of Muslims: 30,885

Percentage of Muslims: 11 per cent

Outside London, Leicester is the most religiously diverse city in the UK. Although Leicester has a large Muslim population – 11 per cent of the population – they are not the largest minority faith group. Hindus account for 15 per cent of the population in Leicester, while four per cent of people are Sikhs. 40 per cent of the population in Leicester are from minority ethnic groups. Leicester experienced large scale migration of East African Asians in the 1970s. These migrants tended to have higher educational and social capital than the Pakistani and Bangladeshi migrants that arrived in the 1960s. As a consequence the largest minority ethnic group are Indians, and Indians are the dominant ethnic group among the Muslim community. Although a significant number of Somali Muslims began to settle in Leicester in the late 1990s. Leicester therefore provides an example of city with an ethnically diverse Muslim community. With its large Hindu and Sikh population, Leicester is a city in which the needs of Muslims have to be addressed by local government and public bodies in the context of significant religious diversity. It is a city that celebrates its diversity and where the city council identifies this as a positive aspect of the city.

#### 4. Oldham

Population of Oldham: 217,273

Number of Muslims: 24,039

Percentage of Muslims: 11.06 per cent

Although there are more Pakistanis in Oldham (seven per cent of the town's population) there is often more focus on its Bangladeshi community and this is because Oldham has the largest Bangladeshi population outside of London – 9,817 in 2001 or 4.5 per cent of the town's population (Garbin Cronem 2005).

Oldham is visibly disadvantaged with a desperate need for regeneration in areas containing some of the largest Muslim concentrations such as Westwood. Efforts have been made by Oldham's leaders to shape their own urban community space through symbols such as the 'Shaheed Minar', a monument commemorating the martyrs of the Bengali Language Movement of 1952. The landmark is in the Bangladeshi area of Westwood and was funded through a local council regeneration scheme.

The offices of the Young Muslim Organisation (YMO) and Islamic Forum Europe are located within the Westwood/Cold Hurst area. Both groups were set up in Oldham in the 1990s. They recently purchased a piece of land in Westwood where the Oldham Muslim Centre is being built with religious and recreational facilities. The YMO also work in partnership with other agencies such as Sure Start, the Oldham youth services and the police (Garbin Cronem 2005).

It is this visible disadvantage that has been highlighted by many as one of the key reasons for the disturbances in Oldham in 2001. McRoy (2001) writes about how the town had been described as 'a mini Bosnia' according to the BNP, who gained Oldham seats in general elections and the highest votes for a radical rightwing party since World War II. The BNP's electoral strategy principally rested on anti-Muslim sentiment rather than generalised anti-Asian or Black racism, urging residents to boycott Muslim businesses only. According to Muslim sources, the violence was partly spurred by White youths deliberately urinating on a mosque. In late June 2001, the violence also spread to nearby Burnley and Bradford.

Oldham's Muslim youth appeared to have come to loggerheads with the White community. Police statistics showed that over 60 per cent of racist attacks are perpetrated by Asians on Whites. Both Asian Christians and Hindus have reported attacks by Muslim youths, and in 2000 a public Dewali festival celebration was attacked by youths. Further fuelling tensions, an Oldham-based Imam, Shafiq ur Rehman was arrested for 'terrorist' links, reinforcing beliefs about Muslim bringing terror to their town.

Despite being close neighbours with Manchester, the portrayal of Muslims in Oldham is in sharp contrast to that of the successful and more sophisticated image of Manchester's Muslim community (Werbner 2000), yet it is likely that there are strong links and interaction between the two.



## 5. Middlesbrough

Population of Middlesbrough: 134,855

Number of Muslims: 5,689

Percentage of Muslims: 4.22 per cent

Despite having just as large (if not larger) concentration of Muslims as Glasgow and Cardiff, the town's Muslim community has remained unnoticed and generally unorganised in terms of asserting a common Muslim identity, as noted with Glasgow. The only other substantial Muslim community in the region is Newcastle, 40 miles north of Middlesbrough. There are 4,840 Pakistanis in Middlesbrough, making up 3.5 per cent of the Muslim community. In comparison there are only 70 Bangladeshis according to the last Census and 840 Indians. There has, however, been a growing asylum seeker community and longer established Somali and other refugee communities.

There are currently four registered mosques in the town. The oldest of the four, the Jamia Masjid, remains in the heart of the Pakistani community. Lawless (1995:46) describes the history surrounding the mosque:

The purchase of the Waterloo Road mosque caused serious rifts in the Muslim community. According to press reports a faction composed mainly of non-Mirpuris, presumably Punjabis [...] maintained that it was their group who had bought the mosque and operated it with their own money. The money, the group claimed was raised by subscription among 91 non-Mirpuri families. In 1977 a new committee was elected at a public meeting to run the mosque. The non-Mirpuri group claimed to have had no knowledge of the meeting [...] and applied to the high court for an injunction to prevent their rivals from assuming ownership and control of the mosque which was granted.

Despite these initial issues now having been long resolved, the mosque committee has remained an important arena for factionalism and political in-fighting within the Pakistani community in Middlesbrough. This has on one occasion resulted in a fatality when in 2000, Ali Rehman was stabbed in the chest following a row in the mosque, where he was appointed secretary only days before.

The Somalis and Yemenis in the town had mostly chosen to attend the mosque in South Shields until 1989, when with the support of the Saudi Arabian government they established the Abu Bakr mosque. It remains the most ethnically diverse mosque in the town and a hub for the new wave of Muslim arrivals such as asylum seekers and students from the Middle East.

The Central Mosque opened in the late 1990s due to growing sectarian differences that had begun to emerge within the second and third generations. The University's Islamic Society had taken a more Saudi-influenced theological stance which had been promoted by many younger Pakistani men in the town. This followed national trends for many young Muslims in Britain adopting more 'Salafi' interpretations of Islam, which branded their parents' South Asian interpretations of Islam to be less authentic. The majority of worshippers at this mosque are Pakistani and there have been moral and theological battles between Waterloo Road Mosque and the Central Mosque for the hearts and minds of the Pakistani community in the town. A prime example is that of Radio Ramadan, for which the licence has been disputed and fought over since the

community first had a radio station for the purpose in the mid 1990s. In 2005 the Central Mosque successfully obtained the licence, however, in protest the small community in Stockton-on-Tees applied for a licence and a second Radio Ramadan, hosted by Waterloo Road Mosque, ran in parallel.

The comparatively 'quiet' presence of Muslims in Middlesbrough when likened with other areas could be explained by two possibilities. The first is that Muslims in the town, despite being geographically isolated, have unproblematically and successfully integrated within the town. The second is that the community has not yet mobilised in the way that other communities have in asserting a more politically active and vocal Muslim identity. Middlesbrough remains socially and economically disadvantaged and the closure of industries, as the case with many other Muslim communities in many towns, has left Middlesbrough's Muslims facing high rates of unemployment. There is a visible presence of young Pakistanis attending the University in the town, where in the ward surrounding the main campus, 36 per cent of the resident population are non-White. There remain, however, poor strategies in place for the monitoring of Muslim communities in the largest three organisations and employers in the town: the National Health Service (NHS), Middlesbrough Council and Teesside University. This suggests that disadvantage and discrimination for faith communities is simply not on the agenda yet.

## **6. Waltham Forest**

Population of Waltham Forest: 218,341

Number of Muslims: 32,902

Percentage of Muslims: 15.1 per cent

Waltham Forest has one of the largest concentrations of Muslims in the UK and the largest Pakistani population of any London borough. Waltham Forest's Pakistanis are broadly representative of British Pakistanis in terms of age structure and socio-economic status (Jacobson 1998).

The area's largest ethnic minority groups are Pakistani and Black Caribbean (each with eight per cent of the population) and Black African and White Other (each making up six per cent). Around one per cent of the borough's population is Bangladeshi.

The borough is therefore extremely diverse and has largely enjoyed a reputation of embracing this diversity, in comparison to other London boroughs with high proportions of Muslim such as Tower Hamlets, where in 1993 the BNP were elected for political representation of the Isle of Dogs. Recently, however, the borough has hit the headlines with a number of arrests of British Muslims suspected of having terrorist links.

On the 11 August 2006, 13 people were arrested in East London on suspicion of involvement in terrorism related offences. Of those arrested nine were from Waltham Forrest. Community leaders in the borough, have been running a '250,000 people - one community' campaign to repair the damage to community relations caused by the arrests. However, despite the campaign, many Muslim leaders were particularly

concerned by their perceptions about the lack of sensitivity shown by the Home Secretary, John Reid, in a visit to the area in September 2006.

In a speech given by John Reid, he said: ‘There are some circumstances when you need to intervene, to challenge your children, to protect them from harm [...] There are dangers of drugs and street crime, but there are others. There are fanatics who are coming to groom and brainwash children in this community.’ Abu Izzadine, a resident of the area shouted ‘shame on you’ at the audience of Muslim parents and called Reid a ‘tyrant’. Parents told *The Guardian* that they were disappointed by the speech because they were not told what signs to look for. They called on the council to provide a forum where young people could feel comfortable expressing themselves and debating issues that concerned them.

Like Bradford, Oldham and Burnley after the 2001 riots, and Leeds after the 2005 London bombings, the Muslim community in Waltham Forest at present is being focused on by both the authorities and the national media as an area where ‘home grown’ terrorists come from.

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