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Nature of Identity among British Pakistanis

Ayesha Masood Chaudhry

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Ayesha Masood Chaudhry

Thesis submitted to the Department of Anthropology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Philosophy in Anthropology

Quaid-i-Azam University

Department of Anthropology

Islamabad-Pakistan

2019

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The United Kingdom, by virtue of being a multi-ethnic society, has a record of an increasing tendency towards the phenomenon of inter-ethnic unions as per the census of 2011. In the context of the British Pakistani community in England and Wales, around 9% of all unions made were inter-ethnic in nature. What are the factors leading towards British Pakistanis undergoing such a form of marriage, especially as a review of literature reveals their inclination to be involved in endogamous and transnational marriages? What are the lived experiences and family dynamics among families formed from such British Pakistani inter-ethnic unions? What are the various forms of identity reflected among members of British Pakistani inter-ethnic families due to cross-cultural contact? Qualitative research methodology was used to explore these research questions. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect a sample of two key informants (both female British Pakistanis), 35 members of inter-ethnic British Pakistani couples (11 males and 25 females), and 3 offspring born of such inter-ethnic unions (2 males and 1 female) from the towns of Norbury and Croydon located in the London Borough of Croydon, Greater London. In-depth interviews were conducted to collect the data and case studies with the help of two semi-structured interview guides. It was observed that religion (Islam) played a major role in many aspects of the respondents' lives, including their tendency to inter-marry (religious boundaries were not crossed in all cases but one); as a common ground for negotiating various cultural differences faced due to cross-cultural contact, including dynamics of the family; and as the major form of identity through which all other forms of identity are exhibited depending on whether or not they would be permitted on the basis of perceived Islamic principles.

Key words: British Pakistanis, inter-ethnic marriages, family dynamics, identity formation, religion

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

1. INTRODUCTION

The British Pakistani community, by virtue of its population, is the fourth largest non-white ethnic group in the United Kingdom (hereafter UK), after the groups of British Indians, Black African/Carribean people and the mixed/multiple ethnic group (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2013). The consolidation of such a sizeable community in the UK has its roots in the associations formed due to the previous occupation of the Indian Subcontinent by the British colonial empire (Werbner, 2005, p. 476-478). The 1948 British Nationality Act, formulated after the departure of the imperial power from the Subcontinent, was enacted to clarify the citizenship statuses of members of all the regions that were newly relieved from under the jurisdiction of the British government, by making them entitled to becoming a part of the category of "United Kingdom and Colonies" in case of any inability to obtain an alternate legitimate Commonwealth citizenship (Pakistan, after independence, became part of the Commonwealth of Nations) (Ansari, 2013, p. 287). Due to allowances to such an alternate form of British citizenship, along with the void of job opportunities created in the labour market by the post-World War II boom, immigration into Britain was made easier (Ballard, 1987, p. 24; Hansen, 1999, p. 88). This caused many Pakistanis, mostly bachelor males and husbands from Mirpur (Azad Kashmir) and Northern Punjab, to take up industrial jobs in the UK and send back the money they made to improve the socio-economic status of their families in Pakistan in the 1950s (Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG], 2009, p. 6-7; Charsley, Bolognani, Spencer, Ersanilli & Jayaweera, 2016, p. 8).

Such a wide-scale immigration from Pakistan, and the negative reaction observed from the native British citizens towards this phenomenon caused the enactment of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1962, which restricted the free entry of Commonwealth citizens into the UK through the use of the voucher system (Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG], 2009, p. 6). In this way, vouchers for admission into Britain could only be issued to those prospective Pakistani migrants who could be sponsored by a Pakistani who had already immigrated to the UK. However, the severe shortage of labour faced by various companies in the UK in running their industry caused them to allot vouchers much more frequently, leading to the reinforcement of the existing

dynamics of Pakistani immigration (husbands and bachelor males), despite the restrictions underlined in the 1962 act (Ballard, 1987, p. 25). Thus, under such a circumstance, the British government, in 1969, decided to contain the processes of immigration to reunification of the already present migrants with their immediate family members, especially underage children. This situation led to a shift in the patterns of immigration, where the trend was seen to change from a practice of temporary labour (with immigrants moving back to Pakistan after earning and saving enough to support their families), to a form of permanent residence (with one's family) (Werbner, 2005, p. 478).

However, permanent residence did not deter many of these immigrants from maintaining ties to their country of origin in the form of various transnational processes. The obtainment of dual citizenship is one manifestation of such transnational processes, causing a cementing of ties, especially in the context of social and material exchange, with both the country of origin and host country (Bloemraad, 2004, p. 394). The entitlement of British Pakistanis to both British and Pakistani citizenship is expressed in their participation with many forms of transnational activities, whether social, economic or political. One such act includes the involvement in transnational marriages.

The constraints enacted on immigration to the UK in 1969 came with the expectation that family reunification would taper off after the initial droves of immigrants began to settle. However, due to the prevalence of the custom of "arranged marriages" among the South Asian community, it was observed in the 1980s and early 1990s that most first-generation immigrants preferred to find a match for their children among their extended family and *biraderi* (system of brotherhood) in their countries of origin (Migration Watch UK, 2005, p. 4; Werbner, 2005, p. 479; Shaw, 2014, p. 31-32). Certain implications are observed to be prevalent in the context of such a practice. One such implication is that being involved in transnational marriages is considered a nearly sure-fire way of being granted entrance into the UK by virtue of the British citizenship of the respective spouses (Shaw, 2001, p. 326-327). Also, husbands from Pakistan who have to start over in the UK call for an opportunity for women based in the UK to maintain a more equal marital relationship with such a spousal choice, both economically and in domestic matters; and, also provides an opportunity for such women to avoid the conflicts that are usually perceived to occur by

virtue of living in a joint family system (Charsley, 2005, p. 94). On the other hand, wives from Pakistan may be perceived to be "vulnerable" based on their segregation from their immediate families and their unfamiliarity with the new environment, and thus this situation may be used as a means of control by British husbands over such women (Charsley, 2008, p. 267-268). Another implication is that for many British Pakistanis residing in the UK, marrying someone from their *biraderi* or kin in their country of origin causes a consolidation of and a chance to increase one's social status and honour in that *biraderi*. Also, for the family from which the prospective husband or wife travels to the UK to be with their spouse, there is a chance for a positive gaining in social status among their *biraderi* or kin, as such families are earmarked as having a transnational connection as compared to those who do not have such ties (Shaw, 2014, p. 35).

A major proportion of transnational marriages are considered to be consanguineous in nature (marriages between close-kin, most commonly between first cousins), especially among the Muslim immigrants (Werbner, 2005, p. 479). What may be the motivations behind such a marriage practice? Apart from the allowance of consanguineous marriages by Islam (Werbner, 2005, p. 479; Bittles, 2008, p. 328), the understanding and, by extension, more frequent meetings and interaction among close kin brought about by consanguineous marriages is an influential aspect in the decision towards arranging such kinds of marriages (Shaw & Charsley, 2006, p. 405). Furthermore, considerable assurance of the appropriate treatment of the bride in a household with which she holds some level of familiarity, and an ensuring extensive support system already in place in the case of marital conflicts are also factors contributing towards the prevalence of these types of marriages (Qureshi, Shaw & Charsley, 2012, p. 264). However, Shaw (2001) elaborates on such notions, stating that other considerations are also included in conjunction with the above mentioned factors, including the socio-economic status and qualities of the prospective match (p. 315).

Thus the aforementioned inclination towards transnational marriages caused a still continuous flow of immigration of spouses and prospective matches into the country, both male and female. It was observed that between 1996 and 2001, the migration of spouses into the country from the South Asian region almost doubled (Migration Watch UK, 2005,

p. 1). According to statistics released by the Home Office, around 15,000 spouses were granted clearance of entry in 2001 (Werbner, 2005, p. 479). These circumstances thus depict that the major marriage practice among British Pakistanis is that of endogamy (marriage within the ethnic group of which one is a part of).

Such an inclination towards transnational marriages among the British Pakistani community can be linked towards a low preference for exogamous or inter-ethnic marriages (marriage to someone from outside the Pakistani community), and statistical data depicts such a circumstance. According to the 2011 census conducted in the United Kingdom (hereafter UK), inter-ethnic relationships constituted 9% of all recorded relationships (1 out of every 10 couple was involved in an inter-ethnic relation). Such statistics have been observed to be an increase from 2001, when inter-ethnic relationships made up 7% of all couples (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3). However, the ethnic group of "British Pakistanis", as outlined in this census, had one of the lowest probabilities out of all ethnic groups in the UK to be in inter-ethnic relationships (with 9% of British Pakistanis involved in such relationships), after White British (4%) and Bangladeshis (7%). Nevertheless, low statistical probability does not negate the fact that there is a small faction of British Pakistanis present that opt to marry outside their parent community, and this phenomenon has been considered to be the subject of the present research.

1.1. The problem

An analysis of the history of the processes of immigration from Pakistan to the UK provides us with the context of the present-day continuous reinforcement of the preference towards endogamy and transnational marriages among British Pakistanis. With such a heightened propensity towards a particular preference, any deviation from the norm would be considered as highly unusual, and therefore, an unknown avenue that would be interesting to uncover. Therefore, the aim of this thesis was to undertake an in-depth analysis on the context and workings of such an uncommon phenomenon of exogamous marriages among British Pakistanis (marriage to someone from outside the Pakistani community), and also to explore how the decision to be involved in such a marriage practice is reflected in the way they identify themselves by virtue of holding the status of an ethnic minority in the

UK. Furthermore, it also intended to investigate the resultant family dynamics that may come about due to cross-cultural contact.

1.2. Statement of the problem

As per the literature on marriage patterns and preferences among the ethnic group of British Pakistanis in the UK, endogamy, or more particularly, arranged, transnational and/or consanguineous marriages are the main practices recorded among the various generations and age groups in the ethnic group under consideration (Migration Watch UK, 2005, p. 4; Werbner, 2005, p. 479; Shaw, 2014, p. 27). Such a propensity towards endogamy is also depicted in official census reports of marriage patterns among the various ethnic groups residing in the UK, with low percentages of exogamous marriages recorded among British Pakistanis as compared to other ethnic groups (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3).

However, these reports do not indicate that there is a non-existence of cases of exogamous marriages among British Pakistanis. Rather, they state a low preference for them. Nevertheless, this phenomenon, albeit small, is still deemed to be significant enough to be reported by various media outlets in the recent past (Bloomfield, 2008; Badawi, 2012; Evans, 2014). These circumstances exhibit that there are particular aspects to such a form of exogamous marriage that may be considered noteworthy enough to be researched upon, but has by far received negligible academic focus. Also, the high propensity towards endogamy among British Pakistanis indicates that any form of inter-ethnic marriages among this minority ethnic group would be considered deviant to the norm. Therefore, research on this avenue may be important to unveil important emerging characteristics that may contribute towards the formation of a more holistic picture regarding the inter- and intra-group dynamics of the ethnic group under consideration.

Shedding light upon the gap in literature dealing with such a small but significant phenomenon, the present research focuses on the experiences of members of inter-ethnic British Pakistani couples (residing in the towns of Norbury and Croydon, Greater London), and on the factors that contribute towards such a decision to inter-marry, along with the resulting family dynamics by virtue of the contact of separate cultures. The relationship of

the decision to inter-marry with the forms of identity of those involved in inter-marriages will also be inferred, based on the debate dealing with ethnic affiliations. Qualitative research methodology has been used, as the utilization of such a methodology results in an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. The use of such a methodology would also be especially pertinent to a phenomenon that is considered to be uncommon and needs to be analyzed in detail to find the underlying patterns and factors contributing to it. In a nutshell, this study will be aimed at providing a rounded picture regarding the various characteristics entailing the small but significant and under-researched minority (British Pakistanis involved in inter-ethnic marriages) within a minority (the ethnic group of British Pakistanis).

1.2.1. Conceptualization and operationalization of concepts

When considering the context of Pakistan, one's "ethnicity" would pertain to one's identification towards a particular ethnic group residing within the confines of the Pakistani territory, including Punjabis, Sindhis, Balochis, Pathans, descendants of refugees from India and Afghanistan among many others, while being "Pakistani" would act as a marker for political recognition, or indicate a sense of national allegiance towards Pakistan as their homeland (Cressey, 2005, p. 71). Such a type of ethnicity would be considered as "self-ascriptive". However, the concept of "ethnicity" is employed differently in the context of the political and social landscape prevalent in the UK. Due to the multiplicities of regions from where migration to the UK occurs, and the associated politics of identity, ethnicity of the residents is officially defined by markers/labels characterized by an amalgamation of various concepts, the main of which include country of birth, nationality, language spoken at home, skin color (dependent on the group of people under consideration), national/geographical origin and religion (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2016). These labels/markers are officially designated as "ethnic groups" by the British government, and include the following (with each one divided into subcategories): White (divided into British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish, Traveller and Other White); Mixed/Multiple (divided into White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian and Other Mixed); Asian/Asian British (divided into Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Other Asian); Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (divided into African, Caribbean

and Other Black); and Other Ethnic Group (divided into Arab and Any Other Ethnic Group) (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 4-5). The category of "Other" in each major ethnic group is usually in the form of an open-ended question on the census form, where each individual can fill in the ethnic group which he/she identifies with that is not already present in the list stated above. Each migrant group is also sometimes labelled as an "ethnic minority" in reference with their country of origin to distinguish them from the majority group i.e. the Whites. Therefore, official documents released by the British government, and much of the literature dealing with the Pakistani community in the UK ascribes them as their region of origin being "Asia", and their ethnicity as "British Pakistani". Thus, in order to acknowledge their common descent in a society inhabited by people from different regions of the world, many Pakistanis may be considered to have taken up this label of ethnicity that would otherwise be prescribed as their nationality in the context of ethnicities prevalent in Pakistan, especially while participating in various political and social processes in the UK (Cressey, 2005, p. 71). For the purposes of the present research, as the locale will be situated in the UK, the definition that will be considered of ethnicity is that which is widely acknowledged in the UK based on the multiplicity of areas of origin of the various groups of immigrants resident there. On the basis of such a definition, the ethnicity of the Pakistani community would be considered as being "British Pakistani", rather than based on their parent ethnic groups connecting them to their country of origin.

Staying in line with such an operationalization of the concepts of ethnicity and ethnic groups, the definition for the term "inter-ethnic marriages" will be adapted from the description of inter-ethnic relationships as elaborated in a report released by the Office for National Statistics relating to the 2011 census (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 18), which states, "Inter-ethnic relations are defined… as a relationship between people living in a couple who are married, in a civil partnership, or cohabiting and each partner identifies with an ethnic group different from the other partner (within any of the 18 ethnic group classifications used in the census)". Since the percentage of cohabitation without marriage is low among British Pakistanis (Goodman & Greaves, 2010, p. 5), the present study is being narrowed down to those Pakistanis involved in inter-ethnic "marriages", not inter-ethnic relationships. Therefore, inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis would

entail a British Pakistani married to a member of any of the 18 ethnic groups as outlined in the census of 2011 apart from that of Asian/British Asian: Pakistani.

The operationalization of the concepts stated above was undergone for the purposes of categorization and to bring forth a criteria according to which the sample of the research was obtained. However, a main aim of the present research was to explore the attributes that one may attach towards his/her ethnicity as being part of an inter-ethnic couple. Therefore, a more affective dimension was aimed to be identified with regard to the "official" labels of ethnic identity that the respondents chose for themselves based on pre-determined categorizations brought forth by the British government in the form of the 18 ethnic groups mentioned above. In such a context, Stuart Hall's theorizations on the formation of cultural identity in a post-modern world have been used as the framework through which such affective components of the respondent's identity have been analyzed. Therefore, the concepts of "identity", "cultural identity" and "ethnicity" have been conceptualized and operationalized as per Hall's thesis, and have been elaborated upon in the section titled "theoretical framework".

1.3. Research objectives

- To explore the factors leading to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis.
- To investigate the perceived lived experiences of both parts of the couples due to being part of an inter-ethnic marriage.
- To identify the resulting dynamics of family life exhibited in inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis due to cross-cultural contact.
- To determine the relation/depiction of the decision to inter-marry to one's nature of identity and cultural preferences.

1.4. Research questions

- What are the factors contributing to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis?
- What are the familial/cultural circumstances surrounding inter-marriage?
- What are the perceived lived experiences of both parts of couples involved in inter-ethnic marriages?
- Do British Pakistanis face ethnic discrimination by virtue of being part of an inter-ethnic couple?
- What are the resulting dynamics of family life exhibited in inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis due to cross-cultural contact?

- How has the decision to inter-marry among British Pakistanis impacted the upbringing of the children born of such a marriage?
- How are gender roles perceived in the context of multicultural contact in inter-ethnic marriages?
- How does the decision to inter-marry relate to one's forms of identity and cultural preferences?
- How is mainstream society, or rather, "British culture" perceived to be by inter-ethnic couples?
- At what position do inter-ethnic couples perceive themselves to be in relation to such a mainstream society?

1.5. Justification of the topic and locale

A review of the vast literature on the British Pakistani population in various regions of the UK depicts a tendency towards choosing endogamy as a marriage choice due to a variety of factors (see introduction, pg. no. 2 for details). In such a context, marrying outside the Pakistani community is an uncommon occurrence, which is also depicted statistically in official government documents (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3). However, such a circumstance makes the phenomenon of inter-marriage a modicum of interest to be researched, as deviation from the norm may prove to be a starting point for new theoretical explorations. The present study thus focuses on a number of avenues related to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis, including that of the factors contributing to such inter-ethnic marriages, and the lived experiences and family dynamics among those undergoing such a marriage form. A main focus has been placed upon the forms of identity as exhibited by members of inter-ethnic families by virtue of cross-cultural contact. The study of this particular aspect is especially significant among the British Pakistanis and their non-Pakistani spouses included in the present research, as a preference for endogamy may indicate an inclination towards closed-group behavior in relation to the wider UK society, and thus any Pakistani branching outwards may demonstrate unique processes of identification not usually exhibited among his/her parent ethnic group.

The locale under consideration for this research was the towns of Norbury and Croydon situated in Greater London, United Kingdom, and coming under the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Croydon. The reason for the selection of towns from this particular

borough[1] is due to its resident population of British Pakistanis. Situated to the South of London ("Borough Profile", 2017), the borough has the second largest overall population along with one of the highest proportions of black and minority ethnic groups (BME) of all London boroughs. The British Pakistani community makes up about 3% of the total population, which is considerably higher than the population of all other minority ethnic groups apart from Black Caribbean (8.6%), Indian (6.8%), Other Asian (4.8%) and Other Black (3.6%) (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011c).

The selection of two towns as the locale was due to the reason that a particular community i.e. the community of British Pakistanis was to be targeted within a locality that boasts many other multiple ethnicities as well, and thus a larger territory was required to be covered so that a considerable sample could be obtained from which data was to be gathered. Also, those British Pakistanis were targeted whom were involved in inter-ethnic marriages, which is a small group of people within the larger British Pakistan community. So, this was also a reason for selecting a larger locale, so as to be able to get enough respondents in order to adequately explore the objectives of the present research. The particular towns of Norbury and Croydon were selected on the basis of the two key informants' area of familiarity, through whom most of the respondents were contacted.

1.6. Significance of the research

The present research holds significance in a number of avenues, depending on the context in which the findings are placed. Academically speaking, this research fills the gap left open when considering studies of inter-ethnic unions in the UK, which till now have had more of a macro-based focus, dealing with patterns of such unions among all ethnic groups (Berrington, 1994; Ford, Jolley, Katwala & Mehta, 2012; Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014; Hannemann & Kulu, 2015). Also, most studies dealing with marriage patterns among British Pakistanis have focused upon the transnational nature of such marriages (Migration

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[1] Collins dictionary provides relevant definitions for the term "borough". The general definition provided is "a town, or a district within a large town, which has its own council." Therefore, in the context of Great Britain, boroughs can be considered to be administrative divisions within the larger city boundaries. When considering the usage of the term "borough" in Greater London, Collins dictionary states the following: "any of the 32 constituent divisions that together with the City of London make up Greater London" (Borough, n.d.).

Watch UK, 2005; Werbner, 2005; Shaw, 2014), and have emphasized on the preference towards endogamy among such an ethnic group. However, the present research sheds light upon another form of union which has been observed to be an emerging phenomenon not just in the British Pakistani community, but in the wider context of the UK i.e. inter-ethnic marriages (Bloomfield, 2008; Badawi, 2012; Evans, 2014).

In the context of public policy, the present research will bring forth a clearer and more nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of the ethnic group of British Pakistanis, the general perception of which entails the stereotypes of being "ghettoized" and culturally segregated from the mainstream society (Abbasi, 2010, p. 7). Having such an in-depth understanding of an aspect that was previously limited in its scope of awareness due to the lack of the presentation of a rounded picture in academic literature on British Pakistanis will prove to be fruitful in the formation, reevaluation or substitution of policies of integration, depending upon ethnic minorities' perceived relation with the mainstream, as previous researches entail that mixed marriages (when taken independently from other factors) are usually considered to be an indicator of assimilation into the host culture (Ford et al., 2012). Also, such a study focusing on a previously under-researched domain will help in bringing forward certain intricacies regarding the family life of British Pakistanis, and would highlight their foray outside of their original affiliations (through inter-marriage). This will ultimately contribute to the process of positive image-building and greater public understanding regarding certain cultural practices among British Pakistanis having their origins in a society different from many of the ethnic groups resident in the UK.

1.7. Theoretical framework

1.7.1. Identity theory among the social sciences

The vast literature on the construct of identity depicts its significance in a huge array of disciplines, with each discipline having its own vantage point in the construct's conceptualization. Anthropological theorizations relating to this construct gained popularity from the 1920s to the 1950s with regard to the school of thought pertaining to

culture and personality, which came about due to the theoretical interaction between anthropology and psychoanalysis. Although the term "identity" was not explicitly in use in this particular domain, it still found some form of purchase in the various theorists' understanding of personality development. Anthropologists thus mainly focused on how interacting with one's environment and culture influenced the construction of one's personality, and how one's personality can also have effects on the surrounding cultural processes (Meijl, 2008, p. 169).

The term "identity" first gained purchase in the realm of social sciences in the 1960s, starting with the seminal work of Erik Erikson on stages of identity development in the initial years of one's life. According to Erikson, identity development is a process whereby one strives to bring into synchronization one's own perception of the self with the way other people in his/her surrounding perceive that "self" (Meijl, 2008, p. 169-170). Further works on the domain of identity in the fields of anthropology, sociology and social psychology exhibits the former trend of defining identity as "the quality of being a particular person", or a marker (in many cases a legal marker) which may describe/depict the person as a whole (Fearon, 1999, p. 8). This particular focus on identity is consistent with the contextual situation of the previous generations in which it may have been prevalent, where groups and categories were fixed as per territorial, geographical and class-bound constraints, and it was expected for anyone born in such constraints to conform to such a form of identity (Kehily, 2009, p. 1). Such a conceptualization based on predetermined situations of identification was challenged in the famous writings of Fredrik Barth (1969), where he claimed that boundaries between groups are not predefined, and they do not form a preemptive condition that determines one's identity. Rather, social groups are formed due to the interaction between groups, causing the highlighting of differences between them. This leads to a perceived sense of otherness when conceiving of such groups, leading to the formation of boundaries. Therefore, this thesis is a step away from the traditional conceptualization of the construct of identity, as instead of depicting one's identity to be fixed, it embeds the development of identity formation in the major social processes and interactions prevalent in one's society. A person's identity is formed when he/she interacts with the members of his/her society, and therefore is not fixed, and is not based on a single label that describes a person.

Change and ongoing complexity in further years in the way identity was conceptualized led to the emergence of another major theme in sociological and anthropological literature, depicting the formulation of two separate but inter-connected aspects of identity i.e. social identity and personal identity (Fearon, 1999, p. 2; Oyserman, Elmore & Smith, 2012, p. 74). These aspects are both contrasted and inter-linked in recent literature. Social identity usually refers to a "social category", which consists of a group of members sharing some sort of attributes or claims, and inculcating a sense of affiliation with that category on the basis of these attributes (Fearon, 1999, p. 2). On the other hand, personal identity refers to one's conceptualization about the characteristics which makes oneself unique, and which differentiates one from the other members of one's social group (Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McGarty, 1992, p. 3). There is also an aspect of self-pride in the attributes that makes up one's personal identity, thus cementing the inherent differences further between members of the in-group (Fearon, 1999, p. 2). These definitions of both aspects of identity exhibit the contradictory nature of the two connotations. However, both of these aspects are present simultaneously within a person, their degree of influence depending upon each individual and the social context of which the individual is a part of (Howard, 2000, p. 387).

1.7.2. Identity as a post-modern construct

Moving away from the previous conceptualizations of identity, as elaborated in the previous section, many theorists have turned towards highlighting alternate models describing the form of identity that one may hold in what they call as "late-modern" societies, thus causing the emergence of post-modern literature on this particular construct. The various postulates put forth by these theorists with regard to identity formation are based on the various shifts in global conditions that make up the post-modern world. The phenomenon of globalization is considered as tantamount to the emergence of such a global system. Two main features of globalization are highly focused: the ease in the processes of international migration, which has caused fluidity in perceived boundaries and deterritorialization from previously closed spaces; and proliferation of a certain type of mass media based on consumer culture through mediums such as electronic media, which then is exposed to any part of the world that has access to such a medium of communication

(Appadurai, 1996). These processes, along with certain changes in the capitalistic mode of production, including accelerated turn over time that has caused prominent changes in patterns of exchange and consumption of consumer goods, have brought forth a society being characteristically rapid in nature where both distances and time taken to complete tasks are shortened, causing the phenomenon of "time-space" compression (Harvey, 1989). In the context of identity theorization, such a phenomenon has caused a mounting exposure to an increased range of options regarding the various forms of identity that can be taken up, therefore causing a rift from the previously conceptualized "master statuses" of the modern era that one acquired or was born into (Lin, 2008).

A number of theorists have been vastly influential in this particular domain. Anthony Giddens is one such theorist. He postulated that the previous factors that were highly influential in the formulation of fixed form of identities, such as religion, are dwindling in their effect in late-modern societies. Thus, each individual is tasked to create a new identity for themselves over the course of their lives with a wide range of aspects to choose from due to the prevalence of consumer culture. Therefore, identity is considered to be flexible due to this wide range of possibilities that become available to each individual (Giddens, 1991, p. 82-85). Ernesto Laclau also discussed the formation of identity in post-modern societies (as cited in Hall, 1992, p. 599-600), but goes in a slightly different direction. Using the term "dislocation", he has discussed the conditions of post-modernism to have caused a replacement of the previous power order for a "plurality of power structures". This circumstance has caused a break in the way identity is conceptualized. Such a new global order based on plurality calls for a resplendence of a multiplicity of discourses causing a form of discontinuity in the previous absolute sense of identification. Therefore, the individual is faced with a multitude of identities to pick and choose from and form a coherent whole whenever the situation demands, and a sense of stability is present, but the nature of this stability changes from context to context.

For the purposes of the present research, the theoretical framework which will be utilized for the analysis process would be that of the "new ethnicities", put forth by Stuart Hall. The reason for selecting this theoretical work is because of its relevance for the particular context of the locale where the research has been conducted i.e. the United Kingdom. Stuart

Hall was a British theorist, and therefore wrote from the vantage point of living in the UK. The following section elaborates upon his theory, and how it will be put into use with regard to exploring the objectives of this research.

1.7.3. Stuart Hall and the notion of "new identities"

Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist, is considered to be one of the founders of the field of "cultural studies", and one of the pioneers on the study of "popular culture" and black identity politics. Born in 1932 in Kingston, Jamaica, he received a Rhodes scholarship in 1951, on the basis of which he moved to the UK ("Biography", n.d.). His main area of interest was the notion of identity, and the manner in which one would coordinate the multiple identities which one obtains over the course of his/her life in the context of the late-modern social world (Hunter, 2018, p. 31). Therefore, most of his work has been focused on the aspects of race, ethnicity and gender-identity, especially in relation to Black culture. One of the main mediums through which he explored such avenues is that of the various particularities of the popular culture which emerged as part of the prevalence of consumerism brought about due to the conditions of globalization. Such a mode of study borrows tools from a variety of disciplines, including cultural anthropology and literary theory, and forms the foundation of the school of cultural studies (Morley & Schwarz, 2014).

Stuart Hall's work and insights on the concept of ethnicity, which have been employed as the theoretical framework for the purposes of analysis for the present research, finds its basis in his reevaluation of the previous accounts of identity politics which have their foundations in the conditions of modernity. One of the main questions which he sought to answer in his writings is whether there exists a "crisis of identity" due to certain conditions taking root in the age of late-modernity, when compared with the previous notions of identity as perceived to exist in previous times (Hall, 1992, p. 596-597). He always elaborates his stance on the matter by making sure he clarifies to the reader that he is speaking from the vantage point of being a black immigrant resident in the UK, especially as the notion of speaking from a particular position in relation to the dominant discourse (subject position) is a key influence observed throughout his works.

In many of his writings and lectures, Hall begins by describing the nature and tracing the origins of previous conceptualizations of identity in relation to the conditions of modernity. He begins by elaborating on the idea of the Cartesian subject based on the theoretical works of the renowned modern philosopher, Rene Descartes, and other major theorists of the time (Hall, 1991a, p. 42, 1992, p. 603). One of these major theorists includes Raymond Williams, who claims that modernity initially brought about certain conditions (examples include the rise of Protestantism, advances in science, and the prevalence of the Enlightenment era) which led to man considering himself to be "all-knowing and rational", having a unified sense of being characterized by a pure, inner core that was considered as "his" identity, and bestowed upon at birth (Hall acknowledges the lack of consideration of the female presence in writings characterizing this era) (Hall, 1992, p. 602-603). Although this inner core undergoes development over the course of one's life, it still essentially remains unchanged. Therefore, the notion of "mind over matter" was deemed as vital, with the split between that of the nature of the mind and the body as evident as ever. Man was considered enough of a "higher being" to be able to use his mind as a source of higher mental faculties and the voice of reason (Hall, 1992, p. 603).

Over time, modern societies began to increase in complexity. This, according to Hall, led to the development of more collectivistic societal processes, including the class system of modern capitalism, and the formation of nation-states. Thus the focus shifted away from the conceptualization of solely individualistic forms of identity, and caused the creation of a subject position in which orientations are increasingly rooted in societal processes. The essence of the individual's identity remains intact, but the effect of external influences causes this essentialist notion of identity to lean towards processes of group identification. The "outside" was used as a means of coordinating the "inside" to be able to efficiently navigate the uncertainties perceived of such an "outside" (Hall, 1992, p. 604-605). This conceptualization of identity differs from the previous notion of the Cartesian subject due to the addition of the impact of collectivistic models and state machinery prevalent in the modern era to one's sense of identification, rather than just focusing on the uniqueness of man as a rational being, and the unique nature of each individual person's identity.

Stuart Hall then highlights a third shift in the discourses dealing with the conception of identity in what he calls the "late-modern" era. According to him, this shift in discourses is responsible for the major decentering of the previous notions of identity that act as a stabilizing force within the individual, and that remains intact throughout his/her lifetime. Five of these shifts in discourses as per Hall are: the reinterpretation of Marxist writings, which cite the processes of Capitalism as robbing people of their individual agency by prompting them to act in circumstances and contexts that are not of their own making (Hall 1991a, p. 43, 1991b, p. 30, 1992, p. 605-606); the prevalence of the notion of the "unconscious mind", as put forward by the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, according to whom one's sense of identity is learnt via interaction with others through various developmental stages, and is based on this part of the mind that one is not fully aware of rather than being a guiding force which one is aware of since birth (Hall, 1991a, p. 43-44, 1992, p. 606-607); the work of the structural linguistic, Ferdinand Saussere, according to whom the words we utter and the thoughts we formulate are not unique to our sense of self, but are constrained by the particularities and rules of articulation of the language which we use as a medium to navigate ourselves in the social world, and by the systems of meaning of the culture in which we prevail (Hall, 1992, p. 607-608); the relationship between the constructs of power and knowledge as proclaimed by the French theorist Michel Foucault, and his theorization of the notion of "disciplinary power" which is a type of power sought for surveillance and regulation of both societal processes, and the individual and the body, through certain institutions designed to govern modern societies, thus removing any form of individual agency (Hall, 1992, p. 608-609); and the role of the discourse of "feminism" in challenging the pre-existing power order based on perceived gender differences, and bringing forth an alternate and more fluid conceptualization of gender based on social identities, thus challenging the major class structures prevalent in early modern societies (Hall, 1991a, p. 44, 1992, p. 609-611).

According to Hall (1991a), the eminence of the modern-era discourses dealing with the production of identity as a stabilizing force led to one's identity to be defined in terms of a "master status" in lieu with the huge collective social identities of class, race, nation, gender and the West (p. 46). However, the discrepancies in thought emerging due to the prevalence of the aforementioned five alternate discourses in the late-modern era brought about an

apparent rupture in the way identity was conceptualized. The proliferation of these five discourses mentioned above, that marked the beginning of a critical departure from the manner in which these master statuses were internalized, all have one thing in common: they questioned the validity and the taken for granted stance of the stabilizing nature and solace which one gains by virtue of reaching towards that overarching identity with the help of which one navigated the troubled seas of life. These discourses thus played a huge role in de-structuring the previous major conceptualizations by bringing to light certain alternate theorizations of the conditions in which these form of identities claim to thrive (especially as these conditions are rapidly changing based on the phenomenon of globalization and the propagation of mass consumer culture), and how these processes are causing fragmentations of cultural landscapes.

What form should the notion of identity then take up if the great discourses which held the mantle for propagating its importance as an all-encompassing piece of one's sense of self have been cast into doubt, as already elaborated upon in the aforementioned debate? Hall at this point, uses the works of the French philosopher, Jacques Derrida for further reference (Hall, 1988, p. 447-448, 1990, p. 229-230, 1991a, p. 49-51). Derrida makes a significant distinction between the concept of "difference", and another self-coined term of "differance" based on the distinction between the French verbs "differ" and "defer". According to him, shackles of the past cannot be broken that easily. Hence, undergoing change does not mean a complete shift from what was previously known. We may lay claims to eradicate a certain concept in favour of a new one, but in reality, when trying to conceptualization an alternate explanation, we end up reaching for the older notions as a stepping stone. Therefore, instead of hoping for a "different" proposition, we end up with one that is "differant" – considerably novel in nature, but having its roots in previous notions. Hall borrows such an explanation for the purposes of contesting previous forms of identity, but remaining somewhat within the same lane as well. He proclaims that although we may try to negate previous concepts to keep up with changing times, there comes a point when these concepts have to reemerge in attempts to bring some semblance of understanding to these shifting scenarios. However, these concepts of identity are not adopted in the same form as before, but take on new explanations that have their roots in

previous versions. Therefore, we can posit these concepts to be in continuous flux and production, prone to adapt to varying situations.

In the context of such a debate, Hall elaborates upon his thesis on his contestation of previous theorizations on identity formation through master statuses by claiming that the form which our identity takes is no more totalizing in nature. Therefore, a person is not bound to a particular form of identity throughout his/her life. Rather, identities become "pluralistic", with the person having a range of identities to choose from depending upon the situation and what it demands (Hall, 1992, p. 605). However, this does not mean that each form of identity anchors itself independently when in use by the consciousness of the individual. It is always formed within representation (hence is "differant" from previous forms, not "different"). Therefore it is considered to be a narrative, a discourse, formed within a greater discourse, and any person engaging in a certain form of identity is considered to be "positioned" with reference to the interacting discourses under consideration (Hall, 1990, p. 222-226, 1991a, p. 49). However, the nature of this greater discourse, in contrast to previous eras of modernity, is not in opposition to all other discourses that come in its way, where the "Other" was imagined to be external to and completely foreign from oneself, leading to identities pertaining to fixed categories. On the contrary, it is considered to be mindful of differences, and being inclusive to them insofar as to foster a sense of acceptance for them, and thus bringing them into the fold and providing them with a sense of familiarity in the face of an unfamiliar circumstance. In this context, the "Other" inscribed in the gaze of the outsider is considered to be internalized, a part of oneself as well, and therefore a feeling of "ambivalence, love and desire" is encumbered towards it, and a sense of "differance" is posited to be within us and within our surroundings (Hall, 1991a, p. 47-49, 1996, p. 4-6). Furthermore, according to Hall, in light of the scenario in which identity formation is considered to be a process of negotiation that one undergoes as part of being a "subject position" to the dominant discourse, it may be more appropriately be labelled as a process of "identification". Hall prefers the term of "identification" due to his proposition that it points to an ongoing process of production, rather than having a fixed form of identity throughout one's lifetime. In such a context, identification points to a "suturing" of various forms of identity, with variations of them

fitting together, but not completely uniform and conforming to each other (Hall, 1996, p. 5-6).

How does Stuart Hall bring the debate around to the notion of "ethnicity"? In order to bridge the gap between identity and ethnicity, Hall, elaborates upon his understanding of the concept of "cultural identity". In his essay titled "Cultural identity and diaspora" (1990), he states two separate conceptualizations pertaining to cultural identity and what it entails (p. 223-227). The first conceptualization leans towards a sense of uniformity and homogeneity. According to him, cultural identities can be described in term of one shared culture, one shared set of beliefs, with the help of which people bond together and look towards a common past, a common origin, regardless of the tumultuous nature of the ups and downs faced in this glorious past. The individual who retains such a form of cultural identity would be part of an ethnicity which corresponds to "cultural features – language, religion, customs, traditions, feelings for 'place' – which are shared by a people" (Hall, 1992, p.617). Such a form of identity corresponds greater to the earlier theorizations pertaining to the possession of a "master culture", which brings us to Hall's second conceptualization, having a more critical stance towards such an over-arching sense of affiliation in the late-modern era.

According to Hall, the nature of change brought about due to the rise of certain alternate discourses (as mentioned previously), and the process of globalization has led to a certain form of cultural identity which corresponds to a number of different avenues based on the differing experiences of each individual. Applying his theorization on the emergence of new "pluralistic" forms of identities (as already elaborated upon above) on the reformation of previous notions of cultural identity, Hall (1990, p. 222-226) states these new forms of identities to also be pluralistic, formed within representation, corresponding to an internalized "Other" rather than to an externalized and shunned Other, and therefore having feelings of love, desire and ambivalence for the Other rather than a sense of alienation. We may have more than one cultural identities based on the internalization of the Other, so much so that we are not just a certain being, but simultaneously become another being as well, based on the historical processes which constantly transform the cultural identity which one "is" in the context of the Other. Therefore, our past and our future interplay with

each other to form a multiplicity of cultural identities within us, based on our positionality with reference to this "imaginary" past and "speculative" future.

What constitutes this multiplicity of forms of cultural identity? Hall provides a contextual background and attributes these forms of identity to the present scenario of the phenomenon of globalization, and how this phenomenon rooted in, but "differant" from a previous variation of these processes (Hall, 1991b, p. 27-30, 1992, p. 618-627). Globalization of the previous era can largely be attributed to the time of British imperialism. This was an era when Britain was seen to be an economic power based on the huge empire it had built with the formation of many colonies around the globe. Having been influenced by Marx, a Marxist touch was seen in his writings on the matter of Britain being able to control the discourse that played a huge role in the categorization of various cultures around the world into "them" and "us" by virtue of holding economic power. The imperial notion of "Us" was based on the cultural identity of Englishness, and relied on a criteria of exclusion: it was the English versus the rest of the world. If you were not English, you were already cast away into the category of the "Other" by virtue of the all-encompassing "English gaze". The more colonies conquered by the English, the more contact they had with the rest of the world, the more consolidated these categories became. Therefore, the notion of being the Other was imposed on any population that did not fit into the apparently neat and clean category of Englishness (although, according to Hall, this idea of "pristineness" of the Englishness way of life was a fallacy, as it had to subjugate all other differences, both arising within itself and outside in foreign cultures, to be able to thrive). There was a sense of stability when it came to identity formation in such a circumstance, as subject positions were formed based on a binary system of being: you were either with us, or against us (Hall, 1991b, p. 20-22).

However, the peak of the English-gaze began to wane in its intensity. Stuart Hall (1991b) mentions a number of factors that led to such a decline: The rise of other competing economic powers that came about due to the proliferation of the phenomenon of the mass-consumerism and production, led by Fordist models of execution, and based on the system of multi-national corporations (this new competitive environment acted as a stepping stone for the propagation of the phenomenon that we now know as globalization); wide scale

migration of labour to the UK in the post-war era, leading to an overturn in the formerly prevailing cultural landscape; increasing international interdependence, due to the joining of Britain to various international organizations including NATO and the Common Market, and growing global ecological interdependence; and the rise of Thatcherism. This turning of the tables saw the USA rise to the occasion and take the lead in the strata of world economies, causing the beginning of the phenomenon of Americanization (p. 22-29).

The decline in the supreme rule of the colonialists led Hall to infer that a new form of globalization was on the rise, based on the breaking down of barriers of communication around the globe, causing an easier proliferation of products and ideas produced under the banner of global mass consumption (Hall, 1991b, p. 27). It shifts from an inherent global prevalence of the cultural identity of Englishness which was usually aimed towards subjugation, or exclusion of forms of other forms identities, to the widespread popularity of the American way of life, which is at present taken to be synonymous with Western culture. Hall (1991b) highlights the notion of "global mass culture" to be the hallmark of such a new form of globalization, characterized by "modern means of cultural production" enabling rapidity and fast-flowing cultural content across linguistic and geographical barriers through visual and graphic media (p. 28-29). Two main aspects differentiate this global mass culture from previous cultural forms. The first aspect centres such a global mass culture in the West, in Western culture and Western forms of imagery. However, it is not the same as the Englishness that previously dominated the Western image. Hall takes the example of the English language to enunciate this point. The English that is now spoken around the world is not the "Queen's English" i.e. it is not rooted in the aristocratic upper class mode of articulation. Rather, it has many non-Western influences that characterizes an amalgamated quality by virtue of cross-cultural contact. The second aspect focuses on a unique form of homogenizing nature of this particular global mass culture. It does not seek to spread the American way of life to every corner of the Earth, in order to form "mini-Americas" all over the globe. Rather it brings all cultures into its folds not to the extent of the "completeness" of a homogenous culture, but with the intent of bringing about a sense of acceptance that fosters the encouragement of an inherent sense of difference between each particular culture under consideration. It strives to work with these cultures and the capital that they contribute to the world, rather than aiming to destroy and subordinate. It

is driven by an economy that is fast-paced, market-driven, and that tries to cater to the needs of each individual.

Hall (1991b) proclaims such a notion of globalization pertaining to the particular type of global mass culture mentioned above to be characteristic of what he calls the "global post-modern", proliferated as a major discourse to many segments around the world, advertising being one of the most prominent mediums for such a process (p. 33). This phenomenon of the global post-modern has taken a form of a dominant discourse by virtue of its nature of maintaining an interplay between absorption and acceptance of differences, thereby maintaining a semblance of acceptance while still being able to keep all differences under its thumb. Therefore, Hall states such a discourse to be highly influential at a global level, and gives it the title of the "global". However, this discourse is not the only one that reigns supremely, and came into power without any form of contestation. Rather, there are many other discourses formed that hold their own in terms of cultural significance, but are still oriented in some way in relation to that of the global. The global itself is, according to Hall, "the self-representation of the dominant particular" (Hall, 1991a, p. 67). The penetration of this dominant form of a local discourse in all aspects of life causes any individual oriented towards any alternate discourse to have to negotiate his/her position with respect to this global. This makes the individual having to take on a subject position in relation to the global. Here, Hall (1991a) uses Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony to explain such a predicament of these alternate discourses, each one labelled by him as the "local", in the present form of the globalized world (p. 58). He uses a different interpretation of Gramsci's concept of hegemony whereby he favours the conceptualization that supports the incorporation of the different locals into the dominant global, rather than its traditional conceptualization of the complete subjugation of these locals under a pretense of false consciousness (the latter conceptualization may have been a more pertinent explanation in the context of the previous form of globalization, where the English gaze subjugated all differences under the umbrella of the "Other").

What form does the various "local" discourses take in having to position themselves in relation to the global? Hall uses his understanding of the concept of "ethnicity" in the present era of the global post-modern to answer this question (Hall, 1991a, p. 52-53, 1991b,

p. 37-38). He posits that the recent shift in global conditions leading to the processes of decolonization has led to freedom from the previously overarching forms of cultural identities taking the stance of master statuses. This has caused a rise, and a return to the "local". However, years of imperialism and the resultant influence on the formation of identity have led to the local's dislocation of sorts from much of its own cultural background and history. Therefore, those individuals seeking to return towards the local of their ancestors have to do so through a rediscovery of their roots by means of secondary mediums and significant forms of cultural symbols of the "days past" that they do not have first-hand experience of. This predicament, along with the years of influence that modern culture has had on the processes of the formation of self, has caused an emergence of a "differant" form of ethnicity. It is differant as, according to Hall (1991a), ethnicity associated to the local is not radically different from that of the global (p. 49-52). On the contrary, one's ethnicity is seen to be working upon a continuum, where many of the multiplicity of identities characteristic of the global post-modern may take up a place, and the extent to which one may hold onto the local is impeded by this continuum of forms of identity. There is a strong tendency to hold onto one's origin story, one's roots (pertaining to the previous conceptualization of ethnicity as a shared absolute culture pertaining to a particular place, as previously mentioned), but it is not easy to, or may not even be possible to shake off the influences of the global, making the current forms of ethnicity to be similar to, but also different from, its previous conceptualization. Therefore, one's ethnicity may be considered local in nature, but having to find its place in negotiation with the processes of the global which, in the present case, can be stated as the "Americanization" of the globe, accepting of difference, but having a hold nevertheless on the forms these differences may take.

In order for any "local" to find a footing in the present scenario, it has to wage, in Gramsci's terms, a war of positions, rather than a war of maneuvers with the dominant global (Hall, 1991a, p. 57-58). Space is given for the local to express itself, but only within the processes of representation that are guided by the global. Hall analyzes the phenomenon of the rise of fundamentalism and a return to one's roots in the context of such a negotiation with the global. Even though these particular locals strive to overthrow the global, they cannot do so without being even slightly influenced by and having to position oneself in relation to

24

that dominant discourse, as the nature of globalization prevalent today has caused this global discourse to have seeped into almost every aspect of a person's life and form of self-conceptualization (Hall, 1991a). Therefore, one's ethnicity is based on the positioning and questioning of one's cultural identity in the context of the global, and thus may manifest in a multiplicity of ways depending on the extent of the individual's need for negotiation with the dominant discourse in each particular scenario. In Hall's own words, "the term ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated, and all knowledge is contextual" (Hall, 1988, p. 447).

In the context of the aforementioned debate, the present research focuses upon the conceptualization and forms of cultural identity in relation to the phenomenon of inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis. Both aspects of the debate on identity put forth by Stuart Hall i.e. identity as conceptualized to be formed as per the conditions of modernity, and the new forms of identity characteristic of the global post-modern, have been taken into consideration when analyzing the forms of ethnicity/local discourses and the ensuing manifestations of cultural identity among members of British Pakistani inter-ethnic families in relation to the various aspects of inter-ethnic marriages among such British Pakistanis. How does the decision to inter-marry relate to the forms of identity one may hold? Do such British Pakistanis conceptualize their cultural identity to take a form of a master status that may either be potentially chalked up to an absolutistic national identity with respect to Pakistan, or to a sense of "Britishness" in the context of their residence in the UK? Or, does the decision to inter-marry depict a formation of new identities based on cross-cultural contact and the effect of the global discourse? If so, then what are these forms of identity that may come about? Furthermore, how does inter-married life affect the processes of identity formation among British Pakistani inter-ethnic couples, and what would be the resultant family dynamics that may emerge due to such cross-cultural contact? These questions have been explored with reference to the findings of the present research, and have been elaborated upon in the following chapters of this thesis.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of previous researches conducted that are related to marriage practices in the UK society in general, and the British Pakistani community in particular. Another focus of this chapter is on citing literature dealing with the various aspects on the phenomenon of inter-marriage, and how the objectives of this study aim to highlight the gaps in said literature in the context of Pakistani inter-ethnic marriages.

2.1. Patterns of partnership behaviour in the UK

Britain, being a multi-ethnic society, boasts a multitude of cultures based on varying ethnicities, religions and orientations. What influences the kind of partnership behaviour that is opted to be carried out among the diverse immigrant groups in the UK? Hanneman and Kulu (2015) highlight three main categories of hypotheses after a review of the present literature on the processes of unions among immigrants in the UK (p. 277-279). The first category, named by the authors as socialization hypotheses, indicates that one's preference for a partner and subsequent behavior with that partner will be in accordance with his/her experiences with his/her family as a child, and thus may be similar to what is the norm in one's country of origin. The second category, postulated as the adaptation hypotheses, state that one's present living environment will be more influential on partnership choice and behavior. Thus, there is a general process of adaptation, where migrants take up elements of the mainstream culture. The third category, termed as the selection hypothesis, posits that choices made by immigrants are more selective in nature, and will differ both with the influence of the country of origin and the host country. However there would be more of a contribution of the host country processes in the shaping of decision making abilities. Many individual factors, including one's education and occupational situations, can help in shaping such a form of identity and preference for a partner.

In such a context, where marriage is important for some groups, others opt for the option of cohabitation. How would one differentiate between these two practices? A review of anthropological literature brings forth a diversity with regards to how the notion of

marriage is perceived in various cultures. However, Terian (2004) brought forth a description of the phenomenon of marriage that has commonalities across cultures: that marriage is a contract that entails certain rights and duties over a proposed partner, and provides a socially acceptable platform for sexual alliances, and legitimization of children born. Going into a marriage also implies a legal recognition of the partnership, and ensures the well-being of the family unit through legal action, if needed (p. 230). A family would also act as a basic economic unit of society. In such a context, when considering the present scenario of the preference for marriage in the UK, official government documents record a decline in marriage rates in the overall population of England and Wales from the years of 1972 to 2009, with the possible reasons for such a circumstance stated to be a preference for delaying of marriage between men and women, or due to the increase in the phenomenon of cohabitation (Mclaren, 2016, p. 2-3).

The notion of cohabitation has more of a fluid dynamic. Cohabitation entails the living together of a couple without being tied in the contract of marriage. Two aspects have been observed to be important with regard to the reasons for cohabitation: This may be undergone as a precursor for marriage, where the couple might "test out" whether they are compatible enough with each other to make a more permanent commitment which may symbolize deeper feelings of "love" towards each other (Perelli-Harris, Mynarska, Berrington, Berghammer, Evans, Isupova, Keizer, Klärner, Lappegård & Vignoli, 2014, p. 1062); Or it might either be an alternate for (and thus a rejection of) marriage (Lesthaeghe, 2010, p. 3), or may be perceived to be indistinguishable from it due to social and legal acceptance (van de Kaa, 2001, p. 302). In the context of such a form of decision-making processes, it has been observed that as per the census of 2011, 58% of the total household population of England and Wales were in a married relationship, or were cohabiting. 9% of these couples were involved in inter-ethnic relationships, with people identifying with the groups of Mixed/Multiple Ethnic, White Irish and Other Black having the largest recorded numbers of being involved in such a form of relationships (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3).

Why does the present study focus on inter-ethnic "marriages" rather than cohabitation? The ethnic group of British Pakistanis that is under consideration for the present research

has been recorded to be among one of the few ethnicities in the UK where rates of cohabitation are lower as compared to other ethnic groups (Goodman & Greaves, 2010, p. 5). Instead, there is a marked preference for endogamous marriages, including those being transnational in nature (Migration Watch UK, 2005, p. 4; Werbner, 2005, p. 479; for factors contributing towards such a propensity, see pg. no. 2). Therefore, when focusing on the British Pakistani community in the context of inter-ethnic relationships in the UK (both married and cohabiting), "married inter-ethnic British Pakistani couples" will be the focus of the present research based on such a preferred tendency to marry rather than to live as a cohabiting couple.

2.2. Factors leading to inter-marriage in multi-ethnic societies

What are some of the factors, in conjunction with one's living environment (as elaborated upon by Hanneman and Kulu [2015]), that contribute towards the phenomenon of inter-ethnic marriages in multi-ethnic societies? Studies show that size of the ethnic group is considered a determinant. A small population of a certain ethnic group in a region dominated by the majority group limits the amount of contact with a prospective partner from one's own ethnicity, causing an increased tendency to marry from the majority population (Lievens, 1998, p. 119; Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits, 2002, p. 420). The extent to which the country of origin has urbanized has seen to positively relate to a propensity to inter-marry to a partner from the host society (Lievens, 1998, p. 150). Age at migration also attributes to the decision towards marrying out of one's ethnic group. Later the age, smaller time to socialize with the out-group, and thus lowered propensity to inter-marry (Kalmijn & van Tubergen, 2007, p. 388). The obtainment of higher education can also be linked to an increased chance of inter-marriage, as greater opportunity of contact is observed with people from the out-group as schools are usually occupied by ethnically diverse populations (Kalmijn, 1998, p. 418). Extent of association towards a particular religion is another factor influencing the decision to inter-marry, as such an inclination would cause oneself to marry within one's religious circles, decreasing the chance to inter-marry in religiously plural societies (Hartung, Vandezande, Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2011, p. 162). This is especially evident in Western European countries, where ethnic groups among which people are ardent followers of Islam and Hinduism are more likely to marry

within their own circles (Lucassen & Laarmen, 2009, p. 58). Parental rejection, along with other third party influences in choosing a prospective partner from an ethnic group varying from one's own are also major contributors in this regard (Kalmijn, 1998, p. 401; Hartung et al., 2011, p. 161-162), along with one's gender (with males having a larger propensity to inter-marry) (Hartung et al., 2011, p. 158). The factor of spatial segregation leads to a decrease in tendency to choose a spouse from outside one's ethnic group, as increased geographical distance and may indicate limited contact between various ethnic groups. In the case of decreased spatial segregation (as is the case in cities boasting many ethnicities), the presence of cultural boundaries, and the ensuing condition of gaps in converging cultural practices, is a major factor that diminishes the chance of inter-marriage (Gündüz-Hoşgör & Smits, 2002, p. 420). Furthermore, in societies where class-system is prevalent, there is a preference for marrying someone who shares one's socioeconomic status, not due to discriminatory tendencies, but because of a wish to connect with someone who shares similar life experiences to oneself (van Leeuwen & Maas, 2005). Also, in the particular context of immigrants to the UK and Europe from areas previously under colonial rule, there is a sense of familiarity with the Christian value system based on increased exposure via formation of colonies in these areas. Therefore, it was easier for immigrants from these countries to settle in among, and find common values with the inhabitants of Western countries, which may lead to an eventual acceptance of the notion of inter-marriage as well (Lucassen & Laarmen, 2009, p. 63).

What is the impact of such a decision to inter-marry on individual experiences and societal processes? The resulting contact brought about between not just two individuals from different walks of life, but also between different groups causes the formation of a bridge between the two societies, paving a pathway for social exchange, alliance and cohesion (Smits, 2010, p. 421). However, in case of resistance on the part of the respective extended family members against an individual's decision to inter-marry, a more hostile environment is usually observed within that family, as is seen in the inter-generational conflicts among the immigrants from Maghrebian countries in France when the younger, more assimilated descendants reject the phenomenon of arranged marriages and seek partners outside their family's sphere of influence (as cited in Penn, 2011, p. 646). Also, where inter-marriage is usually considered an indicator for an increased notion of

acceptance by the native population of the incoming migrants, the opposite may be true as well, especially when considering the private sphere of some inter-married couples. Such a finding was brought forth by Annika Elwert (2018) in her study of the determinants of inter-marriage between people from the native population of Sweden, and immigrants to Sweden. According to her, one attribute brought forth in her study was that in many cases, those Swedes inter-marry who have characteristics that are not considered valuable in the "Swedish marriage market". In such a circumstance, many of these Swedes take the opportunity to marry people from non-Western societies, as they may perceive that they would have the upper hand in the relationship with regard to social standing and familiarity with the norms and customs of the Swedish society. In such a context, Elwert states that they inter-marry based on the opportunities they observed to be easily attainable from the union, rather than on the basis of the acceptance of "outsiders" (p. 82-83).

2.3. Factors contributing to inter-marriage in the UK

When considering the context of UK, a study conducted by Kulu and Hannemann (2016) outlines the various determinants of inter-ethnic marriages among ethnic minority communities resident there. Some of these determinants include higher education levels, later age at marriage and decreased religiosity. Such findings are in accordance with the studies cited above. However, differences in rates of exogamy were observed across ethnicities, including low levels of out-marriage among the descendants of South Asian immigrants. A report released by a think tank, British Future, gives a clearer picture regarding inter-ethnic relations and daily life experiences in the UK (Ford et al., 2012). In this report, the authors, in separate entries, paint a picture of Britain as becoming more integrated over time, forming a "melting pot" (term borrowed from the American context of an amalgamation of identities into a melting pot, a new form of identity coming forth that is different from the original ingredients, with the metaphor gaining popularity during the twentieth century, see last subsection of this chapter for details of this concept) with the aspect of mixed relationships coming to a norm. This report focuses on case studies of people in mixed relationships or of mixed descent claiming to feel more "British" with little to no social repercussions of their varying heritage, acting as an indicator of integration into mainstream society rather than holding onto cultural aspects of one's

foreign component of his/her identity. South Asian communities were also singled out in this report as the exception to be tolerant of or involved in such types of relationships.

However, most other studies that deal with inter-ethnic relationships in some form in the context of the United Kingdom are on a macro scale (based on census results and Labour Force surveys), and are more focused on patterns of various marriage/union types and the extent to which ethnic minorities are involved in such types of marriages/unions (Berrington, 1994; Ford et al., 2012; Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014; Hannemann & Kulu, 2015). There is a lack of qualitative research dealing with specific scenarios and the experiences of particular ethnic groups within the domain of inter-ethnic marriages. The present research will seek to fill this gap. Furthermore, the prevalence of transnational and arranged marriages indicates that the phenomenon of exogamous marriages may not be as considerable among British Pakistanis (statistics also support such a notion; see Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3). However, such a reduced tendency to being involved in a particular phenomenon renders it even more academically viable as it would be interesting to uncover the various factors that would lead to certain individuals acting in departure to the norms followed by the members of his/her community. The present research will seek to fill this gap as well.

2.4. Inter-ethnic marriages: A British Pakistani context

According to the most recent census conducted in 2011 in the UK, about 9% of British Pakistanis were observed to have been a part of inter-ethnic relationships (Potter-Collins & O'Brien, 2014, p. 3). A more detailed look at the statistics of such British Pakistani union formations (the phrase union formation is used here, as the data does not differentiate between married and cohabiting couples) depicts that among both British Pakistani males and females the three main ethnic groups with which they inter-married were White British, British Indian, and Asian Other (stated in order of increased number of unions; however the number of unions recorded with British Pakistanis among both genders was still considerably higher than with the three aforementioned ethnic groups) (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011a, 2011b). Also, gender difference was observed with regard to the number of females in a union with White British as compared to the male British Pakistanis.

More than half more males were recorded to be in an inter-ethnic union with a White British citizen than female British Pakistanis. With regard to union formation with members of the ethnic group of Asian Other, it was observed that the British Pakistani females were more involved in such unions than males, but only by a small margin. The number of British Pakistani males and females in a union with people from the ethnic group of British Indian were found to be similar (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011a, 2011b).

In the age group of 16-24 years, it was observed that there was a huge difference in the number of males and females in a union with regard to British Pakistanis, with many more males found to be in a relationship (both married and cohabiting) than females. Although most of these males were in a union with British Pakistani females, the second largest ethnic group after British Pakistanis in this scenario was observed to be that of White British (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011b). However, when considering union formations among British Pakistani males and females in the age category of 25 to 49 years, a similar number was observed between the two genders, with same preferences for ethnic groups: British Pakistani, White Asian, British Indian, and Asian Other (stated in order of increase in preference for both males and females) (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011a, 2011b).

2.5. Inter-ethnic family dynamics

When considering the aspect of the family structures that come about due to contact between differing cultures in inter-ethnic relationships, there has been observed to be a deficiency where anthropological research is concerned. Shedding light upon such a circumstance, Lomsky-Feder and Leibovitz (2010) have made an attempt to study the varying cultural models competing with each other during the process of child rearing among inter-ethnic Jewish families in Israel i.e. family units where one half of the couple is an Ashkenazi or Mizrachi Jew, and the other half is a Russian immigrant in Israel. They observed that in such families, the aspect of differing cultural preferences is posed as more of a source of struggle than as a positive contribution to their children's upbringing. Although women were considered in charge of the decision making regarding children's education and rearing, there were still limits placed by the husbands, albeit subtle, that

acted as guidelines for such decision-making. In such a context, the prevalence of a particular cultural model (Israeli or Russian) depended more upon macro-social processes of hierarchy (which, apart from gender, also included differences in class) than on conventional household roles (which guided the extent of limitations placed by the husband). However, regardless of the ethnicity of the father and his ensuing cultural contribution in the process of child-rearing, the authors still found that there was no compromise in instilling the traditional "Jewish" identity by these fathers among their children.

Another study was conducted by Sasson, Saxe, Chertok, Shain, Hecht and Wright (2015), this time in the USA, which also involved the context of inter-marriage where one part of the couple is Jewish. The focus of this study was the children that were born from such a union. It was observed that in the initial years of their lives, these children were less likely to exhibit a Jewish identity and participate in Jewish religious rituals as ardently when compared with children born of parents who are both Jewish. However, the study revealed that parental influence is not the only factor determining one's identity, as the university experience of much of the sample included in the study caused a change in religious orientation among them. Exposure to and participating in Jewish societies caused many of the children born of inter-marriage to become more aware of their Jewish roots, and take on a more religiously influenced lifestyle later on in their lives, which points to the notion that in addition to child-rearing processes employed by parents, societal influences cannot be ignored when considering the shaping of one's identity.

Another study conducted by Behtoui (2004) brings into focus the processes of gender dynamics when it comes to the integration of the children of inter-ethnic couples in the Swedish labour market. He concludes from the results of his study that for a person born through an inter-ethnic union to do well in the labour market, it is important that one of his/her parents should be a native-born member of society. He also states that those children who are part of an inter-married couple where the father is a member of the native population are more likely to be accepted into, and to do well with regard to opportunities in the labour market, as compared to those children who mother is a member of the host population.

Research on family dynamics and structures in the context of British Pakistanis is more focused on transnational marriages, and the resulting shifting and change in conventional gender roles based on whether the male or female spouse is the one migrating to the UK. A "conventional" Pakistani family unit is not usually based on the nuclear family model, but is multi-generational, comprising of the couple, their children, and the elderly parents of the husband (the paternal grandparents to the children). Therefore, such a household is patrilocal, and the female is considered to be dependent on her natal kin (usually father and brother) for financial needs and processes of marriage. Males are deemed as "bread-earners", while elderly males are responsible for major decisions to be made; women and elderly females are responsible for running the household (Shaw, 2014, p. 28).

Such a form of gender roles was not only observed in Pakistan, but across many regions of Asia as well. A comparison-based macro-study conducted by Albert Esteve and Chia Liu (2009) entailed the measurement of various indicators regarding patterns of family life and household arrangements across countries in Asia. Esteve and Liu conclude that differences in family dynamics were observed with regard to countries that are "modernized" than others across Asia (examples include South Korea and Japan) in terms of household size, where single person abodes were seen to be more preferred over living with other family members. However, most other Asian countries were recorded to have larger household sizes, pointing to the practice of inter-generational co-residence, especially as in many cases sons continue living with their parents, and the practice of patrilocality causes wives to come and stay in her husband's parent's house as well. However, country-specific data shows that although men live with their parents in the initial time after marriage, in many countries such as Cambodia and Mongolia, the likelihood for them to move out at an older age is greater than when comparing the situation to men in South Asian countries. Also, age at marriage was observed to be lower for women than men across much of Asia to the extent that from ages 25 to 29, more men were observed to be living with their parents than women, due to the propensity for women to marry early and move to where their husbands are residing. In the context of Pakistan, the authors stated that 43 per cent of men lived with their parents between the age of 25 to 29, as compared to just one percent of women.

Where such a system of family dynamics may be dubbed as "oppressive" by various discourse generating institutions in the UK, Ballard (2008) paints the situation differently. He proclaims the South Asian family structure as "corporations" where each person fulfils his/her responsibilities as part of such a unit in exchange for extensive reciprocal mutual support in various aspects of one's life, including times of need. Therefore, where a society focused on "individualism" as the ideal would dub such dependence and affiliations of the men to their parents, and of the women by virtue of having to leave their previous homes behind, as "being robbed of one's own free will", a person involved in such a family unit would find such ties extremely useful and fruitful during the course of his/her life, provided he/she is willing to put in the effort and respect that would earn him/her such a "privilege".

How do such "traditional" roles as mentioned above undergo change in accordance with exposure to the new contextual backdrop of the UK? Male spousal migration causes the female spouse based in the UK to go out and earn in order to fulfil the requirements for the husband to be able to take up residence in the UK (Charsley et al., 2016, p.19); also, the male initially may have to live with the female's family until he is financially stable enough to support his wife and children, and to send remittances back to his family in Pakistan (Charsley, 2005, p. 92). Such a focus on chain migration and its impact on family roles has largely been focused upon in academic circles, but is rarely seen to diverge from this particular domain. The present research aims to contribute towards rectifying such a situation, by focusing on that population of British Pakistanis that has opted against transnational marriages to form exogamous unions, and to observe the resulting family dynamics that come about due to such a divergence from the norm.

2.6. Reflections of identity among members of multi-ethnic societies

What are some of the theoretical works that deal with processes of identity in multi-ethnic societies? The debate of identity is at present a hot topic in Britain, due to its multi-ethnic composition. The "melting pot" theory was one of the first attempts from theorists of various disciplines to visualize identification based on being part of a multicultural society. Such a term was first coined in 1908 by Israel Zangwin through his play of the same name,

and is essentially used in the American context to describe the result of the contact between multiple cultures in the midst of a myriad of immigrant groups resident there. According to this theory, the various attributes of all cultural processes of each migrant group are mixed together in a metaphorical "melting pot", and the resultant product formed is more homogenous and refined than its original constituents. The addition of more migrants enriches the product constantly, forming a homogenous society of amalgamated cultures, considered as the hallmark of the American identity. Therefore, such a phenomenon can be termed as "assimilation to the dominant culture" (Nelson, 1996, p. 184).

On the other end of the spectrum, Horace Kallen, a renowned philosopher of the twentieth century, rejected the notion of America amalgamating into a metaphorical melting pot, and coined the term of "cultural pluralism" as a counter-phenomenon. He claims that the process of integration does not necessarily lead to complete assimilation into the host society, as nobody can refute his/her ties to the respective ancestor groups. Even though a person does become "Americanized", his/her origin story will never change, resulting in some form of affiliation with the sending country. Therefore, the American society can be considered as a "plural" society, where a multitude of people of varying cultural back-stories are residing with the sentiment of tolerance, with each nationality having a separate "substance" and "form" constituting the American society (Whitfield, 1999).

John Dewey, another renowned philosopher of the twentieth century, although an ardent criticizer of the melting pot metaphor (along with Kallen), proposed an alternative explanation to both extremes stated above. He rendered the assimilation process that each immigrant undergoes in the American society to not be in accordance with the dominant culture, but rather the immigrants and their ancestors, by virtue of their varying cultural orientations, "assimilate to each other". This forms a society that is constantly in flux and mobile, and receptive to any form of change (Wilson, 2010, p. 14). The degree to which an ethnic group out-marries is usually considered an indicator of assimilation into the host society (Ford et al., 2012, p. 4-6).

The melting pot theory, according to Richard Alba and Victor Nee (2003) is a progressive theory of its time, especially due to its propensity for including all ethnic groups, both

Europeans and non-Europeans, into the mix of American society (p. 26). It is also a very good predictor of inter-marriage, based on its supposition of cultural and biological inter-mixing due to contact between varying ethnic groups. However, the reason why this theory did not gain much ground is that although it may predict the direction in which a society as a unit may go towards, there is ambiguity in this theoretical debate with regard to the extent of the intricacies of cultural fusion. Also, most proponents of this theory support the dominance of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant way of life when it comes in contact with any other cultural form, which may not be the reality among many of the ethnic groups that "ghettoize" themselves from the majority population.

In light of such a criticism of the melting pot theorization, a number of attempts have been made to study and conceptualize the process of the interaction of immigrants with the host population in multi-ethnic societies. The existing literature in this regard can be divided into three categories (Maxwell, 2009, p. 1451-1453). The first category, dealing with the "spillover effect of improved incorporation outcomes over time", is also labelled as straight line assimilation literature, as it describes the expected assimilation, albeit gradual, of migrants into the mainstream culture of the host society. The second category of literature deals with the extent of contact that minority groups have with the mainstream culture, and posits that the incorporation of minority groups into the mainstream culture may even deteriorate over time, depending upon their willingness to interact with such mainstream culture. The third category deals with the contribution of the cultural and religious influences of the country of origin of ethnic minority groups upon their extent of identification with the mainstream culture.

Milton Gordon and his work on assimilation is worth mentioning here, as his theorizations were among one of the first that brought forth a multi-dimensional description of the process of assimilation with indicators and variables that provided a concrete framework for further studies on immigrant integration behaviour. The previous studies before Gordon's seminal work brought forth a huge variety on the definitions and constructs regarding the process of assimilation, with each theorist coming forth with his/her own explanation of the phenomenon that was vastly different from other's conceptualizations in the same regard (Alba & Nee, 2003, p. 24). He postulates seven steps towards the

37

complete assimilation of immigrants into the host society, which are: cultural or behavioural assimilation (where the migrant group takes on the cultural attributes of the host society); structural assimilation (where the migrant group begins to take part in various institutions and congregations that play an important role among the natives of the host society; marital assimilation (where migrants begin to accept the host society's value systems to the extent that they are willing to inter-marry with members of that host society; identificational assimilation (where member of the migrant group identify themselves with the same attributes and affiliative cues as members of the host society); attitude receptional assimilation (where there is no form of prejudice faced from members of the host society; behaviour receptional assimilation (where there is no discrimination faced from members of the host society; and civic assimilation (where members of the migrant communities are accepted by the host society to the extent that concerns and demands can be raised without in any way being afraid of repercussions faced from members of the host society) (Gordon, 1964, p. 70-71). Gordon's work is especially pertinent in the context of the present research as his focus on the aspect of inter-marriage as a crucial stepping stone towards integration into the host society instigated more nuanced research on the phenomenon of inter-marriage as a whole. However, Gordon's theory, similar to that of the theory of the melting pot, was criticized due to its focus on the inevitability of assimilation of migrant groups (Alba & Nee, 2003, p. 25-26). Such a form of assimilation may not be as ordained and foretold as one might expect it to be, especially when considering the multiplicities of cultural experiences that each migrant group goes through, fostering difference in viewpoints among them.

In the context of such strands of literature, South Asians are documented to be largely alienated and marginalized from mainstream society, based on their preferred separation and diminished associations with British culture, formation of separate enclaves to shield themselves from the cultural influences of the host society, and lower levels of socio-economic stability as compared to other ethnic minority groups (Rieff, 2005; Maxwell, 2006, p. 736). However, a few studies comparing South Asian ethnic minorities to Carribbean groups in the UK have brought forward differing results, with Caribbean people having a lower level of identification with the mainstream British culture than the South Asian population due to a higher level of perceived discrimination on the part of such

Caribbean groups, and a switch to determinants apart from socio-economic stability to determine integration into mainstream society (Maxwell, 2006, p. 737, 2009, p. 1463).

Another study conducted by Alita Nandi and Lucinda Platt (2014) brings forth a different picture than the one painted above with regard to marginalization of minority groups in the UK. The authors state that the general assumption that in order to survive in a multi-ethnic society, one has to take up the identity similar to that of the native population, and if one failed to do so, they would be both structurally and culturally detached from the overall sense of being "British", was proved wrong in their macro-based study. Rather, the unique aspect which they observed was that in the present era, it is possible for minority groups to maintain more than one forms of identity, both related to their country or origin and to being part of British society. And, such a holding of dual forms of identity play a positive role in their association and contribution towards British society based on an increased sense of acceptance of both their British identity, and the form of identity that anchors them to their roots. Also, the authors observed that being a Muslim did not ghettoize one from participating in mainstream society. Rather they observed the opposite to be true, and where ghettoization may be observed would be more with regard to the Caribbean group of people than any other ethnic group, including South Asians. An important point that the authors also raised was that in most studies, the processes of identification of the minority groups are always under fire for not being cohesive enough to the general British sentiment. However, the study indicated that not only do minority groups affiliate themselves on the basis of ethnic rather than national identities, but the White majority population do so as well, whether in the form of "English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish" identities, or affiliations towards European countries among White immigrants from Europe. Therefore, they state that there is a need to address identity issues with regard to the majority group first, before targeting minorities based on the assumption of differences due to uncommon origin or difference in skin colour.

As already elaborated upon above, most literature focuses on the reason for isolation of minority ethnic groups from the mainstream "British" society. Where this study fills the gap in literature is more in line with Nandi and Platt's (2014) theorizations on the existence of multiple forms of identity among individuals at particular times. Therefore, the

phenomenon of inter-marriage, which entails cross-cultural contact in most cases, will be studied with regard to the forms of identity as reflected in such forms of unions. A particular focus has been placed on the British Pakistani population, as this community has been recorded to ghettoize oneself, especially with regard to endogamous marital practices, and therefore involving oneself in exogamous marriages may entail a unique form of identity that is in need of further exploration. For this purpose, Stuart Hall's theorizations on the multiplicity of forms of identity will be used as the theoretical framework guiding the process of analysis, as this theory acknowledges the role of variety in affiliations when navigating one's sense of self in a globalized post-modern world (see the section titled "theoretical framework" for greater elaboration of Hall's theorizations).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted as per requirement for the completion of the degree of MPhil in Anthropology, stretched over a period of two semesters from February 2018 to January 2019. Qualitative research methodology was used to carry out this research, and the main research design used was ethnography.

3.1. Sample and sampling technique

Purposive sampling technique was utilized for the purposes of exploring the research objectives. The major sample was collected (a total of 40 respondents) through this sampling technique from within the British Pakistani community of the towns of Norbury and Croydon situated in Greater London, United Kingdom, and coming under the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Croydon. The fieldwork conducted spanned over a period of 4 months, from 23rd April to 20th August, 2018. The target sample was members of British Pakistani inter-ethnic couples (36 respondents, 18 of which are British Pakistanis [5 males and 13 females]; and 18 of which are non-British Pakistani spouses [6 males and 12 females]. Although some respondents included are married couples [11 couples], not all respondents had their husband or wife included in the sample). The children of a few of these couples were also interviewed (3 respondents, out of which 2 of them were male [and also siblings], while one was female [offspring of another couple]). Two key informants were selected. Both are British Pakistani; one is involved in an inter-ethnic marriage (and so her and her husband have been added to the main sample of respondents); and one is married to a British Pakistani, but has been chosen as a key informant due to her considerable social standing (see subsequent section for more details). The reason for using purposive sampling technique was that a particular criteria was set beforehand as per the objectives of the research i.e. selection on the basis of marital choice (the choice to marry outside the Pakistani community for British Pakistani respondents, and the choice to marry within the Pakistani community for non-Pakistani respondents), and the respondents were thus selected on the basis of such a criteria with the help of the two key informants. The respondents were of various age groups, ranging from the age of 22, to the age of 72. All the respondents stated themselves to be Muslim, apart from one female non-British

Pakistani spouse (White British Other [Spanish]), who is a Catholic Christian. Her husband is a Muslim British Pakistani.

With regard to the ethnic groups of the non-British Pakistani spouses interviewed (18 respondents in total), four of them (3 males, and 1 female) stated themselves to be British Indian. Two of them originated from Mumbai (the female respondent and one of the male respondents; the female respondent was born and brought up in Mumbai, and moved to the UK after marriage to her British Pakistani husband; the male respondent was born in Mumbai, but moved to the UK with his parents at the age of 8); one of them originated from the Indian Gujrat (born and brought up in the UK); and one of them termed himself as a Memon[2], with origins in Kutch, India (born and brought up in the UK). Four of the respondents (3 females, and 1 male) stated themselves to be African British. The male respondent is a Black[3] African, originating from Uganda, Africa, and converted to Islam (was previously a Catholic Christian) before meeting his wife, who is also a respondent of the present research (40 year old British Pakistani). Out of the female respondents, one of them is a Black African British born and brought up in France (her parents moved there from Mali, Africa before the respondent was born), and moved to the UK to obtain higher education where she met her present British Pakistani husband; and two of them, although originating from Pakistan, identify themselves as African British, based on the influence of their parents, who spent some of their lives in Nairobi, Kenya at the time when Kenya was a British colony, before they were deported in the 1970s after the overthrowing of the colonial power there[4]. Three of the respondents (all female) identified themselves as Other White. One stated herself to be Spanish, one as Lithuanian, and the third one as Polish (the Spanish respondent is the only non-Muslim respondent in the sample [Catholic Christian], all other respondents are Muslim; the Lithuanian and the Polish respondents converted to Islam just before marrying their Muslim British Pakistani husbands). Three of the

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[2] Memons are a group of South Asian Muslims originating from Sindh when it was a part of the Indian Subcontinent. Over time, they migrated to the Kutch and Kathiawar regions in what is now termed as India. They are called Memons based on their speaking of the distinct Memon language.

[3] The term "Black" has been used throughout the study to refer to those respondents having their origins in Africa, and because of which have darker skin tones.

[4] Due to Kenya being a previous colony of the UK, many people from the Indian Subcontinent opted to take up jobs in Nairobi (Capital of Kenya) in the pre-partition era. After the British rule over the region was overthrown, many of these people opted to migrate to countries like Canada, the UK and USA based on the ease of immigration to these areas because of their previous connection to the colonial power.

respondents (2 females and 1 male) identified themselves as British Arabs. The male respondent identified as such on the basis of his origin in the country of Iraq (he was born and brought up in the UK, his parents moved to the UK from Iraq). When considering the female respondents, one of them identified themselves as Arab based on her mother being born in Morocco, and her father being born in Egypt; the other one identified herself as Arab due to her parents' origin in Morocco, and her birth there (she moved to the UK when she was 1 year old with her parents). Two of the female respondents stated themselves to be as Other Asian; both of them were born and brought up in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; one of them moved to the UK to obtain higher education and met her British Pakistani husband there, while the other moved to the UK after marrying her first British Pakistani husband (she divorced him, and got married again a second time to another British Pakistani). One of the female respondents stated herself to be a British Bangladeshi (born and brought up in the UK). The last non-British Pakistani respondent (male) stated himself to be an "American Mexican". He is a convert to Islam (converted before meeting his wife), and moved to the UK a few years after marrying his British Pakistani wife; he has not yet taken up British citizenship.

Not all of the respondents in both the female British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani samples had their husbands included in the interviewing process, citing religious reasons for their reluctance in meeting with a female interviewer (myself) that they are not familiar with. Furthermore, one spouse was not included in the sample as he had passed away two years before the time of the fieldwork, and another was not included as he was divorced from his wife and they were not on talking terms with each other. Seven of these spouses are British Pakistanis, while the ethnicities of the non-British Pakistani spouses are: two of them are British Bangladeshis (all born and brought up in the UK); two of them are British Indians (one's origin was from Kutch [Memon]; while the other's origin was from Gujrat; both were born and brought up in the UK); and one of them is an Afghan (British Asian Other; he was born and brought up in Afghanistan, but moved to the UK alone in his twenties to avoid the unruly law and order situation due to the US-Afghan war).

A socio-economic survey was also conducted in the locales selected for the research. This was done in order to be able to obtain a general overview of demographic information that

would provide some context for the analysis of the findings. 70 households were included in this survey, 35 of which were from the town of Norbury, and 35 were from the town of Croydon. These households were selected through purposive sampling technique. The reason for using this sampling technique was that all households were selected based on a pre-determined criteria i.e. at least one member of the household should identify himself/herself as British Pakistani. Most of these households were approached with the help of the key informants, as they had many contacts among the target households due to their considerable social standing. Survey forms were handed out in each household (see annexure E for a sample of the survey form), inquiring about the number of people in that household, age, gender, education, occupation, ethnicity (in case the household is multi-ethnic if any of the members are involved in an inter-ethnic marriage), residence, hometown, religion and marital status of each member living in the household. Number of children (under the age of 18) in each household were also inquired after.

3.2. Key informants

The key informants selected for the present research played a major role in the processes of data collection. Purposive sampling technique was utilized to select the sample of two key informants (those key informants were chosen who had considerable social standing). One of the key informants selected (who will be referred to with the pseudonym "Sara" in subsequent mentions), and in whose household I also resided with during the duration of my fieldwork, is a relative of mine, which is how I was able to get in contact with her in order to access the members of the community under consideration. Sara's household is located in Norbury, Greater London, and is composed of a family of British Pakistanis. Sara is married to her cousin, and they have three children (two sons and a daughter). The children's paternal grandmother also lives with them. The grandmother is a pensioner whose husband died in 2005. Sara (who was 38 years old at the time of the conduction of fieldwork) herself is a housewife and a part time teaching assistant at a well-known school in the borough adjacent to Norbury, while her husband is a management officer at a hospital. The children were of age 14 (son), 11 (daughter) and 7 (son), respectively at the time of the fieldwork.

The second key informant selected for the present research, who will be given the pseudonym of "Sadia" (her age was 43 years old at the time of the conduction of fieldwork), is the sister-in-law of the first key informant, and is a housewife at present. She is married to a British-Indian, and does not live in the same household as Sara, but still lives in the town of Norbury. She is a housewife, with three children (two daughters, ages 19 and 16, and a son, age 14). She grew up in the area, and went to school and university with many of the people residing in the community.

Both key informants had considerable social standing in the community under consideration. Sara is a well-known member of the community based on her various activities, including a cake-baking business, and due to her regular attendance of Quran translation and interpretation classes held at the local mosque in Norbury. Also, as mentioned above, she is a part-time teaching assistant at a well-known school located in the area adjacent to Norbury, and frequently interacted with many of the parents from the community who sent their children to the school. Two of her younger children also attend that school, and thus she is still active in the social activities held by the school even during times when she is not working there. The second key informant's (Sadia's) social standing is based on her immense familiarity with the area and the members of the community, by virtue of being brought up with the same people around her. Therefore, she had many connections which proved to be fruitful when it came to contacting respondents.

The key informant interviews taken from Sara and Sadia also proved to be immensely fruitful. Because of their positive social standing with many members of the community, they were able to provide me with preliminary information regarding the general everyday activities, customs and norms prevalent in the members of the community, especially regarding the general marital trends that they have observed. Moreover, they helped in the sample selection for my research, as they were able to contact prospective respondents to be added in the research. They also assisted me to build my rapport with these respondents by accompanying me with and introducing me to them. Furthermore, Sadia also became a part of my main sample of respondents, as she herself was also involved in an inter-ethnic marriage (married to a British Indian).

3.3. Participant observation

Participant observation is an instrumental part of ethnography, and proved crucial as one of the main methods for data collection. The two key informants selected (Sara and Sadia) acted as a vital source through whom I, as the researcher, was able to conduct participant observation by contacting the respondents and attending various events taking place in the community. As already mentioned above, I resided in the household of one of my key informants (Sara). Residing with this family of British Pakistanis and participating with them in their daily activities provided me with an insight into the workings of life in the UK as a British Pakistani.

Rapport building was also conducted with the help of the two key informants. During the initial two to three weeks of my fieldwork, I focused on visiting the various community members with whom I was to conduct interviews in their different routinely activities. I went with Sara to drop and pick up her children from school every day, and met many of the female respondents, and spent some time in exchanging small talk with them. I also regularly went to a small family park where many parents brought their children to play, inter-mingling with prospective respondents there as well. The Quran translation and interpretation class held twice a week at the local mosque for Muslim women became a way for me to meet respondents apart from those who had younger or school-going children (as those were the respondents I met mostly during my visits to the school and park). There, I was able to interact with certain elderly members of the community as well. Most of the women who took this class were British Pakistanis (some married to Pakistanis, and some to non-Pakistanis). However, there were a few other ethnicities as well, including Indian and Malawi. In this way, many members of the community became sensitized to my continuous presence with Sara, and I slowly began to become a familiar face for them, helping my rapport with them to become more consolidated. However, a big drawback for me and my research was that most of these areas which I visited were mainly female-oriented spaces (apart from the park), and therefore I was not able to establish sufficient rapport with the male members of the community. This may have contributed to the considerable gender imbalance in my research sample. However, a greater factor contributing to this drawback was seen to be that of the religiosity of many of the families,

and the cultural barriers to the meeting of opposite sexes, due to which many male respondents refused to meet with me and be a part of the study.

Apart from the community participation which I undertook for the purposes of rapport building, I also attended certain events throughout the duration of my fieldwork, which consolidated the process of participant observation further. One of the events which I attended was a monthly get-together held by some students and the teacher of the Quran and interpretation classes taken at the main Norbury mosque, which my key informant, Sara, attended regularly. It usually occurs in the form of a one-dish party, where each person participating brings over an item of food to be consumed during the get-together, which is held at lunch hours between 12 and 3 in the afternoon. Most of the women who attend the gathering are British Pakistani (and therefore a few of them also became respondents for the present study), along with a few Bengali women. The house at which the get-together is hosted belongs to a Polish woman (previously Catholic but converted to Islam) married to a British Pakistani, and a crucial respondent for the research. I was able to attend this gathering twice during my fieldwork. Since this congregation brought together many women whom I included in my sample for this research, attending it proved fruitful for the purposes of rapport building and data collection. It thus gave me an opportunity to observe these women in an informal environment, and to gain an insight of the communal life of the women residing in the community. Furthermore, since the person who hosted these get-togethers at her house was a crucial respondent to be interviewed, this gathering made it possible for me to observe her role and demeanor in her own household (her comfort zone), and meet the other members of her family as well (her older daughter and Polish non-Muslim mother) providing me with greater insights regarding her family life and dynamics.

Other events which I was able to attend were related to the school in which my key informant, Sara, occasionally worked as a teaching assistant, and where two of her younger children studied. An annual summer fair is usually arranged by the school where children and parents are encouraged to participate in event management, holding stalls, and as the general disciplinary committee during the event. This funfair acts as a platform for members of the community of various ethnicities to interact informally with each other.

Apart from this funfair, I was also able to attend the annual sports day held by the primary wing of the school. Through this event, I was able to observe the interaction patterns of the children with each other (many of whose parents were included in my sample), giving me a viewpoint into the informal behaviours of another age group of the community (apart from adults and the elderly). Also, another event I was able to attend was an end-of-year production, titled "Madagascar" which was organized and acted out by the teachers and students of year 6 (the final year of primary schooling in schools across England). This play is a traditional rite of passage for students in many primary schools before being inducted into secondary schools, where preparations for GCSEs (stands for General Certificate for Secondary Education, taken as the equivalent for matriculation for students in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) is considered as one of the main focus points for these students.

The final major event which I was able to participate in was the Eid prayers[5] held at the open space of the main Norbury park (since I conducted a part of my fieldwork in the month of Ramadan[6], I was available in the field during the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr[7] as well). This is a ritual which is attended by most Muslims - men, women and children - living in the area outlined for my research. Although the prayers were segregated for males and females, members of the community congregated and inter-mingled after the prayers were over, marking this ritual as one of the main platforms for meeting with those who one may not interact with routinely. It was a major setting through which I could observe the informal dynamics between members of the community, especially between males and females, who otherwise may not interact as frequently in day-to-day life due to religious constraints and cultural barriers.

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[5] A prayer held in the mornings of the two major festivals of Muslims i.e. Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha as a form of celebration.

[6] Ramadan is the 9th month in the Islamic calendar, and marks a time of fasting, community prayers and restraint from "wordly desires" for Muslims around the globe (Ramadan, 1998).

[7] Eid-ul-Fitr is one of the two major Islamic occasions of festivity, celebrated in felicitation for the month of Ramadan to have successfully ended. The second major occasion is termed as Eid-ul-Adha, and it marks the celebration in the name of the Prophet Ibrahim (AS), and his willingness to sacrifice his son due to his devotion to Allah. According to Islamic scriptures, Ibrahim's (AS) son was replaced by a ram at the last second by Allah, thus relieving the burden of sacrificing his son off of him (Javed, 2018).

3.4. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted from the respondents mentioned in the section of sample and sampling technique with the help of two semi-structured interview guides constructed prior to the beginning of the fieldwork (see annexures B and C for the interview guides). One interview guide was constructed for inter-ethnic couples (one part of the couple should have been a British Pakistani); and one was constructed for the offspring of these inter-ethnic couples. The interviews were all conducted in English and were audio recorded, as almost all respondents provided permission for me to do so. Where recordings were not possible, field jottings were taken, which were later converted to field notes. Field jottings were also taken while observing the various events attended during the process of participant observation. A daily diary was also kept in which I detailed all nuances and relevant particularities as observed during the process of the fieldwork. The technique of thematic analysis was used for the analysis of data brought forth by the in-depth interviews.

3.5. Case studies

Case studies were also taken to further corroborate the findings of the research. At any point where it was observed that a certain incident or event that a respondent is mentioning or that I noticed while undertaking participant observation may prove to be a fruitful finding, I tried to probe further to gain more details about it to be added as case studies. This tool of investigation provided me with the means to collect certain meaningful data with regard to the focus of the present research i.e. marital experiences.

3.6. Ethical considerations

The matter of ethics was properly taken into consideration. Adequate efforts were made to ensure that there was minimal psychological and no physical harm to the respondents. An informed consent form detailing all ethical considerations, mainly the assurance of the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondent's identity and information provided was given to the respondents to sign (see Annexure A for a sample of this form). The ethical considerations outlined in the form were also verbally explained to the respondents to

further ensure that they understood their rights and the control they had over the interview situation and to guarantee to them that any information they provide would only be used for academic purposes. A reference letter issued by the university, and a document giving a brief overview regarding the objectives of the research was also provided to the respondents when needed. Furthermore, the respondents were also informed of their right to opt out of the interview process at any point in time if they felt uncomfortable with the questions being asked.

3.7. Limitations

A major limitation faced during the present research was with regard to the barrier pertaining to gender difference. Since most of the couples under consideration were religiously oriented, it was very hard to convince the male counterparts of the couples to give the interview face to face, as they did not wish to interact with a female that they did not know previously. Therefore, there is a lower number male respondents included in my sample as compared to female respondents. Furthermore, those who agreed to give the interview were not willing to sit with me in a room by themselves, rather a female that was a *mahram*[8] of the male respondent was present in most of the interviews that I conducted with them, which may have an effect on the amount of information that they wished to reveal.

Another limitation faced was with regard to the distance of the locale from my place of residence. Since I conducted my research in London, United Kingdom, but am a resident of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, I stayed in the field for the full duration of 120 days, and once I came back to Pakistan, I could not go back due to time constraints and the expense of travelling. Therefore, I had to satisfy any follow up questions I had over the phone, instead of talking to the respondents face to face. Because of this, during these telephonic

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[8] *Mahrams* of a woman are those men whom she is not allowed to marry under any circumstances. One can be considered a mahram of a woman based on three guidelines: kinship, foster relationship, and marriage. *Ghair mahrams* are those men with which in most cases contact is not permissible by Islamic Shariah, unless the women follow particular Islamic guidelines on covering her body. However one can become a *mahram* of a woman by virtue of being tied with her in a contract marriage (for details, see ibn Adam, 2009).

interactions, I could not properly play the role of an ethnographer by using my observation skills to analyze my surroundings and visual cues exhibited by the respondents.

3.8. The research site

The locale selected for the present research, as indicated in the subsection titled "sampling technique" is the towns of Norbury and Croydon, both situated in the South of London under the administration of the London Borough of Croydon, Greater London. The town of Norbury is situated at a latitude of 51.4167 degrees, and a longitude of -0.1167 degrees. It is situated at a distance of 10.8 kilometres from the area of Charing Cross, and is close to the neighbouring major towns of Streatham and Mitcham, and the Crystal Palace park. ("Postcode/zip code of Norbury", n.d.). The town of Croydon is situated at 51.376495 degrees latitude, and -0.100594 degrees longitude ("Croydon, Greater London, UK", n.d.). Norbury is 4.7 kilometres away from the town centre of Croydon ("Drive distance", n.d.). Croydon is also close to the town of Thornton Heath and the county of Surrey.

Since both of these towns come under the same borough, they are both governed by the Croydon council. Councils are a form of devolution of power in London, with each borough being run by its own council made up of local authorities. Some of the functions of local councils include public housing, the sorting out and collection of waste from local housing, and to construct and carry out plans for local development ("Local government in Britain", n.d.).

Figure 1. Map of London Borough of Croydon
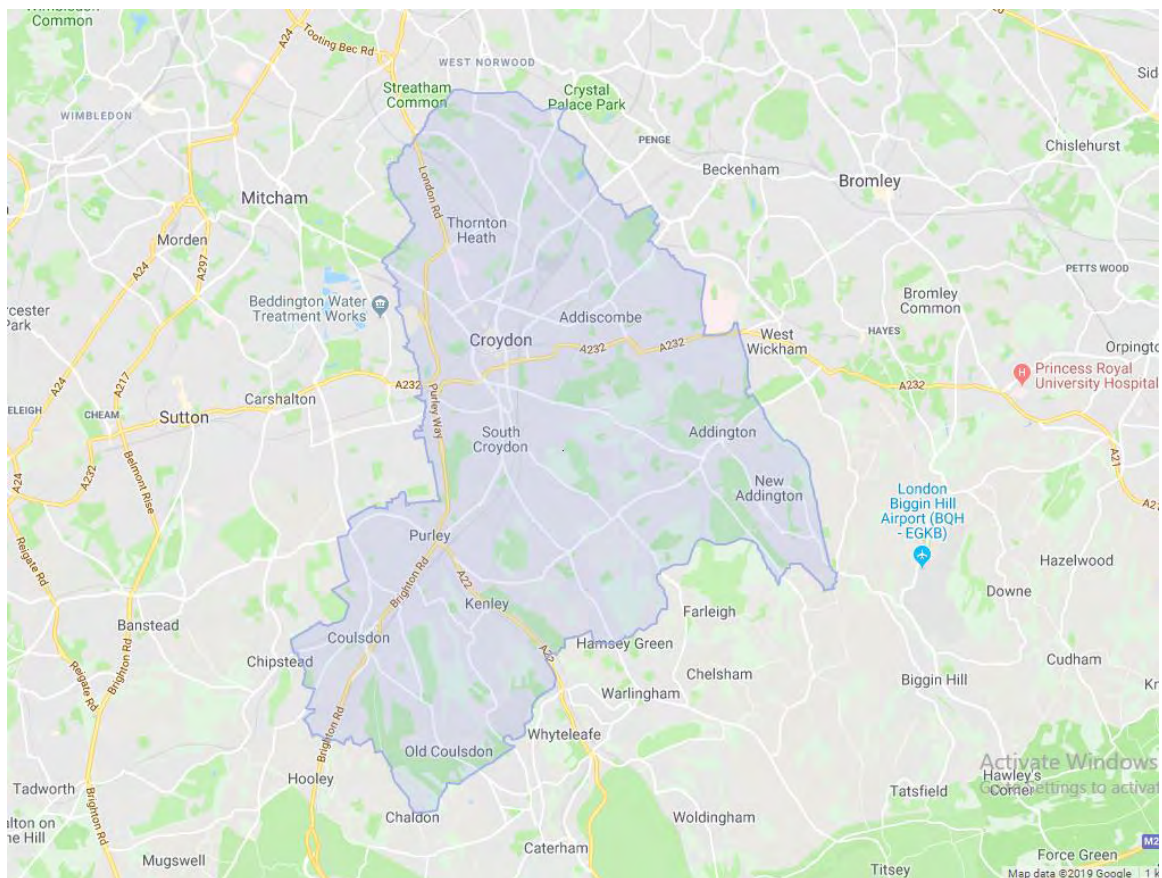
Norbury is one of the 4 northern towns of the London Borough of Croydon. It shares the post code[9] of SW16 with the neighbouring towns of Croydon and Streatham. Although one third of this town comes under the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Merton ("Norbury", 2018), the area being included in the present research is under the jurisdiction of the Croydon Council, making up 6,055 households. The total population of the town is 16,476, out of which 1,428 members are ranked as Pakistani as per the census of 2011 (8.6% of the population), making it the third largest ethnic minority group in Norbury after Indians and Caribbean people. With regards to the birth place of the population resident

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[9] The Royal Mail (the official mailing agency in the UK) has divided the country into different categories for ease of access when it comes to postage services. These categories are labelled with the help of "post codes", which are each a distinct collection of 5 to 7 letters and numbers. These codes also help when there is a need for accurate identification of particular areas ("Postcodes explained", n.d.).

here, Pakistan as a birth place ranked third out of all non-UK countries of birth ("Norbury", 2012).

Figure 2. Map of Norbury

Historically, Norbury was part of the northern area of the manor of Croydon. This may be the reason why it was previously termed as North "burh" (an old English term for borough). After separating from the manor, the name of the area evolved from Northbenchesham (one of the previous seven boroughs of Croydon) to the Northborough to the present terminology of "Norbury" ("Norbury", n.d.).

Croydon, one of the greater highlighted areas in the London Borough of Croydon, is considered as one of the major centres for commerce and culture after central London. Due to its vast geographical area, it encompasses a number of wards (areas divided on the basis of electorates), namely: Addiscombe, Broad Green, Fairfield, Waddon, Croham, Selhurst, Ashburton, Woodside, Sanderstead, Shirley, and Selsdon and Ballards. The population of British Pakistanis is around 3% of the total population, which makes them among the more

prominent out of all ethnic groups (not including Indians, Other Asians, Other Whites and Caribbean people) (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011c).

Figure 3. Map of Croydon

3.8.1. Socioeconomic profile of the areas

Within the total population of Norbury, 51% of them are females, are 49% of them are males ("Norbury demographics", n.d.). While in Croydon, 48% of the population are males, are 52% of them are female ("Croydon census demographics", n.d.).

With regard to household types in Norbury, 65.9% of them contain married or cohabiting families (both with and without children) and 11% of them are one-person households (Fallon, 2013). In Croydon, 20% of them are single person households, 30% of them contain a married couple (both with and without children), 18.5% of them contain

cohabiting couples (with and without children), and 4.4% of them are single parent households with children (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2011c).

76% of the population of Norbury speaks English, while the rest of the population speaks other languages (3.3% of the people speak Urdu, while 0.8% of the people speak Punjabi) ("Norbury demographics", n.d.). In Croydon, 85.5% of the population speaks English and 0.7% of the population speaks Urdu ("Croydon census demographics", n.d.).

According to the results obtained from the 2011 census, the following occupations were recorded among the people in Norbury, with the percentage of people involved in these occupations: Professional (19.8%); administrative and secretarial (14.5%); caring, leisure and other services (8.9%); sales and customer services (8.7%); elementary administration and services (8.6%); elementary (9.2%); associate professional and technical (13.0%); administrative (11.0%); skilled trades (10.3%); managers, directors and senior officials (10.4%) ("Norbury demographics", n.d.). 34.5% of the females are unemployed, while 22.8% of the males are unemployed (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2018b). The following occupations were noted for the people in Croydon: Professional (19.6%); skilled trades (9.6%); administrative and secretarial (14.7%); sales and customer service (8.7%); elementary administration and service (8.1%); associate professional and technical (13.7%); administrative (11.2%); caring, leisure and other service (9.5%); elementary (8.7%); managers, directors and senior officials (10.3%) ("Croydon census demographics", n.d.). 6% of females are unemployed, while 5.3% of males are unemployed (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2018a).

3.8.2. Geography and climatic conditions

The city of London was constructed on the "flood plains" of the river Thames (which cuts the city into two halves), therefore it is mostly erected on flat lands ("Physical features", n.d.). The climatic conditions in London vary considerably. During the summer, because it is close to the ocean, the weather mostly remains cool and rainy, with occasional spells of sunshine. However, the weather in London is much milder than the rest of the UK, based on its sheltered position on the island. The rate of rainfall is around 600 millimeters per year. In the winter, the average temperature is around 5 degrees centigrade. There may be

the occasional snowfall, but not as heavy as the northern regions of the UK ("Climate – London", n.d.).

3.8.3. Public transport

Two of London's systems of public transport have terminals and connections to Norbury. The first mode of public transport is the over-ground train service of London, which connects to Norbury via the Southern line through the Norbury train station (Southern line gets its name from its functioning in the South of London) ("Norbury station details", n.d.). The second mode of transport include the London bus services. Five bus routes connect Norbury to other parts of London: Route 50 towards Croydon and Stockwell; Route 109 towards Brixton and Croydon; Route 250 to Brixton and Croydon; Route 255 to Balham and Pollards Hill; and Route G1 to Battersea. A night route i.e. Route N109 towards Croydon and Oxford Circus also functions from Norbury (Transport for London, 2014).

Three of London's systems of public transport have connections to Croydon. As the geographical area of the region is vast, there are numerous routes that of transport both in and out of Croydon. In the context of the present research, the route plan for buses starting from Croydon Town Centre released by the Transport for London office is more pertinent based on most respondents from the region belonging from around that particular area. These bus routes are: Route 50 towards Stockwell; Route 60 towards Old Coulsdon and Streatham; Route 75 towards Lewisham; Route 109 towards Brixton; Route 119 towards Bromley North and Purley Way; Route 154 towards Morden; Route 166 towards Banstead and Epsom; Route 197 towards Pekham; Route 250 towards Brixton; Route 264 towards Tooting; Route 312 towards Norwood Junction and South Croydon; Route 403 towards Warlingham; Route 405 towards Redhill; Route 407 towards Caterham and Sutton; Route 412 towards Purley; Route 455 towards Old Lodge Lane and Wallington; Route 466 towards Addington Village and Caterham-on-the-Hill; and Route 468 towards Elephant & Castle and South Croydon (Transport for London, 2013).

Four tram lines are also operated out of Croydon Town Centre: towards Elmer's End; towards Beckenham Junction; towards New Addington and Wimbledon; and towards Elmer's End and Therapia Lane (Transport for London, 2013).

With regard to the over-ground train service, there are two main stations operating from within Croydon: West Croydon station, and East Croydon station. West Croydon station, constructed in 1839, was the first station in Croydon that conducted train services to central London. It was at first called as Croydon station, but the name was changed to West Croydon station after the construction of the East Croydon station in 1851 (Datson, 2018). West Croydon station operates on the Southern and East London lines, while East Croydon operates on the Southern and Thameslink lines.

3.8.4. Hospitals

There are two local doctor's surgeries[10] present in Norbury: Norbury health centre, and Fairview medical centre. There are no major hospitals in the area, as the adjoining town of Croydon has a major hospital, called the Croydon University hospital (previously known as Mayday hospital). It has a capacity of more than 500 beds, and has expanded to also hold a maternity unit, and a special care baby unit. There are four operation theatres kept aside for emergency day time operative procedures ("Croydon University Hospital", n.d.).

3.8.5. Mosques

The Muslim population in Norbury is about 17.8% of the total population, which is the second largest religious group after Christianity in the area ("Norbury", 2012). To accommodate the religious activities of such a population of Muslims, five local mosques have been set up in the area: Jamia Noor Mosque, Norbury Islamic Academy, Norbury Muslim Centre, Bismillah Cultural Centre and Al Noor Institute ("Mosques in Norbury, London", 2009).

With regard to Croydon, 8.1% of the total population is Muslim, which is the largest religious group in the area after Christians (56.4%) (Office for National Statistics [ONS],

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[10] These are offices, both private and governmental, where general physicians practice medicine on a routinely basis. Residents of a particular borough are required to register with the surgery in their area, and book appointments with the doctors whenever there is a need of medical attention that is not urgent. In case of emergencies, patients are advised to go straight to hospitals.

2011c). To accommodate this population, two major mosques have been constructed in the region: Al-Khair Masjid and Croydon Islamic Community Trust.

3.8.6. Other religious centres

In Norbury, two Anglican churches, and one Baptist church have been constructed (London Borough of Croydon, 1999). In Croydon, The Baitus Subhan Ahmaddiya mosque, and the Ismaili Prayer Centre are the mosques constructed by the Ahmaddiya and Ismaili communities. There is a Nanak Community Centre where Sikhs attend religious events. For Buddhists, there is the Croydon Buddhist Centre. Apart from these, the area also contains 16 Anglican churches, and 9 Baptist Churches (London Borough of Croydon, 1999, p. 11-17).

3.8.7. Landmarks

In Norbury, a community park is present for locals, named as "Norbury Park", which boasts the facilities of a multi-games court, public car park, children's playground and a BMX track ("Norbury Park", n.d.). The Norbury high-street, situated on London road, holds many major supermarket chains, along with other local-based shops run by people of varying ethnicities. A well-equipped library, functioning under the jurisdiction of the London Borough of Croydon, provides many services for the public, including reading groups for children, free wi-fi access, and study areas apart from its collection of books on a variety of genres ("Norbury library", n.d.).

The main landmarks in Croydon include the Whitgift shopping centre, Centrale shopping centre, Croydon Clock tower and Croydon Airport (now non-functional, but converted into a museum that opens once a month) among many other cultural, leisure and recreational centres. There is also a large library, named as Croydon Central library, which apart from book-keeping, plays many other roles for members of society, including provision of free wi-fi, recording and ease of access of all pertinent information regarding the area of Croydon, a presence of an archive of books for children with dyslexia among other services ("Central library", n.d.).

Out of the six major airports functioning in London (London Heathrow Airport, London Gatwick Airport, London City Airport, Stanstead Airport Luton Airport and Southend Airport) London Gatwick is the closest airport to both the towns of Norbury and Croydon (Gatwick airport in 24.5 kilometers away from Croydon town centre ["Distance between", n.d.]).

3.8.8. Schooling

Schooling in England follows the system of three main progressions till one reaches the stage of higher education: the passing of primary school[11], then of secondary school[12] till the point where one would undertake his/her GCSEs[13], then obtaining further education which would qualify one to sit his/her A-level examinations or any other form of technical or vocational qualification if required (further education is necessary for obtaining admission in university) ("UK education system", n.d.). Furthermore, there are different types of schools to choose from in both the primary and secondary stages: state schools (run by the government, where education is free of cost, grammar schools[14] and most academies are included in such a type of schools); special schools (from ages 11 and over, for children with special needs); faith schools (run and funded by religious organizations, have to teach national curriculum along with religious-based teachings); faith academies (religion-based schools, don't have to teach the national curriculum); free schools (locally based operations, but funded by government); academies (independent, do not have to follow national curriculum, a state school in the sense that education is also free of cost); city technology colleges (specialize in science and technology training); state boarding

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[11] The primary school system in England entails the academic years of one to seven, and admits students from age 5 to 11. It provides basic training for students before they have to undergo more difficult and specialized training in secondary school with regard to sitting the standardized GCSE exams ("UK education system", n.d.).

[12] The secondary school system in England follows the primary school system, and admits students from age 11 to 16, and entails all qualifications that one has to undergo before he/she can begin training for him/her A-level examinations ("UK education system", n.d.).

[13] GCSE stands for "General Certificate of Secondary Education". It is a system which holds a set of examinations for students aged 14 to 16, which they have to undertake in order to qualify for their A levels (GCSE, n.d.).

[14] Grammar schools are types of secondary schools in the UK where education is free, but only children ranking high in academic abilities are admitted. Students at the end of their primary schooling years take the 11+ exam, and their placement in grammar schools depends on their performance in the exam ("The parents' guide to secondary school", n.d.).

schools (fee has to be paid for boarding, education is free); and private schools (fees have to be paid, are independent from governmental policies on education) ("Types of school", n.d.). There are no grammar schools in the London Borough of Croydon, although there are 19 of these schools spread around in other regions of Greater London ("State grammar schools in Greater London, n.d.).

Due to the smaller geographical area of Norbury, there is only one primary school that comes under its jurisdiction: Norbury Manor Primary School (state school) (London Borough of Croydon, 2018a, p. 18). Stanford Primary School, coming under the charge of the London Borough of Merton, is a school just outside the boundary of Norbury, and many respondents of the present research chose to send their children to this school. There are no particular secondary schools in Norbury. However, there are a few schools on its outskirts where many of the respondents preferred to send their children. These schools include Woodmansterne School & Children's centre (situated in the London Borough of Lambeth), Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College for Girls (Situated in Thornton Heath, which comes under the London Borough of Croydon) and Harris Academy, Merton (situated in the London Brough of Merton).

There are a huge number of primary schools in the area of Croydon, based on its large geographical area. Among these schools, Elmwood Infant School (ward of Selhurst), Elmwood Junior School (ward of Selhurst), Greenvale Primary School (ward of Selsdon and Ballards), Gresham Primary School (ward of Sanderstead), Heavers Farm Primary School (ward of Selhurst), Howard Primary School (ward of Waddon), Orchard Way Primary School (ward of Shirley), Purley Oaks Primary School (ward of Croham), and Ridgeway Primary School and Nursey (ward of Sanderstead) are all community schools (state schools, not influenced by any religious party of business group). Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School (ward of Waddon), The Minster Nursery and Infant School (Waddon), and The Minster Junior School (ward of Waddon) are all faith schools, while Krishna Avanti Primary School (ward of Waddon) is a free school. There are also many primary academies in Croydon, namely: Aerodrom Primary Academy (ward of Waddon), Ark Oval Primary Academy (ward of Addiscombe), Atwood Primary Academy (ward of Sanderstead), Broadmead Primary School (ward of Selhurst), Davidson Primary School

(ward of Addiscombe), Forest Academy (ward of Shirley), Harris Primary Academy Benson (ward of Shirley), Harris Primary Academy Haling Park (ward of Croham), Harris Primary Academy Purley Way (ward of Waddon), Heathfield Academy (ward of Fairfield), Kingsley Primary Academy (Broad Green), Monks Orchard Primary Academy (Ashburton), Oasis Academy Ryelands (ward of Woodside), Oasis Academy Shirley Park Primary (ward of Ashburton), Park Hill Junior School (ward of Fairfield), St Mary's Catholic Infant School (ward of Fairfield), St. Mary's Catholic Junior (ward of Fairfield), St Peter's Primary School (ward of Croham), St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School (ward of Woodside), The Crescent Primary School (ward of Selhurst), Robert Fitzroy Primary Academy (ward of Addiscombe), and The Woodside Academy (ward of Addiscombe) (London Borough of Croydon, 2018a, p. 17-23).

There are a number of secondary schools which come within the geographical territory of the town of Croydon. One of these schools i.e. Coombe Wood School (ward of Croham), is a free school. Most other schools are academies i.e. Harris Academy Purley (ward of Waddon), Harris Invictus Academy Croydon (ward of Broad Green), Oasis Academy Arena (ward of Woodside), Oasis Academy Shirley Park (ward of Shirley), Orchard Park High School (ward of Shirley), and Riddlesdown Collegiate (ward of Sanderstead). Two other schools are faith schools i.e. St. Mary's Catholic High School (ward of Fairfield) and Al-Khair School (ward of Addiscombe, this Islamic school was quite popular among the respondents, with many of them opting to send their children here) (London Borough of Croydon, 2018b, p. 16-17) (See Annexure D for maps of the locations of each of these schools in the London Borough of Croydon).

3.8.9. Main wards of Croydon included

Although the research site included the overall region of the town of Croydon, most of the respondents were mainly found from two wards: that of Addiscombe and Broad Green. One reason for such a circumstance may be due to the social standing of the key informants in these two particular areas (apart from Norbury where they both lived). Another reason may be due to the resident British Pakistani population of the two areas. The population of Addiscombe counts up to around 16,883, with 7,553 households. The number of British

Pakistanis adds up to 372, making up 2.2% of the total population ("Addiscombe", 2012). Furthermore in Broad Green, out of a total population of 18,652 (7,029 households), 978 of them are British Pakistanis, making up 5.2% of the population ("Broad Green", 2012). These percentages of British Pakistanis are much greater than in all other wards in the town of Croydon, which may be why most of the respondents obtained were from these two areas.

4. FACTORS LEADING TO INTER-ETHNIC MARRIAGES

A literature review of the marriage practices among British Pakistanis indicates that most researches have focused on the processes and factors contributing to transnational and cousin marriages, while other marital circumstances have garnered negligible focus based on their uncommon occurrences. This section fills this gap in literature by providing a detailed account of the factors that have led to inter-ethnic marriages among the sample of British Pakistanis and non-Pakistani spouses of British Pakistanis (not all of them are married to the British Pakistanis under consideration) included in the present research.

4.1. Ill-treatment of females

Many of the female British Pakistani respondents considered Pakistani culture to have components that they proclaimed to be "old-fashioned" and "restrictive", especially in relation to the treatment of women in Pakistani households, and therefore opted out of marrying into the Pakistani community because of such a perception. Such an opinion was put forth by a 46 year old British Pakistani married to a British Indian who is a Kutchi Memon having origins from Kutch, Gujrat. According to her, the present generation of Asians, by virtue of being a part of the "melting pot" of Britain, have a form of homogenous culture due to which they could not be differentiated upon based on cultural practices alone. However, she considered the generation from which she belonged to, and that of her parents at the time of her marriage in 1995 to have a distinguishable form of cultural practices that she stated to be associated with Pakistan, more specifically with Mirpur, Azad Kashmir, due to which she claimed such Pakistanis were:

> I think they were very enclosed, they did not think outside the box.
> They were very small, very close-minded people.

When probed further into the matter, she attributed such small mindedness mainly when pertaining to the matters of women. Although she stated that she understood her role as a mother as dictated by Islam, and followed it as much as possible, a term which she used for herself was that of a "feminist". When asked that in what way she considered herself to be a feminist, she replied in the context of marriage, where she perceived marital

relationships to be partnerships rather than what she conceptualized to be unequal relationships among Pakistani couples. According to her, Pakistani women had no ambitions, and were not social at all. Since the respondent claimed to be quite career-oriented at the time before marriage, she deigned the Pakistani community to be "stuck in their own ways", and tried to stay away from such an atmosphere, ultimately leading her to opt for an exogamous marriage choice to someone more suited to her opinions on life.

Another British Pakistani female respondent, who is 31 years old and married to a British Indian (Gujrati) had similar sentiments towards the Pakistani community. She got multiple proposals throughout her twenties from various Pakistani families but was put off by them due to the expectations they brought forth regarding the role of the woman in a family unit, which she found to be highly restrictive. Due to these reasons, she ended up looking for a match through alternate means and set up a profile on a Muslim marriage website, through which she met her present husband. She claimed to be pleasantly surprised by the role the men of the house played in helping out the women in her husband's family, especially by the way her father-in-law helped out her mother-in-law in various household chores, including washing dishes, ironing clothes and changing bed sheets.

A case study was also observed in this regard. One of the respondents, who is a 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi, had many negative experiences when dealing with her extended Pakistani family, so much so that she branded Pakistani men as "disgusting". When she visited her village situated near to Jhelum, Punjab when she was younger, she was sexually assaulted by her mother's second husband. Her sister was also sexually assaulted. Both were saved just in time before any permanent physical damage could be done. Furthermore, the respondent's maternal uncle came on a work visa to the UK and stayed with her family when he first reached there. During that time, he attempted to physically and sexually assault her to the point of dragging her out of the house in order to take her somewhere remote. She was able to save herself solely due to the involvement of the police in the matter. She says about the experience:

He was dragging me across a dead road, there was nothing there. And I remember making *dua*[15] to Allah, "Allah! Please help me. If you help me now, I will never ask anything from you again." And as soon as those words came out of my mouth, he dragged me into a street, and there was a police car there. I just jumped on the police car, and the policeman came, and he helped me. Since that day, I have full faith in Allah, as these things kept happening to me in my own house, under my parent's nose. Even they couldn't help me. Only Allah could.

Other encounters include a negative experience regarding a marriage proposal from her family in Pakistan. During one of her trips to Jhelum, her extended family brought forth the proposal of one of her cousins for marriage, but made it out as though her parents had already agreed to it, and were happy about it. In this way, she was almost tricked into saying yes to the proposal, even though she was not happy about it. The only way she found out about the deceit was because her mother confirmed with her about the match just a few weeks before she was due to go back to the UK. Only then it was revealed to her that her parents had not agreed to anything, and were themselves under the impression that she was happy about the match, when in reality she was not. She was only agreeing to it because she was made to think by her extended family that her parents wanted her to marry her cousin. Other observations which she had about the Pakistani community in the UK was that there is a stark divide when it comes to the way the two genders are treated. Parents give boys the priority, and turn a blind eye to their actions, when girls are punished severely for the same actions. According to her:

When the sin is the same for the man and the woman in the eyes of Allah, why should people take judgement into their own hands and treat both differently?

These reasons caused her to make the decision to not marry within the Pakistani community, be it in the UK or in Pakistan, even though her father was against inter-marrying, as was evident with him cutting off ties from his own sisters, two of which had opted to marry white men, and one whose daughter decided to marry a Bangladeshi. She

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[15] The word *dua* is an Arabic term translated roughly to "supplication" or "invocation". In Islamic contexts, it is considered an act of supplication, or calling out to God in the form of a conversation as a means of manifesting one's faith to Him. For more details, see Stacey (2010).

met her present Bangladeshi husband at a wedding, and over a struggle of ten years, she finally convinced her parents to agree for her to marry him.

Thus it can be inferred that the perception of ill-treatment and oppression of women was especially found to be eminent among many of the British Pakistani female respondents, and it was such perceptions, along with their personal experiences, that led them to make the decision to marry a person that was a lot closer to their mindsets than what they saw in Pakistani men.

4.2. The notion of "love"

Inter-marrying due to the notion of "love" between both parts of the couple was another major theme observed among the respondents, both British Pakistani and non-Pakistani. One of the female respondents, who is a 45 year old British Pakistani married to a 42 year old British Indian (Memon), stated such an experience. She met her husband in 1995 while they were at university. However, when it came to matters of marriage, her then "boyfriend" (now husband) kept insisting on her to talk to her parents about the match, but she would always back out based on her pre-conceived idea of her family's rigidity in holding on to customary practices of marrying within the Pakistani community. When she finally did ask her family, they resisted profusely, mostly on the basis of the language barrier that she would face after marriage (the language her in-laws spoke was Kutchi, which she was not familiar with, as it is quite different from Urdu) and which she realized years afterwards was an inherent pride among many Pakistanis that their culture was better than any others. Eventually her parents gave in, but only after much strife and struggle stretching over four years, and they got married in 1999. One of the mediums through which they convinced her parents for the match was that of her future husband's older brother, who himself was married to a Pakistani Memon. Through him she tried to convince her parents that there is some Pakistani influence in the family, and there is someone there who can converse in Urdu fluently, and that would make matters easier for her.

Another respondent, who is a 38 year old British Pakistani, has been married to her husband, who is an Afghan immigrant, for 16 years. They met while waiting for a bus at a

bus stop, fell in love after spending time meeting with each other, and after a short while began to talk about the possibility of marriage. However, they had to face hurdles from their respective families. The respondent's mother wanted her to marry her brother's son, who lived in Sahiwal, Pakistan. However, the respondent had already met her future husband by then, and kept putting off the trip to Pakistan to finalize the wedding plans. Her mother had to eventually refuse her brother about the marriage proposal, and thus the mother and her brother didn't speak to each other for quite a while after that. On her husband's family's side, they refused to give their blessing for the union based on her being a non-Afghani, and thus did not come to the UK to attend the wedding (they live in Afghanistan, while the respondent's husband moved to the UK to keep away from the situation of the US-Afghan war). Therefore, the wedding took place with the bride's family, while the groom's family was absent.

Some of the non-British Pakistani parts of the inter-ethnic couples also emphasized upon the notion of love as one of the greatest reasons leading to their decision to inter-marry. In one such case, one of the respondents, who is a 38 year old British Bangladeshi married to a British Pakistani, had to overcome great hurdles when it came to her family in order to marry according to her wishes. She met her future husband while studying for a degree in health sciences at university. After getting to know each other, they started spending more time with each other at various places in the university. Since the university was not far from the respondent's house, one of her brothers saw her with her future husband and told the rest of her family members. They became infuriated with her based on her choice of marriage partner to be from outside the Bengali community. In order to avoid further meetings between the two, the respondent's family took her back to Bangladesh under the pretense of her brother's wedding, whose marriage to a Bengali woman had already been arranged beforehand. However once they got to Bangladesh, they did not let the respondent come back to the UK, and kept her there for three years while trying to convince her to accept one of the many marriage proposals that were brought her way. At first she refused each proposal with the excuse that she was not ready to get married yet. But eventually under immense pressure from her extended family, she had to admit that the reason why she was not agreeing to any proposal was that she still wanted to marry the British Pakistani whom she met in university (her future husband). Her family then allowed her to return to

the UK after 3 years, but cut off ties with her when she set out to marry her proposed choice for a husband. She ultimately got married in a simple and secret *Nikkah*[16] ceremony at a community center, with only four people in attendance: two of her brothers (one of these brothers was supportive of her decision to inter-marry while the other was against it, however they both agreed to act as witnesses for the *Nikkah*), one of the groom's brothers (the rest of his family is based in Kharian, Punjab; he moved to the UK when he was 17 years old), and the *maulana*[17] who performed the *Nikkah*. She went back to Pakistan for her *Walimah*[18] ceremony, which according to her was a lavish affair, but none of her family was in attendance. After 10 years of marriage, her mother is on talking terms with her, along with the same brother who was supportive of her decision at the *Nikkah* ceremony. Her sister talks to her occasionally but has to do so secretly as she is forbidden by her own husband to contact the respondent under any circumstance. The rest of her family still does not speak to her till this day.

Another respondent, who is a 72 year old British Malaysian, has been married twice, both times to a British Pakistani. On both marriages, she proclaims that love was the major motivation. She met her first husband while still living in Malaysia in the 1970s. Originating from Karachi, he visited Malaysia as a tourist. While in Kuala Lumpur, he knocked on the door of the respondent's parents' house and asked them to take him in, as he had no other place to go. They obliged and let him stay over for a period of time, during which he was able to meet the respondent and get to know her. He then made plans to move to London, and asked her to marry him and eventually join him there. Her parents advised her against it, and urged her to marry someone from Malaysia. She did not listen, and ended up going through with the marriage and meeting her then husband in London. They had a son together. However, according to the respondent, her husband began to mistreat her. She used to earn money by doing soldering and welding jobs at a factory, and he used to take all of it and spend it in revelries. He also went back to Pakistan and got married there

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[16] In Islamic terms, *Nikkah* is a marriage contract between a man and a woman that dictates the terms and conditions in which they would live together as a married couple. For more details, see Siddiqui (2008).

[17] A *maulana* is a Muslim scholar. Such a form of address for a scholar is usually heard in certain regions of India (Maulana, n.d.).

[18] A *Walimah* is usually a feast conducted by the husband after the *Nikkah* ceremony, however the exact time when this feast should be arranged is debatable as per Islamic scholars. For more details, see "The Walimah" (2010).

again without informing the respondent. She found out as one of her friends, who was based in Pakistan and knew the husband, informed her of his actions. The respondent also stated another incident where her husband bought her a one-way plane ticket to Malaysia and asked her to go there. One of her friends advised her against it, as she said that it was not a return ticket, and therefore he did not want her to come back to London. Once she went back, he would pressurize her to stay there so that he could "be rid of her". She listened to her friend, and now says that it was a "brilliant" decision to not go back. In the midst of such incidences, she finally went to court with her 1-year-old son and got a divorce from him, and lived alone in an apartment which she rented and paid for by doing odd jobs in various factories. A few years later, a Pakistani family moved into the apartment next to hers which consisted of three people, a married couple and the brother of the wife. This brother was a carpenter and had recently moved to the UK. He was living with his sister and her husband until he was able to earn enough to find residence for himself. According to the respondent, "I saw him, and he saw me, and that was it (laughs)". They got married and had two sons together along with the respondent's first son, whom her second husband "accepted as his own". This was a very happy marriage, but it was not without its hurdles. Her second husband also had a wife back in Pakistan whom he had married before meeting the respondent and brought over to the UK with him, but she had to be deported due to a mistake in the immigration documentation. He had a daughter with this first wife. The respondent knew about the first wife, but still agreed to marry the respondent due to "feelings of love". His first wife did not come back to the UK and the husband went to Pakistan occasionally to meet with her and their daughter. A few years before the interview took place with the respondent, her husband, who was suffering from diabetes, fell severely ill and passed away. She says about him:

> He was so good. So what can you do? He said to me that when I go, then you will remember me. And he was right.

One discrepancy was observed in the respondent's claims. Her 33 year old son (which she had with her second husband) was also interviewed for the present research, and when asked about his knowledge of his parents' meeting, he stated that one of the main reasons why his father may have married his mother is so that he could easily obtain British citizenship through his new wife, who was already a British citizen at the time.

Three cases of love marriages between people of different faiths were also recorded, with the male counterpart of all three couples being British Pakistani Muslims, and the females belonging from the Catholic Christian faith. However in two out of the three cases, the non-Muslim females ended up converting, albeit willingly, before going through with the marriage. They used the term "revert[19]" to address themselves. One such case involved a 34 year old Christian woman who was born and brought up in Lithuania (situated in Europe). She met her future husband, who is a British Pakistani and was in Lithuania at the time on a study visa, taking up his education at the university where the respondent studied as well. According to the respondent, they began to develop feelings for each other, and decided to get married quickly as the husband had decided to move to the UK and wanted to take her with him. But before going through with the marriage, the respondent's husband asked her to revert to Islam, which she did so willingly even though her family members advised her against it, as according to her:

> When you like someone, you don't see anything, even if other
> people make more sense at the time.

The second case involves a 39 year old Catholic Christian Polish woman, who was previously married to a Polish man and had a daughter with him. This first marriage did not work out for reasons the respondent did not wish to reveal. She met her future British Pakistani husband a few years later where he worked at a fast food restaurant that she frequently visited. They became acquainted over small talk and initially bonded over their mutual love of Bollywood movies, and this interest turned into a romantic relationship which ultimately resulted in marriage. In this case, according to the respondent, she willingly reverted to Islam when her future husband asked her to for "love" at the time, but later on began studying the religion further and attending Islamic gatherings, which further deepened her faith. At present she is a prominent figure in the Muslim women's community

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[19] Usually the word "convert" is used for those people who leave behind their previous belief systems and accept the code of life as exhibited by the religion that they choose. However, many of the respondents of the present research claimed that the term "revert" is being considered more appropriate among the Islamic circles in the UK based on the Muslim belief that all children are born Muslim, but accept different ways of life due to the socialization they go through as they grow up. If at any point in their lives they make the decision of accepting Islam, they "revert" back to a religion of which they already were once a part of when they were born.

in the area of Croydon and Norbury with regards to organizing religious gatherings and talks, and does a lot of charity work in the name of her Islamic faith.

The third case of inter-faith marriage was considered unique in the sense that both parts of the couple agreed to not convert to each other's faith, but to respect each other's beliefs. Both members of this particular couple (a 48 year old male British Pakistani Muslim, and a 48 year old female British Spanish Catholic Christian) were interviewed, and they both stated similar accounts of the circumstances surrounding their marriage. They first met while studying A-levels at college, and have been together since. They remained cohabiting partners for 15 years, after which they decided to get married. This marriage was not without its hurdles. The husband's mother was vehemently against the match as she wanted him to marry a Muslim Pakistani girl of her choosing. Since he refused her wishes, she is not on proper talking terms with him and his family, even after 30 years of being together. The wife's father also had his reservations about the marriage, but he eventually overcame his doubts after meeting the groom many times over the years when they visited Spain as a family (her parents, having their origins in Spain, decided to move back there in 2009). There were also obstacles when it came to their marriage ceremony. Although the husband stated himself to be a Muslim, but "not particularly religious", he still wished to hold a *Nikkah* ceremony in a mosque to fulfil the wishes of his family, and at the same time, hold another ceremony at a Catholic church to heed to his wife's wishes as well. However, he stated that since the marriage was taking place only a year after the incidents of 9/11[20], mixed marriages were not viewed in a positive light, and the mosque refused to marry the couple until his wife converted to Islam. Also, the church only agreed to marry them if they signed an affidavit stating that the children born of this marriage will be raised as Catholics. Both husband and wife had agreed upon before marriage that they would not "give" their children a particular religion, but would let them decide for themselves when they are older as to whether they want to follow a religion or not. In such a circumstance, the couple decided to forgo both avenues, and got married instead through legal means in a civil

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[20] 9/11 is the term given to a series of four attacks carried out by the group Al-Qaeda on four prominent locations around the USA. The means of these attacks were the hijacking of planes and crashing them into said locations. Three of these attacks were successful. For more details, see Taylor (2011).

ceremony. They now have two children, a son and a daughter. The wife says about their marriage:

> We have been able to keep everything quite balanced to be involved
> in each other's families without conflict, for the most part.

Thus it can be observed that apart from a few cases, the notion of "love" before marriage was mostly demonstrated by those couples where either the husband or the wife did not have their origins in the South Asian region of the world. It was highly unlikely for such marriages to be arranged by South Asian families if one goes by the trend of endogamous marriages recorded in such families. Therefore, a strong connection between the couple is required for such marriages to be performed and accepted, which was proclaimed as a feeling of "love" by many of the respondents in the present subsection.

4.3. Previous divorces

A major theme that emerged from the present study is that among many of the British Pakistani female respondents, initial marriages with Pakistanis were riddled with obstacles, leading to divorces. Such a case was observed among a 40 year old British Pakistani who is presently married to a 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai). At the age of 20, her parents arranged her marriage to an American Pakistani who was the son of her mother's close family friend. The family was based in Pakistan, and had just recently migrated to America. The groom was 18 years old at the time of immigration. She had no contact with the groom, and only saw him through pictures that were sent over by his parents. After the marriage ceremony, she immediately applied for an American green card and moved there to complete the residency requirements. However, the two clashed regularly due to their differences in life-styles. In the respondent's opinion, her in-laws were from the upper class in Pakistan which is not as religiously oriented, and therefore they were not practicing Muslims, and were quite enthralled by the Western way of living. Type of clothing worn, and a negligence towards praying *Salaah*[21] were the examples quoted by the respondent that she perceived to be un-Islamic practices. She had two children, a son and a daughter,

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[21] *Salaah* is considered as the second out of the five pillars of Islam, and is an obligatory act of prayer that is performed five times at allocated periods throughout the day. For more details, see "Chapter 1: What is Salah and why do we Pray?" (n.d.).

from this marriage, and did not want them to be brought up in such an environment. This circumstance, along with differences in thought processes between the couple led them to make the decision to divorce after six years of marriage. The respondent then moved back to the UK with her two children, and for many years she focused on bringing up her children with the help of her parents and earning a livelihood for them by obtaining her teaching diploma and getting employed at a primary school. Her present husband, who is a British Indian (Mumbai), and a *maulana* at the local mosque located in Norbury, knew her as a very close friend of his sister, and asked for her hand in marriage. However, it took the respondent three years to accept the marriage proposal, due to reservations from her and her father pertaining to him being an Indian, stemming from what she proclaims to be the general negative sentiments between the people of the two countries since their conception (see pg. no. 81 for details). She finally agreed based on what she claimed was the "humble nature" of her present husband, the closeness she already felt with the members of his family, and the close relationship her children had to his children from his first marriage (he had divorced his first wife, who is a Memon British Indian). Therefore, her first failed marriage opened her up to the prospect of inter-marrying by looking past ethnic barriers, which she may have previously found hard to entertain based on her initial disdain of the idea of marrying an Indian. Her second husband was also interviewed for the present research, and he was observed to have gone through similar circumstances in his first marriage as his present wife had. He terms this marriage as "arranged" between his family and a Memon family. However, the reason why, according to him, the marriage broke down was due to the excessive interference of his in-laws in their marital affairs, which became a source of constant conflict between the married couple. This led to them parting ways through divorce, and it was a while before he entertained the idea to remarry. This notion was only possible for him after he became acquainted with his second wife, and was able to foresee a happy life with her, especially as he was a single father looking after his children (his ex-first wife fell terminally ill and was admitted in hospital, and thus he had to take full custody of the children) and wanted them to have a stable family life.

Another female respondent, who is a 44 year old British Pakistani currently married to a 52 year old American Mexican, also went through a divorce from her first husband who was a Pakistani residing in Lahore. Born and brought up in the UK, she moved to Lahore

after marriage, and had a son with her first husband. However, she found the atmosphere that she was living in quite restrictive, as according to her, she was always independent, and thus did not agree with the way women were treated in the Pakistani community under the guise of Islam. She stated:

> My second marriage outside the Pakistani community gave me a lot of freedom, as I think there is a lot of cultural prejudice on women, which has got nothing to do with Islam. And I found out that many Muslims do not share the same feelings when it comes to women's place as Pakistani Muslims do. And that is something that I have never ever been comfortable with my whole life…. So to me I wanted someone who had the same interpretation of Islam as I did.

Thus, she got divorced after two years, worked in Pakistan for a while independently, and then moved back to the UK. She met her second husband, who is a revert to Islam (previously Catholic), through an online profile on a website after a few years, and they ultimately got married. She lived in the USA for two years, then moved to the UK with her husband. She now has two other sons with her second husband.

Thus the cases described above entail British Pakistani females initially going through endogamous marriages that were arranged by their parents, but going through divorces due to hurdles faced after marriage. Such hurdles caused skepticism towards the Pakistani community among these respondents, due to which they selected inter-marriage as the next viable option.

4.4. Religion over "nationalism"

Many of the cases dealt with in this section may be categorized to some extent in other subsections in the present chapter as well. However, the reason why they have been allocated in a separate section is that although religious boundaries were adhered to and consciously followed in many of the aforementioned cases, religion was not explicitly stated as the main guiding force towards the decision to inter-marry, as it was stated in the cases mentioned here. A major aspect that was highlighted among many of these respondents is their aversion to the concept of "nationalism", and their preference for identifying themselves based on religion rather than country of origin. Academically

speaking, the concept of nationalism and its modern manifestations have been the focus of various debates dealing with post-colonial circumstances in varying regions of the world, and with matters of integration and multiculturalism in multi-ethnic societies, such as the UK. Anthony Smith (2004) defines the notion of nationalism as, "the maintenance and continuous reproduction of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations and the identification of individuals with that heritage and those values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions" (p. 208). Stuart Hall (1992) talks about nationalism in modern times in the context of associations towards a particular national culture, which has the following five components: a particular narrative of a nation; importance given to origins, continuity, traditions and timelessness; the invention of tradition; focus on a foundational myth; and based on the notion of a pure, original people, or "folk" (p. 613-615). McCrone and Kiely (2000), referencing Benedict Anderson's conceptualization of "imagined community", differentiated between the concepts of "nationalism" and "citizenship" by stating that nationalism instils a more affective association to a particular nation-state, and thus there is an imagined sense of community between people of a common origin based on cultural similarity. Citizenship entails a more political aspect, and involves one's legal rights and affiliations to a particular state (p. 25). Thus, it can be seen from such a brief review of literature that nationalism instils a unique set of characteristics and affiliations based on associations with a particular cultural setting, which many of the respondents were averse to based on their perception of these associations having their origin in "man-made ideals and doctrines". Instead, they preferred to live their lives following a set of ideals based on religion (in this particular case, Islamic Shariah[22], and the Sunnah[23] of the Prophet Muhammad [PBUH]) which they envisioned to be the "ultimate truth of living", rather than on a sense of "nationalism". The present subsection deals with the reasons for inter-marrying based on such an aversion to

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[22] Islamic Shariah is the body of law derived from Islamic sources of knowledge, and that lays down the guidelines in accordance with which Muslims are to mold their lives and actions. The primary sources of Shariah are the Quran and the Sunnah, and anything that may not be covered by these first two sources are derived based on a number of guidelines differing in the various sects and schools of thought prevalent in Islamic circles. For more details, see "Islamic law (Shariah)", n.d.

[23] Refers to the sayings (more commonly known as ahadith), actions and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) (Hasan, n.d.).

"flawed cultural ideals", whether in Pakistani culture, or the culture of the non-British Pakistani parts of the couples.

The responses of many of the British Pakistani respondents included in the sample can be included in this subsection. One particular case involves a 33 year old British Pakistani, married to a 36 year old Black African Muslim (originally from Uganda, previously Catholic Christian, reverted to Islam), who associated her decision to marry outside the Pakistani community to her increasing inclination towards Islam, and her resulting change in sense of affiliation from being attached to the Pakistani community, to the Muslim community. Her parents had immigrated to the UK in the 70s (her father to study, and her mother in the late 70s after getting married to him), but moved back to Pakistan from the UK when she was one and a half years old to expose the Pakistani way of life to her and her sister. She lived in Lahore for ten years and went to school there. She had always been inquisitive about the meaning of life, even at a very young age, and thus had lots of questions which the education system and people in her surroundings were not able to answer appropriately enough for her. Also, in her own words, the "unbridled and irrational sense of nationalism for Pakistan, the taken for granted nature of various cultural practices which were seldomly questioned, and the inherent racism against dark skin tones (she had a dark skin tone as well)" caused her to become disillusioned from Pakistani culture. This prompted her to seek answers elsewhere, and, after moving back to the UK at the age of eleven, she became enamoured with, in her own words, the "Western style of living" as it made sense to her at the time. However, even though she tried to fit in as much as possible with the Western ideals as a means of "survival", she still remained the target of racial abuse throughout her lifetime. These experiences, along with the influence of her sister who she proclaimed had become a practicing Muslim from a very young age (including the wearing of the *hijab* and *abaya*[24]), and the culmination of the events of 9/11 and the

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[24] In various Islamic circles, the *hijab* is considered to be a form of covering for Muslim women, whether of the hair, face or body. Many debates surround such a construct, with various schools of thought justifying its advantages and disadvantages through their own philosophical backdrop and created discourses, whether it be Islamic jurisprudence, Western feminism or any other prominent field of study and action. For more details, see Hijab (n.d.). An *abaya* is a long robe that is loose-fitted, worn by certain Muslim women around the world as a form of covering of the body (Abaya, n.d.).

ensuing wave of Islamophobia[25], caused her to go through another crisis of identity, and begin to explore Islam as a way of appeasing her constant quest of finding meaning in life. This shift towards Islam came about due to the present scenario of the UK, about which she states:

> You get questioned a lot about who you are here. Where do you belong? Which group do you belong to? Who are you?

This increased inclination towards religion caused her to intermingle more with the Muslims in her surroundings, regardless of whether they were Pakistani or not, which ultimately led her to be more open towards who she could accept as a potential marriage partner. Therefore, she married her husband three years after meeting him through mutual friends, and the delay was due to his initial unavailability and the time it took to convince her father of the appropriateness of the match, rather than because of any form of hesitation on the part of both individuals involved.

Another female respondent, a 36 year old British Pakistani married to a 35 year old British Arab (Iraqi) also followed religious inclinations when it came to the selection of a marriage partner. When she started university at the age of 18, she joined the Islamic society prevalent there, and began to become more inclined towards the religious practices that she perceived to be Islamic. Due to this reason, she decided to select a marriage partner that matched her views of religion. She began to get proposals from within the Pakistani community very quickly, but rejected them all based on their preference for following what she stated to be "Pakistani cultural practices" rather than "what Islam dictated". An example which she gave was her wearing of the *hijab*, which was looked down upon by many of the Pakistani people who came up to her family with proposals for marriage. She stated:

> It was Islam that taught me that this whole idea of "nationalism" and being really proud of your country is just ridiculous. It's more about being part of one big Muslim Ummah[26].

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[25] Prejudice or feelings of dislike against Muslims, usually stemming from and leading to political consequences (Islamophobia, n.d.).

[26] Muslim "Ummah" is a term used in Islamic circles as a community of people that is bound together by their common belief in Islam, and that goes beyond territorial or cultural constraints to form a global network

Her husband was also interviewed, and he stated similar reasons based on an increased sense of religiosity for inter-marrying. In his case he stated that his family was "shocked" to some extent when he announced to them about his choice of a marriage partner, as they had expected to play more of a role in finding and deciding about who he wanted to marry, and they also wanted him to marry someone within the Arab community. However they eventually agreed based on his arguments that they both had similar understandings with regard to religion, and therefore had a common ground in case of conflicts, regardless of the culture which they originated from.

In a similar scenario, a 51 year old British Pakistani who is a Muslim-turned Atheist-turned Muslim again, also averted herself from the Pakistani community from a very young age. She mentioned her parents being highly racist to the extent of her father calling her non-Pakistani friends as "lazy" and "thieves" and telling her to distance herself from them. She also proclaimed Pakistani men to be highly "sexist and violent". These circumstances caused her to stay away from both religion and Pakistani culture, and she eventually became an atheist. She finally left home at the age of 17 to live independently. She then met her first husband, who was a Black African British, and a non-Muslim. She had a son with him. However, as her son grew older, she began to question her life choices, and the meaning of life when faced with decisions when it came to bringing her son up. This led her to find answers elsewhere, and she began to look into Islam again, causing a greater inclination toward her religion. She then separated from her husband. Years later, she got married to her present husband, who is a British Asian (Other, Palestinian). At the time of the research, they had been married for a year. Her journey throughout her life and her marriage preferences were based on religion, both due to her aversion towards it, and then due to her reversion back to it; and to stay away from the Pakistani community based on her negative experiences with it.

A similar theme of selecting a marriage partner based on religion rather than from within one's community was also observed among some of the male British Pakistani respondents. Such a perception was observed among a 38 year old British Pakistani married to a 31 year

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of "brotherhood" and "religious affinity" based on Islamic sentiments. The Ummah would thus be composed of Muslims from various races and nationalities. For more details, see Stacey (2018).

old British African (Black, born and brought up in France). He migrated to the UK with the rest of his family and began to work in a dry cleaner's shop. It was here that he met his future wife, who was also a part-time worker there, as she had moved to the UK on a study visa and was completing her degree in travel and tourism at the time. Although the marriage can be deemed a love marriage, but it was based on a mutual admiration of perceived religiosity between the two. The wife, who is also a respondent of the present research, stated that although she was born and raised as a Muslim in France, her family was not forceful on the practical aspect of Islam, including covering of the body and wearing of the *hijab*. However, the influence of her future husband, who, according to her, was already quite religiously inclined, led her to study the Quran and Hadith[27] in greater detail, and she began to become more practicing, including the wearing of the *hijab* and the *abaya*. When both parts of the couple approached their respective families after they decided to get married, the husband stated that the main issue among his family members was that she was a *Kali*, (the term used among the Pakistani community to refer to the Black women) and the sentiment of *"Log kya kahen gen?"* (what will people say?). However, they eventually agreed to the match, based on his arguments that she is a practicing Muslim, and that is all that matters in the eyes of Allah. The wife stated that her family members proved much harder to convince. Her father, based on previous experiences with matters of marriage among her siblings (many of them refused to go into arranged marriages and ultimately inter-married), had already given her the blessing to marry whomever she wanted, as long as the prospective match is a Muslim. Thus he easily agreed to the marriage. However, he passed away before the marriage could go through. In such a circumstance, her brothers and mother brought forth their true feelings about the situation, and refused to let her get married based on the perceptions that they had about the Pakistani community. The wife gave some examples of such perceptions: "They perceive Pakistanis as killers, bombers, rapists, and because my husband has a beard as well, they also attributed that to terrorists." It took much longer to convince her family, but she was eventually able to do so based on multiple meetings between her husband and various members of her family, and on the religiosity that she observed to be prevalent among him,

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[27] Records of the quotes and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

and they ended up getting married in London in 2010 with both families present for the ceremony.

Another male British Pakistani respondent, who is 36 years old and married to a 37 year old British African (Kenyan, having origins from Pakistan), also attributed his decision to inter-marry to his religious orientations, but in a different context. According to him, when he was in his teens, his biggest *fitna* (Arabic word for "test") was women. However, he began to look into Islam closer to his twenties, and, in his own words, he "fell in love with it." Therefore, in order to stay on what he proclaimed to be the religious path, he had to somehow get rid of his tendencies to free-mix with women, and thus decided to get married straight away. In such a scenario, he agreed to marry the first proposal put forth before him, at the age of 20. Therefore, religion caused him to inter-marry, not because of his aversion to a sense of nationalism, but because of his urgency to keep away from his wayward tendencies. Thus it can be inferred that during that particular time period, he prioritized religious obligations over cultural affiliations by marrying quickly to keep away from sinful acts, especially as he did not heed his mother who was initially against the match based on him marrying into a non-Pakistani family. However he now claims that one should not be hasty in decisions of marriage, but should look into the matter and further deliberate before making a decision that would affect one's entire life. He said so due to the huge cultural differences that he has observed between Kenyan culture and Pakistani culture (which he considers to be very similar to the Islamic values that need to be followed be every Muslim). An example includes the tendency of Kenyans to be more inclined towards what he calls "Western" rather than Islamic values, which also included the way women dress up, and the lack of accountability among Kenyan children. His wife was also interviewed for the present research, and she was observed to have mirrored the sentiments of her husband in the sense that her main motivation to get married was based on her being a practicing Muslim, and wanting to find a husband who was also practicing; and in the sense that she presently states that one should not be hasty in making decisions regarding marriage. However the reason she gave for not being hasty is that in her opinion, women should be given a chance to explore their options with regard to education and choosing a profession before being married. Such an opinion is based on her personal experience, where she got married straight after finishing university, and did not get a chance to build

up a career or study further as she had to leave for Saudi Arabia straight away to be with her husband who was studying there at the time.

Prioritizing religion over nationalism was also a theme observed among the non-British Pakistani parts of the inter-ethnic couples. Such a perception was emphasized especially in the matter of staying above prejudices which have quite an influential reach among one's community, in this case the public perception pertaining to Indo-Pak relations. Since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, a number of unresolved issues between the two resultant countries formed have caused strained relations between them, contributing to a number of wars and hot talks between political leaders of the two countries (fueled mainly by the Kashmir conflict, among other factors). Such circumstances have caused many segments of society among both sides of the border to hold certain negative perceptions regarding the threat posed to them, whether from certain groups of people or the political leadership over various times, from each respective country (Kohut, Wike, Horowitz, Poushter & Barker, 2011, p. 35-36; Price, 2012, p. 3-5; Stokes, Wike, Bell, Deane, Drake, Poushter, Sahgal, Devlin, Ponce, Schwarzer & Simmons, 2014, p. 15). This strand of thought was a major point of emphasis in many sections of the interview conducted with a 41 year old British Indian (Mumbai) married to a 47 year old British Pakistani. Born and raised in Mumbai, India, she used to work as an air hostess, and very frequently travelled the route of Mumbai-Jeddah-London. When in London, she used to stay at her aunt's house, who was settled there at the time. She got a number of marriage proposals from families who saw her there. One of the proposals included that of her future husband, a British Pakistani. Due to the general sentiments of animosity towards Pakistan that she was used to witnessing in her surroundings, she found the proposal to be odd. However, she decided to give it a go and meet up with the family before making any decisions. The main factor which she pinpointed that played a major role in such a decision to consider the proposal was religion, as she stated that despite the general sentiments towards Pakistan in her home country, she still felt somewhat affiliated to Pakistan based on it being a Muslim country. Once she met her future husband, they began talking over the span of a year, and, according to her, the marriage thus turned from an arranged one into a love marriage. Therefore, common religion proved to be a greater instigating factor than a sense of nationalism in this particular case.

Therefore, religion has been observed to play a very impactful role in the lives of the respondents included in the present research, as not only indicated in the present subsection, but at various places throughout the chapter under consideration. How does such a form of identity play into Stuart Hall's conceptualizations on cultural identity in a post-modern era? An attempt has been made to answer this question in the following subsection.

4.5. Reflections of identity in the decision to inter-marry: A theoretical perspective

Taking into consideration Stuart Hall's thesis on the processes of "identification" in a post-modern world (see pg. nos. 22-25), the debate will be continued in the context of his propositions on the concepts of "the local and the global". Putting the opinions and responses of the respondents in terms of the main terminologies that Hall utilizes in his academic writings, it can be inferred that their responses reflect an interplay between three major discourses when it comes to the selection of a spousal partner in the circumstance of an inter-ethnic marriage, where ethnic boundaries are constantly being tested and renegotiated as per cross-cultural contact. These discourses include that of the "West", which may be described in Hall's terms as a dominating discourse taking up the label of "Americanness" having its origins in the previous Western ideal of the "English-gaze" guided by the Protestant ethic, but being different from it in the sense that it now absorbs and brings differences into its folds to the extent of fostering some sort of ethnic distinction without compromising the basic tenants on which these ethnicities operate; the Pakistani ethnicity or that of the non-Pakistani part of the inter-ethnic couple, based on a sense of "nationalism" towards the country of origin of the respondents; and that of a religious form of ethnicity pertaining to "Islam", which as a religious discourse contains many components that the respondents of the present study perceived to be in contradiction to both the discourses of Western and Pakistani culture. In the context of the present research, British culture has been taken as synonymous to Western culture, due to the various components identified by the respondents to be characteristic of such a form of British

culture that are identical to Hall's conceptualization of the Western discourse. How should such a scenario pan out when looking at it through the lens of Stuart Hall's writings?

Placing the debate in the context of the arguments put forth by Hall, the interplay between these three discourses should carry out as follows: the "West" would be considered as a dominant form of a global discourse, but that is open to absorption of cultural differences. This global will have a constant presence over all aspects of society to the extent that "local discourses" can rise to prominence, but only after negotiating their position in relation to the global. Therefore, the discourses of the ethnicities relating to "Islam" and "Pakistani and/or other ethnicities of spouse" would be labelled as "locals", that have distinguishable characteristics from other locals in the UK, but can only maintain their existence in relation to the global. Any person identifying with any one of these locals would have to justify and relegate their position in relation to the global in order to have some form of relevance and authenticity in the eyes of the various post-modern societies, in this case, the context of the United Kingdom.

However, in the context of the findings of the present chapter, two separate scenarios are observed when comparing the actions and the perceptions of many of the respondents. Western influence was not explicitly stated by most of the respondents to have played a major role in their decisions pertaining to marital choice. Rather in all four subsections of this chapter, the influence of religion was observed to be present to some extent as influencing the decision of selecting a marital partner, whether consciously or unconsciously. This is especially evident in the observation that most of the respondents were Muslims themselves (both Pakistanis and non-Pakistanis) and kept within religious boundaries, and married outside the culture, but not outside the religion. There was an exception observed in one case where both parts of the couple (a Muslim and a Catholic Christian) decided not to convert but live in tandem with, and respecting each other's beliefs. Here, both the husband and wife stated their non-strict adherence to their respective religious beliefs, exhibiting a resulting greater influence of Western culture upon him and his wife. Also, many of the British Pakistani respondents, most of them female, stayed within South Asian circles when it came to marriage (many of them married Indians and Bangladeshis; one of the respondents also married an Afghan). However, match based on

similarity of Islamic interpretations was seen to be the major factor for such marriages, instead of a desire to not stray too far from "what is familiar". Rather, a desire was seen to escape "familiar but oppressive cultural tendencies" in most of these cases.

Furthermore, in the subsection titled "ill-treatment of females", most of the respondents, who were females themselves, did not use the ideal of Western feminism (as emphasized by Hall to be a major factor in the breakdown of previous absolutistic affiliations) to justify their negative perceptions regarding the stereotypical role of a woman in a family unit. Rather, they used their interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence to nullify many of the attributes that they perceived to be present in what they labelled as "Pakistani culture", which a few of them claim have its origins in the "Hindu" practices prevalent since pre-partition times in the Indian Subcontinent, and that are highly restricting for women's mobility. Examples include the domain of household chores being restricted only towards women, and double standards in the treatment of sons and daughters. In the subsection titled "the notion of love", the choice of marriage partner was Muslim in all cases (except the one mentioned above), and where they were not Muslims, they were asked to revert to Islam. An aversion towards "Pakistani cultural practices", and increased inclination towards religiosity was also one of the main reasons stated for remarriage in the subsection of "previous divorces". The subsection of "religion over 'nationalism'" dealt with the most explicit forms of religious affiliations, where decisions were said to be influenced by the notion of "religion over culture" i.e. they adhered more strictly to what they perceived to be religious boundaries based on Islamic Shariah law instead of the practices that they stated to have an origin in Pakistani culture. Their aversion from such a form of Pakistani ethnicity stems from the sentiment that in many ways, this culture is justified in the name of Islam, but contradicts the actual teachings of Shariah law to a very large extent.

Keeping in mind the tendency towards religiosity, as mentioned above, the practice of arranged marriages, having a common occurrence among the British Pakistani community, was seen to have an interesting manifestation in the context of the present research. When considering the norm, usually parents or family members are the ones who look for, select and arrange marriage partners on the behest of the individual. After family backgrounds are explored, and the individuals to be married get to know each other (although usually in

the presence of another family member, not alone) formal permissions are taken from said individuals, and the marriage ceremony is planned and arranged with extended family members being involved in various matters of decision-making (Shams Uddin, 2006, p. 211-212). However, in the present research, it was rarely seen that parents were the ones who brought forth the prospective match for the respondents. Rather, it was seen that most of the inter-ethnic couples met either in common places of profession or study, or through online profiles, or the initial meeting was arranged through mutual friends rather than family members. Therefore these marriages were not arranged in the traditional sense. Although religious sentiment had major influence in the cases stated above when choosing a prospective partner, the medium of initial contact and subsequent meetings alone between the couples can be considered to be highly Western in nature, especially in the context of increasing emphasis among many of the respondents on the segregation of the sexes based on perceived Islamic ideals. Another reason why such a medium would be termed as "Western" can be found in Hall's description of Western culture in the post-modern world (see pg. no. 23): A culture that works through differences, absorbing local ethnicities into its fold, but fostering acceptance to the point of retaining the fundamental identities of each of these ethnicities. The fostering of differences means that a number of spaces (both physical and virtual) may be present where people from different ethnicities are able to live and function side-by-side with the Western form of culture as a point of reference, including the various initial meeting places of the respondents included in the present research.

The traditional practice of arranged marriage did not disappear completely, however. In many of the cases (among both Pakistani and non-Pakistani respondents) it was observed that although the couple agreed to get married following a form of contact that had minimum familial involvement, the expectation of asking and convincing the respective family members about the appropriateness of the match still remained, with many of the respondents having to take a lot of time to overcome the resistance they faced from both immediate and extended family circles alike, thus not being able to completely be rid of the notion of arranged marriage. Hence it can be inferred that as much as one would emphasize on the role of religion in guiding the process of marriage selection and conduction, it cannot be denied that certain aspects from the "global" had to be borrowed

to break one's shackles from Pakistani culture and to link oneself towards more "religious situations" (in this case, wanting to marry outside the Pakistani community into a more, as the respondents stated it to be, "practicing family" or to a person of their own choosing). Furthermore, even though negotiations with the global were underway, obstacles pertaining to the local Pakistani culture still had to be overcome, especially evident in going through with the marriage only after gaining approval of the parents, which even took up to a span of seven years in the case of one respondent. Thus, in Hall's terms, although religion is apparently the major point of influence when observing the perceptions of most of the respondents, negotiations were still made with the global, and to some extent with the local Pakistani ethnicity when considering the actions undergone to achieve one's desires pertaining to religious orientation. Thus although the move away from the notion of arranged marriages to semi-arranged (met first, fell in love, then asked parents to "arrange" the marriage between the two), or arranged-cum-love marriages (arranged through, in the present case, mutual friends, and the couple fall in love after meeting through such an arrangement) may be attributed to an inclination towards Islamic jurisprudence, the very notion of the coining of such terms by many of the respondents indicates a shift in orientation towards new forms of thinking, while still anchoring oneself to some extent to familiar ideals (hence the concept of "differant" that Hall borrowed from Derrida can be applied here).

How would the respondents' sense of identification come about in such a scenario? Hall, in his thesis, proclaims that the situation of the global post-modern and the various particularities that come into play with the discourse of the global has caused a multiplicity of cultural identities available to choose from, with technological advancement and the dominance of the rapid proliferation of cultural components through visual imagery making the access to such forms of identity much more easier (see pg. no. 23). Due to such a situation, the process of identification is considered to be a form of "suturing" of various identities, causing the emergence of the individual whose identity is constantly in production depending upon the circumstances faced by said individual. However, the global West will remain as the framework to turn back to as a point of reference and negotiation through which such forms of identity can emerge. Therefore, previous binary of existence as "us" and "them" (based on the phenomenon of the English-gaze) has broken

down to such a point that the "Other" is now internalized within the person instead of being separate and opposite to him/her. In the context of the present scenario regarding the factors leading to interethnic marriages, although on the surface it may seem as though there is a form of absolutistic affiliation with Islam as a religion among most of the respondents under consideration, a multiplicity of identities can be observed when diving deeper into the matter. This situation is observed especially when facing various circumstances pertaining to the process of inter-marriage by many of the respondents, including initial meetup, and the familial aspect of the marriage (as already elaborated upon above). Each circumstance is faced by choosing the pertinent form of identity that would get them through the situation, indicating an existence of a multiplicity of identities among them. The example of breaking from the traditional custom of arranged marriages, but still having to go through some semblance of this custom by virtue of having to involve the families for the approval and conduction of the wedding procedures especially exhibits the utilization of different identities in varying situations (marrying a Muslim having the same interpretation of Islam as them: indicates religious identity; the setting in which couples interacted, and the roles which they played in such settings [professional, educational, among others]: indicates Western identity; involving the families in the handling of the wedding arrangements: indicates Pakistani and/or ethnic identity from where spouse originated from). However, where this analysis would diverge from Hall's inferences on the topic is that the extent of the role of the global, or Western identity in regulating marital affairs, at least in the context of the orientations leading to inter-marriage among the respondents, is not as prominent as one would expect. Rather the more relevant inference to be made seems to be that "Islamic identity" played more of an over-arching role in which both the Western and Pakistani and/or non-Pakistani identity manifested themselves while being positioned in relation to this Islamic identity. Can the same inference be made with respect to other aspects of inter-marriage as well (more particularly, lived experiences and family dynamics among the inter-ethnic couples), or will Hall's theorization of "identity formed within the representation of the global West" be more evident in these other aspects? Such a question will be explored in detail in the upcoming chapters of the present research.

5. LIVED EXPERIENCES OF INTER-ETHNIC COUPLES

This section deals with the perceived lived experiences of both parts of the inter-ethnic couples (Pakistani and non-Pakistani). These experiences have been reproduced in the following subsections in the form of case studies. It was observed that most of the accounts provided by the respondents were vastly related to differences between certain practices and perceptions that they attributed to be characteristic of the ethnic group in which they married into, and the ethnic group in which they originated from.

5.1. Wedding Ceremonies

With regard to the details of the wedding ceremonies held by each respondent, it was observed that more than half of them (both Pakistani and non-Pakistani) went through the custom of holding three functions as per tradition in many parts of Pakistan i.e. the *Mehndi*[28], the *Nikkah* ceremony with reception, and the *Walimah,* or a modified version of these events. The reason why some of the non-Pakistani spouses, which included ethnicities such as British Asian Other (examples include Malaysian and Arab respondents) also went through with such a marriage form, even though their cultures called for a more varied approach, was due to the wishes of the British Pakistani families which they were marrying into. Nevertheless, there were some cases that were seen to be a departure from the traditional form of a three-part wedding ceremony, and these cases have been highlighted in the following subsections, along with those cases that were observed to have some form of modifications in an otherwise "Pakistani" wedding.

5.1.1. A balancing act

Many of the respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani, claimed to have undergone some form of compromise when it came to their wishes pertaining to the arrangement and conduction of the marriage ceremony. One such case was observed among one of the couples interviewed for the present research. The British Pakistani part of the couple was

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[28] Hindi/Urdu word, literally translated to "Henna". A ceremony traditionally held the night before the wedding in South Asian communities, where henna is applied to the bride's hands, arms and feet, and songs and dances are usually performed as a form of celebration for the upcoming event.

a Muslim 45 year old female, and the non-Pakistani part of the couple was a 42 year old Muslim British Indian (Memon) male. The female respondent stated that she wanted a marriage ceremony close to how she perceived one to be conducted as per Pakistani culture, containing three functions: a *Mehndi*, wedding reception with *Nikkah*, and *Walimah*. However, according to the respondent, her future in-laws were quite religious and to elaborate, she gave the example of her mother-in-law, "At the time of the engagement, she was wearing a *hijab*. But by the time the wedding came around, she had begun to wear a *niqab*[29]." In light of such an orientation, her husband's family just wanted one function with minimal costs. Therefore, the respondent's family ended up holding all three functions, but had to incorporate the demands of her husband's family into each function as well. For example, the respondent's family danced and sang songs at her *Mehndi* function, but when her husband's family arrived, they participated by singing *naats*[30] and *nasheeds*[31]. Furthermore, her husband's family wanted to have a segregated wedding (a wedding in which males and females were seated separately with no form of free-mixing between the two parties at any point during the wedding; even the catering staff would be male on the male's side, and female on the female's side). In order to accommodate such a request, the wedding hall on the day of the *Nikkah* and reception was separated into two parts, with males and females not being able to interact with each other. However, the respondent sat on a stage that was placed in the center of the hall, and in view of both the male and female portion, thus fulfilling her own family's wishes as well as those of her in-laws. The *Walimah* ceremony was fully segregated, with the bride sitting in the female section, and the groom sitting in the male section.

These accommodations made by the respondent's family at the wedding were not without their points of contention, as this wedding was considered a huge deal on their part, with family coming in from both Pakistan and America. The groom's family was perceived by them to "take the fun out of everything", especially as the mother-in-law refused to come in any photographs on religious grounds. However, the respondent now claims that she

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[29] A *niqab* can be defined as a veil or covering worn over the face by some Muslim women, keeping the eyes uncovered ("Niqab", n.d.).

[30] A *naat* is poetry composed in praise of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

[31] A *nasheed* is considered as a song exhibiting Islamic content.

may not have understood their point of view at that point in time, but can now accept their reasons as she has a deeper understanding of their orientations and beliefs. When the male respondent was asked about his perceptions regarding the situation surrounding the wedding ceremony, he stated that although he understood that certain cultural requirements were to be fulfilled with regard to Pakistani culture, he was not fully accommodating to them as he saw "no point to any of it." Nevertheless, he still indulged in some practices, including the tradition of *joota chuppai*[32] for the sake of his wife's family.

Another couple interviewed stated their experience of the balancing of preferences regarding the wedding ceremony with regard to its location, especially as both parts of the couple were resident in two separate countries before the getting married i.e. the wife, being a 44 year old British Pakistani (a divorcee, see pg. no. 73 for details), lived in the UK while the husband, being a 52 year old American Mexican (previously Catholic but is now a revert to Islam), lived in California, USA. After meeting through profiles made on an online marriage website, they decided to hold a simple *Nikkah* ceremony in the city of Boston, USA, where the wife's uncle was settled. According to the husband, Boston was decided as the location as it was a good halfway point between the wife's hometown of London, and his hometown in California. The wife then moved to California and lived there with her husband for 1 and a half years, after which they moved to London for greater job opportunities for both parts of the couple. They also had a civil wedding ceremony in Las Vegas a few months after their *Nikkah* in order for their marriage to be recognized officially in the eyes of US law bodies. The wife stated about this ceremony that it was a lot of fun, as it was a proper chapel wedding with a theme. They decided to go for a hippie theme, and thus dressed accordingly, with "tie-die hair" as one of the main components of the costume as stated by the wife.

Compromise with regard to location of the wedding was also observed among another couple i.e. the 47 year old British Pakistani, married to the 41 year old British Indian (Mumbai). The wife, being born and brought up in Mumbai, India, preferred for the

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[32] A wedding custom prevalent among many South Asian communities, where the sisters of the bride take the groom's shoes and hide them, after which they demand a price for the shoes, usually in the form of money. The groom gets his shoes back after the price is negotiated and paid to the sisters.

wedding to happen in Mumbai. However, due to the strain in India-Pakistan relations since the partition of the Subcontinent in 1947 (see pg. no. 81 for details), it would have been extremely difficult for a huge family of Pakistanis to be granted visas to enter India for the wedding, even though these Pakistanis were not based in Pakistan, but were mostly resident in the UK. In order to overcome such a hurdle, the wife's father agreed to hold the wedding in London instead, as it would have been considerably easier for Indians to be able to obtain UK visas rather than having to deal with the messy situation of visa obtainment that would have come forth due to the political unease between India and Pakistan. However, according to the wife, this wedding turned out to be considerably expensive for her father, as he then had to pay all expenses in pounds rather than Indian rupees (the value of the pound is greater than the rupee, so more rupees are needed during conversion to obtain a considerable amount of pound sterling).

Another case of balancing the cultural preferences of the two cultures in contact was observed in the form of the decisions pertaining to dowry. In this case, the respondent is a 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi (for details of marriage, see pg. no. 64). Her family, being British Pakistanis, preferred to give her dowry in the form of gifts and household items. However, according to the respondent, Bengalis prefer to provide their daughters with dowry in the form of gold jewelry, and they requested the same to the respondent's family as well. It took many days to come to an understanding, and the dowry which the respondent's family ended up giving her was a mixture of both household items and jewelry.

5.1.2. A simple second marriage

Both parts of the couple included in the present subsection have had previously failed first marriages. The wife, who is a 40 year old British Pakistani, has two children from a previous marriage, and the husband, who is a 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai) has three children also from a previous marriage (for details of this marriage, see pg. no. 72). In the context of such a circumstance, both of them agreed not to make a big deal out of the situation to help with the transition of two broken homes coming together. Also, the husband stated that he perceived both him and his wife to be greatly religiously oriented

and older in age when compared to how old they both were during their first marriages, and thus lavish ceremonies having cultural basis did not appeal to them and seemed frivolous at that point in their lives. Therefore, they decided to perform the *Nikkah* and have a small dinner at the wife's parent's house, with only immediate family involved (parents, brothers and sisters and their families of both parts of the couple).

5.1.3. A struggle against cultural practices

This subsection deals with the struggle when it came to rejecting cultural practices for actions and customs that are perceived to be religiously (Islamically) permissible. The key informant of the research, who is a 43 year old British Pakistani married to a 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati) had to go through a similar struggle. Since she had claimed to become more religiously oriented around the time her marriage proposal with her husband was finalized, and her in-laws were very religious as well, they decided to opt for a segregated wedding, with men and women kept separate and no free-mixing allowed. However, according to the respondent, this type of wedding was rarely seen anywhere else 20 years ago before it occurred. Many of her family's Pakistani acquaintances passed a number of criticizing comments to the respondent's mother, which included statements like, "Who do they think they are, these new Muslims, who think they know better than us? We are Muslims as well, have been Muslims all our lives." Furthermore, she wore a white dress instead of the traditional red that is usually worn on the day of the reception, because of which many people said to her mother "*Is ko to thappar lagana chahye* (She should be slapped), make her wear the red dress, just give her a slap and sit her down." The reason the respondent gave for such a sentiment among her Pakistani acquaintances was that they thought that wearing white was a Christian custom, so it should not be worn by a Muslim woman on her wedding. The respondent claimed such a thought process to be completely misguiding in the eyes of Islam. Also, on her *Mehndi* ceremony she danced with her friends, due to which these same people criticized her actions by saying, "Shame on her, how can she be dancing? Is she happy to marry him because she had been dating him or something?"

One of the British Pakistan respondents, who is 36 years old and married to a 35 year old British Asian (Other, Iraqi) claimed about her wedding ceremony that it was a mix of both cultures (Pakistani and Arab). However, her religious orientation was brought to light by her statement:

> We were open to take anything from any culture, as long as it didn't contradict with Islam.

When asked about the details, she stated that the wedding was more towards Pakistani culture than Iraqi culture, in the context of the number of functions held. According to her, weddings are simple in Iraq, with only a few functions held (mainly *Nikkah* and *Walimah*). However, her side of the family preferred to have what the respondent called "little parties" leading up to the main events of the wedding (*Nikkah* and *Walimah*). She further stated that her in-laws enjoyed these parties and all the dressing up that came along with it. However, the reason why this particular case has been placed under this theme is due to the judgmental nature of many of the remarks passed by the Pakistani guests at the wedding regarding the type of clothes worn by the Arabs guests, which they considered as "revealing" to their bodies. According to the respondent, this was because her Arab in-laws are Islamically oriented, and therefore the women wear *hijab* and *abaya* in front of men that they do not consider their *mahram*. But as the wedding was completely segregated, many of the Arab women took advantage of the absence of men and wore clothes that the respondent's family considered quite revealing to their bodies. The respondent proclaimed that in her opinion, there was nothing wrong with their sense of dressing at the wedding Islamically, as there were no men in the wedding hall, and the women covered themselves up before leaving, but her family were more "culturally" oriented and therefore thought that such types of outfits were unnecessary and with too much "Western" influence. A similar case to this one was also observed in the responses of a 36 year old British Pakistani married to a 37 year old British African (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan, for details of marriage, see pg. no. 80). His future wife had the same interpretation of Islam as him, but his future in-laws were, in his own words, highly "Westernized", and he felt uncomfortable in their presence, especially as they wore "revealing clothes". He found it hard to conduct the wedding ceremony in accordance with his Islamic orientations (including the banning

of any form of photography at the ceremony), as he constantly faced rejection of such ideas from his future in-laws.

5.1.4. Boycotting of wedding ceremony

A few cases were observed (one British Pakistani, and two non-Pakistani cases) where the refusal to accept the respondent's decision to inter-marry has led to families boycotting the wedding ceremonies and cutting ties from said respondents. These cases include that of the 38 year old British Pakistani married to a British Afghani, where her husband's family, who are based in Afghanistan, refused to accept the marriage and attend the ceremony based on her not being an Afghani (already discussed in detail, see pg. no. 66); the 38 year old British Bangladeshi married to a British Pakistani, whose family cut ties from her when she married her partner of choice in the UK after enduring a three year forced stay in Bangladesh to convince her otherwise (also already discussed in detail, see pg. no. 67); and the 48 year old White British Catholic (Other, Spanish) married to a Muslim British Pakistani, whose mother-in-law was vehemently against her son marrying a non-Pakistani non-Muslim, and refused to acknowledge or take part in the wedding (for more details see pg. no. 71).

Therefore, it was observed that when it came to the conduction and arrangement of marriage ceremonies, many factors influenced the negotiating of cultural differences between families. These factors include large distances between place of residency of each family, previous failed marriages, different cultural understandings of various marital customs and traditions, among others. Another finding that emerged is the role of religion as a form of instigating, or justifying certain decisions made and customs followed with regard to the type of wedding ceremony that each individual wished to conduct.

5.2. Perceived ethnic discrimination

Ethnic discrimination would hereby be defined as "negative treatment and prejudice based on perceived ethnic differences among various ethnic groups." Those cases are being included in the present subsection where the decision to inter-marry caused the respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani, to face some form of discrimination from

various ethnicities with which they interact. Whereby the general sentiment among the respondents was that they had observed an increased acceptance towards inter-marriage among the people around them based on the UK being a place of increased inter-cultural activity and contact, some of the female respondents did outline certain instances of perceived ethnic discrimination, both British Pakistanis and non-Pakistani spouses, which have been elaborated upon in the following subsections.

5.2.1. Discrimination from within the Pakistani community

Perceived discrimination due to inter-marriage was reported to be faced by both British Pakistanis and non-British Pakistani spouses (all females) from the British Pakistani community in the UK, and during visits to Pakistan. Among the British Pakistanis, it was observed that relationship with a non-Pakistani spouse, and the colour of the skins of their children were the main points of contention. One such respondent, who is 40 years old and married to a 36 year old Black African British (Ugandan), highlighted a few of the many comments that members of the community in the UK passed at her due to her marriage to a Black African. Examples include "She's not Pakistani anymore", "What's she going to do now?", "How are you able to interact with your husband? What do you talk about?", or "Is he even Muslim?". People also did not refrain from commenting on her two daughters' skin tones either (both have darker skin and afro[33] hair). One of the things said to the respondent about her daughters was, "Who is going to marry her daughters?" A few times she also heard elderly Pakistani women shouting at her across the street, caller her "*nigger[34] lover*". Her response to all these forms of criticism was:

> They don't understand, the world is bigger than Pakistan (laughs).

Another British Pakistani respondent, who is 51 years old and married to a British Asian (Other, Palestinian) (the respondent has been divorced from first husband who was an atheist Black British African, see pg. no. 78 for details), went so far as to state the

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[33] Hair comprising of tight curls, usually characteristic of Black African populations.
[34] A derogatory term used to describe people having "Black" skin colour.

discrimination that she faced from within the Pakistani community to take the form of "racism". She states:

> People from Pakistan are racist, especially those born in Pakistan.
> The whole Pakistani culture is racist.

Her own mother called her son from her first marriage with a Black British African a "monkey" based on his darker skin tone.

Many of the female non-Pakistani respondents also highlighted incidents of discrimination from within the Pakistani community. One such respondent, who is a 34 year old White British (Other, Lithuanian) married to a British Pakistani, stated incidents of ill-treatment during her visit to Pakistan after marriage (for details of the marriage, see pg. no. 70). She did not claim to have faced any form of racism from her husband's immediate family, but she said about many of his extended family members:

> Their understanding is that marriage with someone from any other
> culture other than your own culture would be for reasons other than
> to make a family together, for example, for obtaining paperwork,
> which upsets me greatly.

She also stated another incident which occurred in a zoo in Pakistan. She said:

> I tried to take my nieces to the zoo, and I felt like I was an animal at
> the zoo, because people were looking at me and my children more
> than the animals.

She further stated that many people came up to her children and touched their hands or their faces before walking away. One such woman came up to them, began touching her children, and asked if she could take a picture with them. The respondent got angry, and went up to the woman's son and behaved with him in the same way as the woman was behaving with her children. That woman got angry and said to the respondent that she was only doing it because they seemed very interesting and unique to them. The respondent answered her back by saying, "If I am interesting and unique to you, then you are interesting and unique to me as well. But you don't see me behaving inappropriately with anyone." She also mentioned about ticket vendors in various places of sightseeing around Pakistan, where they usually charged PKR 10 for Pakistani citizens, but as soon as they see

a foreigner, they take advantage and charge them extra. The respondent even had to pay up to PKR 200 at one point just to enter the premises of a historical sight, about which she said that it was not fair at all, as her husband had a British passport as well, but just because he didn't look foreign (was not of another race), he was charged normal prices, while she was overcharged based on her physical appearance that reveals her to be a foreigner.

5.2.2. Discrimination from the wider British population

Female respondents were also the ones who stated greater perceived discrimination in the present subsection. The 40 year old British Pakistani respondent married to a 36 year old Black British African (Ugandan) also mentioned discrimination from the Black community in London as well, apart from the incidences related to British Pakistanis (see the aforementioned subsection for details). According to her, many black women came up to her at various occasions and said to her that "you are taking all our good men from us." However, she does not claim to have any ill feelings towards these women, as she stated that only they would know how much they have suffered throughout their lives due to blatant racism against the Black community that is prevalent in the UK. In such a circumstance, it is understandable if they would feel bitter towards anyone who they would perceive to have wronged them in some way, even though such an act of wrong-doing may be unintentional on the part of the actor.

One of the British Pakistani key informants of the research, who is 43 years old and married to a 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati), stated various incidents of discrimination that she faced in her dealings with her Gujrati in-laws and the wider Gujrati community in the UK. According to her, Pakistanis and Indians already have negative perceptions of each other (see pg. no. 81 for details). However, this perception is more intensified among the Gujrati Muslim community based on their own opinions about themselves as "good Muslims", being highly family oriented and honest, which has led many of them to have a slight "superiority complex" over other communities. Some of the terms that the respondent stated that the Gujratis frequently used for the Pakistani community are, "thieves, murderers, dishonest, corrupt, bad mannered, not good Muslims". Her own mother-in-law used to feel embarrassed to mention to anyone that her daughter-in-law is Pakistani. She

gave an example of the time when she went to South Africa with her husband and her children to meet Gujrati family members there. She began talking to a Gujrati woman, and for hours they sat and conversed about various topics. But, as soon as the respondent mentioned that she was Pakistani, the woman just got up and left the room without saying anything else. She claimed to have a similar experience with one of her husband's family members in the UK as well. Since she has been married now for 20 years, she has been able to pick up quite a lot of the Gujrati language along the way. Thus, she can now identify these types of negative remarks much more frequently without people realizing that she can understand what they are talking about. One of these remarks which the respondent was able to identify was about Pakistanis being "dirty". The reason that she proclaimed to be behind these remarks is the perception of the role of a woman in a Gujrati household, where a woman's honour is seen to be in matters of cleanliness of the household, how well she can entertain guests, how many children she can give birth to and how well she can raise them. Even when the respondent's mother-in-law came to see her for the first time while arranging the marriage, the types of questions she asked her were "Can you cook? Can you bake? Can you sew?". Such a situation has become quite stressful for the respondent, as since she has gotten married she has had to learn how to "cook and clean properly" so that she fares well in the comparisons made between her and her sisters-in-law when the families come over to each other's houses. Her children (two daughters and a son) used to attend an Islamic school that had a high population of Gujratis. They spent their time in that school with other people assuming that they were Indians based on their surname that they inherited from their father's side of the family, and thus were able to escape many racist incidents that they witnessed to have occurred to other Pakistani students in the school.

Two non- Pakistani female White British (Other) spouses were also observed to have faced some form of discrimination from the White British or European population due to being involved with a Pakistani husband/wife. One of these respondents, who is a 48 year old British Spanish (Catholic Christian) married to the 50 year old British Pakistani (Muslim) respondent (for details of the marriage, see pg. no. 71), gave pre- and post-marriage examples of racist incidences. When she first started dating her husband and they used to go out together on the streets of Tooting, she observed many women giving her, in her own

words, "dirty looks for associating myself with a 'Brown' person", and many men looking at her husband and thinking, as stated by her, "it was almost like a, 'she's your bit of "on the side"' kind of look" thus exhibiting the stereotypical notion in the minds of these onlookers of immigrant men having relations with white women for the sole purpose of gaining citizenship through marriage. After marriage, she decided to change her name, taking up her husband's name as the surname. She also put down the same changed name on her CV when applying for jobs, because of which many of the people who interviewed her saw that she was actually white, and thus asked her questions like, "Oh, what an unusual name! The 'Hussein', where's that from?". One of her neighbours also commented about the colour of her daughter's skin, stating, "She is very dark, isn't she?". Also, one of her uncles who came over to visit, saw her sitting cross-legged on the floor, because of which he said to her, "So I see that he has already taught you how to sit now as well." The respondent claimed such a statement to be, in her own words, completely "ridiculous". She put forth such a sentiment as according to her, students at schools in the UK are taught to sit cross-legged from the age of 4. The other White British respondent (34 years old, Lithuanian, and married to a British Pakistani) stated minor incidents of racism from the White ethnic group, including passing of comments while wearing Pakistani attire/adornments. She gives the example of when she wore *mehndi* (henna) on her hands once, and went out grocery shopping, when some White people started commenting as she went by, "Look at her hands! They look so dirty!".

5.2.3. Discrimination from within non-British and non-Pakistani communities

One of the respondents, who is a 22 year old British Arab (Moroccan-Egyptian; father is Egyptian, and mother is Moroccan) married to a British Pakistani (they had been married for 2 months at the time of the interview) stated an experience of negative treatment during the time of her honeymoon spent in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. She remembers interacting with local Saudi women over there (she studied at a local Saudi school in London, and was therefore fluent in Arabic and had many connections to people in Saudi Arabia). However, whenever she mentioned that she was married to a Pakistani, she used to be able to tell that the women were shocked and disapproved of her decision. They used to ask her questions

like, "Are you crazy? Are you feeling okay, that you married a Pakistani?" to which she used to reply, "Yes, it's normal in London, and it's a very good practice in London." The respondent attributed such sentiments from the Saudi community based on their inherent superiority as perceiving themselves to be better Muslims than others.

Thus it can be inferred that in the case of ethnic discrimination, the female respondents of the present research were observed to have faced more incidents or remarks than the male respondents, especially in the context of their decision to inter-marry. Male respondents also mentioned cases of ethnic discrimination, but these cases were more related to a general sense of inferiority as being part of an "ethnic minority" group, rather than due to inter-marriage. Why may this disparity have been observed? One reason may be due to a problem of representation of male respondents in the present research, as many of the males approached refused to take part in the study, either due to "busy schedules", or due to the gender barrier, as they refused to spend one-on-one time with a female who is a stranger to them, based on an increased Islamic orientation. Therefore, more female accounts came forth, due to more of them interviewed. Another reason may be the gender roles in each particular family unit. Most of the females, whether Pakistani or non-Pakistani, were either housewives, or took up part-time jobs, in order to be able to spend more time with the children (details and reasons for such gender roles have been provided on pg. no. 112). And, since these females spent more time at home and socializing with family and friends i.e. more involved in the private sphere of family life, the ethnic discrimination they faced was also more related to their personal matters (more particularly, their marital life). An example can be given of comments faced by a few of the respondents regarding the colour of their children's skin. Females may have to face such comments more, based on them being the main care-taker of the children, and thus being in more situations pertaining to the children than their husbands would. Males, spending most of their day in the work-place, interact more with people in professional settings, and therefore the discrimination they face would be greatly influenced by their personal ethnic attributes, rather than their decisions attributing to their family/personal life.

5.3. Experiences with in-laws

It was observed that those respondents who had previously undergone marriage with a British Pakistani, but ended up getting a divorce due to varying circumstances (see pg. no. 72 for details) had more of an easier transition into the family of the in-laws of their second marriages, mostly based upon them being satisfied with the conditions of marriage and the orientations of the family they were marrying into to a greater extent as compared to the circumstances of their first marriages. The following subsections deal with other prominent cases observed between the family and the person marrying into the family that were observed to come about due to cross-cultural contact.

5.3.1. Unfamiliar language

Difference in the main language spoken by the wife and her in-laws is a major factor contributing to certain types of experiences faced by many of the female respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani. One of the respondents, who is a 32 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi, faced such a circumstance where she did not speak Bengali, and according to her, her in-laws took advantage of her lack of knowledge about the language. Since the marriage was decided between the couple and the husband's family did not have much say in this decision, they began to alienate her through language. They used to speak only in Bengali when she was with them, and also took the opportunity to pass negative comments about her and in front of her among each other in Bengali so she would not understand what they were saying. She stated her sisters-in-law to have made the most derogatory remarks about her. In such a situation, she constantly argued with her husband causing discontent between them, which ultimately led to a divorce a year into the marriage. They had a daughter, who was 5 years old at the time of the interview. Both parents have 50-50 custody over her, where she says three days a week with her father and the remaining four days with her mother. Due to such an experience, she advises against intermarriage, and claims:

> When you are breaking a culture (through inter-marriage), you are
> actually breaking a part of you. Culture comes to you as a human
> being, and you have to break that.

Another respondent, who is a 45 year old British Pakistani married to a 42 year old British Indian (Memon) also faced a similar issue, although not as severely as the previous respondent. She spent her first two years of marriage living with her in-laws, and the language which was predominantly spoken in the household was Kutchi. Since she could not speak the language at all initially, her in-laws used to communicate with her in English. However, the extended family members of her husband did not understand her predicament and used to speak to each other in Kutchi while she was there, because of which she felt left out. She found this very hard, to the extent that she used to dread answering the phone when anyone called in case someone began to speak to her in Kutchi, and she could not answer back.

Problems faced due to the language barrier between the two families was observed to have had another manifestation with relation to inter-marriage. In this regard, the 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi stated that if given the opportunity again, she may not have opted to inter-marry, solely for the reason that as the marriage was of her own choice and her parents were not completely happy about it, if anything goes wrong, she had no one to turn to. Rather, in times of difficulty she blames herself for having to face such a situation as she was the one who opted to go through with the marriage. Also, and this is where the language barrier plays a role, because her parents and her mother-in-law do not speak to each other based on her mother-in-law's lack of fluency in any language other than Bengali, they are not able to discuss solutions with each other when any problem does arise between the couple, or between the respondent and the family of in-laws. Thus, she must face these problems on her own.

5.3.2. Experiences with mother- and father-in-law

Many of the respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani (mostly female), highlighted a number of experiences pertaining to their interactions with their mothers and fathers-in-law in various settings. Among the British Pakistanis, one respondent, who is 43 years old (key informant) and married to a British Indian (Gujrati) focused on the "rigidity of ways" regarding various household matters among her father- and mother-in-law. She posited that although she did not live with her in-laws, she had to stay with them occasionally for long

periods of time, when she realized that there were many restrictions put in place in every aspect of the lives of the people living in the household. She used to enjoy sewing as a hobby, and thus took a mini sewing machine with her whenever she went to her in-laws' house. However, every time her father-in-law saw her using the small machine, he used to make her put it away and use the bigger one that they had in the house. Another example that she states is that when she was cleaning the stove at her in-laws' house, she used the wrong sponge to do so. Both her mother- and father-in-law became startled at that and began to lecture her on how she should take care not to do things the wrong way. Through these examples, the respondent indicated how much her in-laws interfered in her every action to the extent that she felt that she was watched all the time, and how fixed they were in their way of performing even the most ordinary of tasks and did not allow anyone to stray from the usual plan of action. She says about the experience:

> It was almost like we had been brought up wrong, everything we knew from beforehand was all wrong, and we had to be trained again in the right way of dealing with things.

One of the male respondents was also seen to have faced issues when it came to acceptance from his in-laws, in this case his father-in-law. This respondent, who is a 42 year old British Indian (Muslim, originating from Mumbai, and a divorcee, previously married to a Memon) married to a 40 year old British Pakistani (also Muslim, and a divorcee, previously married to an American Pakistani; for details of this marriage, see pg. no. 72) mentioned his father-in-law having doubts about the marriage, but did not go into details as to the reasons for this doubt. His wife, who was also a respondent for the present research, gave more details, and proclaimed that the reason for the doubt came about due to the ethnicity of her husband. Since the conception of their respective countries in 1947, Pakistanis and Indians have had negative perceptions about each other, based on a number of factors including the Kashmir conflict (for details, see pg. no. 81). Due to such sentiments, the wife's father used to say about the prospective match, *beizzati hogyi,* India *mai ja ke shaadi kar rahe ho* (Our dignity has been compromised, because you are marrying an Indian). Another reason for the doubt was also attributed to the husband being a *maulana* in a mosque, and thus the wife's father used to argue that the husband did not even have a job that would pay enough to provide for the wife's family. A third reason which the father-

in-law stated for his discontent was that the husband already had three young children (between the ages of three and seven) from his previous marriage, and therefore he claimed that his daughter would have to take on the "burden" of caring for these children. However, they still got married, and the wife's father eventually accepted her husband as he could see how happy his daughter and her children (first marriage) were with her husband. After eight years of marriage, he has now made peace with his daughter's decision.

5.3.3. Differences in orientations

Such a theme was vastly highlighted among certain non-Pakistani females married into Pakistani families, especially with relation differences in perceptions regarding gender roles among their Pakistani in-laws. One respondent, who is the 31 year old British African (Black, and born and brought up in France) married to a 38 year old British Pakistani, stated in this regard that in her observation, sons are treated differently to daughters in Pakistani households in the sense that they are allowed to do whatever they want in life, and are also not made to work in any form around the household, with mothers and sisters serving them hand on foot. She gave the example of her husband's uncle, who is 40 years old himself, and still cannot make his own breakfast but wakes his 70 year old mother up every morning especially just so that there is someone available to serve him. According to the respondent, because of such practices, boys grow up without any form of life skills, and therefore their wives have to be restricted to the household as their husbands cannot fend for themselves in any shape or form. Another issue which she highlighted was the refusal of many Pakistani men to play an active role in caring for and looking after the children, especially in the initial days after birth when the mother is still recovering from the procedure of childbirth. She stated that her husband used to change her daughter's nappies, and this became a huge point of contention and discussion among the in-laws as to "How can a man change his children's nappies? What type of man would he be then?". She recalls an incident were her husband's cousin asked her to find a marriage proposal for him, but particularly mentioned, "I do not want a woman who will make me change the babies' nappies." She claimed that she felt such a statement was meant to be targeted towards her directly to make her feel uncomfortable. However, she mentions that that particular person is now married, and has no choice in the matter of nappy changing, as his wife makes him

perform the task from time to time. She dealt with these incidences by being very vocal about her outlook on life, especially emphasizing upon examples of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and how he played a very active role in household chores and in helping his wives out in various tasks that they performed. At present, she has now reached a point where her husband's family praise him for his role in the house, especially as, according to the respondent, most of the men in his family are now married and are having to play a more active role with the children and around the house.

Another of the non-Pakistani respondents, who is the 37 year old British African (Kenyan, having origins in Pakistan) married to the 36 year old British Pakistani, stated that before marriage she was quite sociable and enjoyed going out with her friends and family. However, as soon as she was married, she felt the restrictions put in place almost immediately, as whenever she wanted to go somewhere, she was questioned, as to why she would just want to get up and leave the house. The respondent has now been married for 17 years, but still faces the same situation, even though she now lives in a separate house from her in-laws. Her husband was also interviewed, and a contradiction was observed, as he claimed that his wife had no such social tendencies even before marriage, and therefore the transition into life with her in-laws was much easier.

Thus it can be inferred that in all the subsections mentioned above, the female respondents (both Pakistani and non-Pakistani) had more negative dealings with their in-laws than their husbands. The reason for this may be attributed to the customary patrilocal practice in South Asian families for the female to move to her husband's house after marriage (Shaw, 2014, p. 28). And, it was observed that although most of the couples included in the present research lived as nuclear families (as elaborated upon in chapter six), many of the wives initially lived with their in-laws in the first few years after marriage, and most of the cases stated above occurred in that initial time period. Since the male respondents do not interact with their wives' families as much as wives' have to interact with their husband's immediate family, they do not have to face the problems that may come about due to cultural barriers between the two families.

5.4. Cases of divorce

Three cases were observed where certain cultural differences between both parts of the married couple paved way for a divorce between the two. One such case includes that of the 32 year old British Pakistani who was married to a British Bangladeshi, where the language barrier between the wife and her in-laws became a major cause of discontent between them, and she eventually divorced her husband after one year of marriage (for details, see pg. no. 101). Another case includes that of the 70 year old British Asian Other (Malaysian) married twice to British Pakistanis. She divorced the first husband after claiming that he did not, in her words, "look after" her and their one year old son properly, and used to take all the money that she earned while doing soldering and welding jobs in factories and spend it in revelries. She married her second husband a few years after, and stated to have had a happy marriage (he died a year before the interview was conducted), but not without its hurdles as well (he already had another wife living in Pakistan; for details of both marriages, see pg. no. 68). The third case involves divorce proceedings in process between a British Arab (Moroccan), who stated her age to be 40, and her British Pakistani husband. She did wish to reveal the details of the divorce, however it was gleaned from the interview that problems that the wife had with her in-laws may have been a major factor of dispute between the couple, especially with regard to cooking responsibilities around the house. This was demonstrated by the fact that when she was asked about her food preferences as being part of an inter-ethnic family, she refused to answer, saying that the aspect of food is a "sore point" for her.

5.5. Reflections of identity in lived experiences of inter-ethnic couples: A theoretical perspective

In light of the present research, it can be inferred that inter-ethnic marriages serve as a platform for the negotiation between various "local discourses" which influence each part of the couple based on the form of identity they hold, or utilize in a particular context or circumstance. With regard to the arrangement and conduction of inter-ethnic wedding ceremonies among the respondents, since all wedding ceremonies apart from one

(involving the inter-faith couple of the 48 year old Muslim British Pakistani married to the 48 year old White British Catholic Christian [Other, Spanish]) involved Muslim couples, the Islamic events of the *Nikkah* and the *Walimah* were common in all such ceremonies. However, the *Mehndi* ceremony, which is mostly a characteristic of South Asian weddings, was still held in the case of many of the inter-ethnic couples, even if one part of the couple was not South Asian (examples include the Arab female respondents, where in the case of the 22 year old British Arab [half-Moroccan, half Egyptian], her family "enjoyed the little parties leading up to the wedding). Furthermore, it was found that although Pakistani customs and traditions were observed to be followed in most cases, religion was mixed with culture in some of these cases in two ways: personal religious orientations caused many of the respondents to curb any such cultural aspect that clashed with the Islamic principles that they followed; and where the respondents personally wanted to stick to tradition and customs that were in contradiction to perceived Islamic beliefs, they had to strike some form of balance with the religious demands of their spouse's families. An example can be taken of the 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi, who wore a traditional red *lehnga* (a South Asian form of dress for females, consisting of a blouse and a long skirt up to the ankles) on her wedding day, but made sure she had long sleeves, and wore a *hijab* under her heavy dupatta so as to make sure her hair stayed fully covered. Another example can be taken of the 38 year old British Pakistani married to a British Asian (Other, Afghan), who stated that no music was played or performed at any of her three wedding functions conducted. A third example can be taken of the strategic arrangement of the wedding hall to compensate for the husband's family's wish for a segregated wedding, and the wife's family's wish for a mixed-gender wedding (see pg. no. 88 for details). Where would the "Western" discourse play a role in such a scenario? Western influence was observed with regard to the location of the wedding ceremonies conducted. Usually, in many cases of Pakistani marriages, especially in the case of transnational marriages, the wedding ceremony is usually conducted in Pakistan, so that all extended members of the family can attend without any hassle, with the couple travelling back to the UK after the ceremony (Charsley, 2005, p. 85). However, in the cases of inter-marriage included in the present research, as one part of the couple is not Pakistani, a neutral location was needed for the ceremony to occur, which in most cases led to the

ceremony being conducted in the UK. A few cases were observed among the male British Pakistani respondent where they had immigrated to the UK on their own, and their immediate family was back in Pakistan. In these cases, the *Mehndi* and *Nikkah* ceremonies were conducted in the UK with the wife's family, but the *Walimah* took place in Pakistan so as to involve the husband's family as well. Therefore, at least in the initial phases of inter-married life, cultural customs and traditions pertaining to cultural identity of the respondents were given importance to the extent that they did not interfere with religious priorities. This shows that no matter how far one would perceive himself/herself to be detached from nationalistic affiliations, social context of one's upbringing cannot be ignored, which explains certain cultural preferences manifested in the wedding ceremonies that were not thrown away even when the respondents under consideration were vehemently against the phenomenon of "nationalism" (see pg. no. 74 for details on reasons for detachment from nationalistic tendencies).

However, the lived experiences of married life of the respondents brought forth a different story. Where the respondents who were averse to "nationalistic affiliations" were happy to pick and choose cultural elements to their own liking when it came to their wedding ceremonies so long as these cultural elements did not have pervasive effects on their lives and did not contradict their Islamic beliefs, they were not able to control as easily many of the cultural elements that they faced living with their in-laws (this was especially observed in the case of female respondents, due to the prevalence of the custom of patrilocality in some cases). Examples of such cases have been outlined in the sections titled "incidences of perceived ethnic discrimination" and "experiences with in-laws". Many of these obstacles faced were related to what the respondents claimed to be "cultural practices that in many ways contradicted Islamic teachings".

How would Hall's theorization explain such marital circumstances? The role of the discourse of the "global West" should have had a major role in negotiating cultural differences between individuals of varying cultural backgrounds (see pg. nos. 22-25 for details). It should have provided a common thread that could have been grasped and referred to in times of conflict. However, this was not the case observed. Rather, "local" ethnic cultural forms were followed in most cases, and where ever conflicts arose due to

cross-cultural contact, criticisms of these conflicts were mostly based on Islamic explanations rather than on an over-arching Western narrative. Examples include the sense of being a part of the Muslim "Ummah" rather than being "British", "Pakistan", or any other ethnicity when it came to speaking against ethnic discrimination from within the Pakistani community and other Muslim circles; and the use of Islam to justify more fluid gender roles, rather than falling back to the debate of "feminism". Therefore, multiple forms of identity were used by all the respondents when navigating cross-cultural barriers, but in most cases they were used only to the extent where these forms of identity were not in conflict with their Islamic identity. In these particular cases, where conflict arose, Islamic identity also came forth without any question, which may not be in agreement to Hall's theorization.

6. INTER-ETHNIC MARRIAGES AND FAMILY DYNAMICS

Family dynamics are usually considered to be the patterns of interactions and relations between a group of people who class themselves as a "family". The present chapter focuses on unveiling the various details related to the dynamics pertaining to inter-ethnic families, keeping in mind the varied ethnic backgrounds of each part of the inter-ethnic couple. It was observed that all the couples under consideration, apart from two couples, were living in a nuclear family system, as they entailed the structure of a "single married couple with/without their unmarried children" (Sharma, 2013, p. 308). Therefore, the findings included in this chapter would be more characteristic of such a form of nuclear family unit.

6.1. Gender roles and their practical implications

A major theme which emerged among the respondents is that maintaining some form of gender roles is important for the smooth running of one's family unit. The main reason for such a conceptualization among a majority of the respondents was observed to be in the perceived gender roles that many of them claimed to have their origin in Islamic Shariah, where the basic role of the father was considered as the financial provider of the household, and the basic role of the mother as the nurturer of the couple's children. However various interpretations of such a religious injunction were observed among them regarding the extent to which each part of the couple should dictate their lives in accordance with these prescribed roles. This may be the reason why it was observed that all the males worked professionally full-time, while those females who had young children were either housewives or worked professionally part-time. There were some female respondents who worked full-time, but in all those cases, it was seen that the children were older than the age of twelve and did not need as much care as before, or the couple did not have any children at the time of the interview, or the couple's financial situation caused the wife to work to bring extra money to the household. Details of the reasons for such a form of gender roles have been highlighted as follows.

6.1.1. Women, and the "home and children"

It was understood among most respondents, both male and female, that in the eyes of Islamic jurisprudence, if a man and a woman are able to fulfil the two roles allocated to them as described above to the best of their abilities, they are then permitted to perform other actions as well. Therefore, it was permissible for women to be allowed to go to work, and men were encouraged to play an active role in household affairs. Another source which they cited to support such an interpretation was that of Hadith pertaining to the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), where he used to help out his wives in many household chores, including the darning his own clothes, and of his first wife Khadija, who was a successful business woman of her time, and one of the first people to accept Islam. Also, two of the respondents mentioned the name of Fatima al-Fihri, who is known to have opened the first official degree-awarding university in the world in the 859 AD (Chowdhury, 2017). Furthermore, the rising cost of living in the UK also prompted both husband and wife in many of the couples observed to work for money. However, despite such an interpretation of Islamic jurisprudence and societal conditions, when it came to the practical aspects of these respondents' lives, most of the female respondents preferred to spend as much time as possible at home to care for the needs and comfort of the children, rather than trying to focus on a professional career. They did not want to end up neglecting the children, whose well-being was more important to these respondents than having the life of a full-time working woman. This is somewhat in accordance with the results of the socioeconomic survey conducted, as it was observed that more males than females worked professionally full-time (44.6% females, as compared to 55.4% males). Two scenarios were observed in such a circumstance regarding the role of the husband in the household. Some of the female respondents preferred to be the main person to perform household tasks and to see to the needs of the children, especially if husbands were working professionally full-time and were out of the house on most days. However, most of the female respondents were happy to involve their husbands in some form of household tasks, especially if these women were working professionally part-time and were unavailable to perform these tasks at certain times. The husbands of the wives included in the second scenario agreed with helping out their wives more in household tasks, but most of them stated their inability to

do so frequently based on limited time in the day when they come back home after working professionally. Cases from both scenarios have been elaborated upon below.

The first scenario, where the wife took on the main role of seeing to the responsibilities of the household and children, was observed to be the most prevalent among the British Pakistani female respondents. One such case includes the respondent who is a 40 year old British Pakistani married to a 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai) (see pg. no. 72 for details of the marriage). She stated:

> Whatever society you are in, men have to do what men do, and for women it's best they do what they have to do.

The reason why she had taken up a job teaching at a local secondary school was to support her children from her first marriage to an American Pakistani. However, she eventually went part-time so that she was able to spend more time at home with her children, especially as she was not only looking after her 2 children, but that of her second husband as well (he was also married previously and had 3 children from that marriage). At the time of the interview, she had just decided to take up a "career break", especially as her second husband's children were still quite young (all under the age of 12), and she wanted to play a more active role in their upbringing. She plans to go back to her job only when her children have "set off on their own paths". Her husband took on the main responsibility of being the breadwinner of the family.

A second female British Pakistani respondent focusing on a domestic role (one of the key informants, i.e. the 43 year old British Pakistani married to the 50 year old British Indian [Gujrati]) explained her reasons in the context of the present scenario of Islamophobia prevalent in the UK. According to her, there is nothing wrong with a woman going out to work. Rather, in her opinion, the present wave of feminism prevalent in the UK has made matters even more difficult for women simply because they now feel it as a necessity that they need to go out to work to the point of exhaustion, along with taking care of other familial responsibilities. In retrospect, Islam makes a woman's life easy in the sense that it is obligatory upon men to struggle for a job that pays enough to feed his family. However, there are no such obligations upon the woman, and thus she states that the "world is her

oyster", simply because she then has the space for experimentation and working for what she is passionate about, without having the added burden of earning enough to feed her family. Nevertheless, the reason why she opted not to work professionally is to keep a close eye on, and provide a greater support system for her children, especially as being Muslims, it has become a struggle for them to keep up with society while still holding on to what she perceived to be "Islamic values". She gives an example of the Prevent strategy[35] in the UK, a government initiative which focuses on the "deradicalization" of British society. Under this strategy, you are questioned about your faith whenever you come into contact with a government institution, for example when visiting your general physician, or at schools. If any Muslim children give any small indication of any form of "radical" thoughts (for example, homophobia, or terrorist tendencies), social services are called in, and the child is taken into custody away from his/her parents. She gives the example of a seven year old Muslim boy, who drew a picture of a cucumber and showed it to his teacher. However, because the boy had a lisp while speaking, the teacher thought that he called the drawing a "cooker bomb" instead of a cucumber, and immediately called the authorities to keep the child away from what she perceived to be a radical home environment. Furthermore, schools in the UK have also begun to encourage the acceptance of the notion of homosexuality by adding stories dealing with relations between "king and king", or "prince and prince" into the compulsory curriculum to be taught in primary classes. Also, sex education has become compulsory for all children reaching their sixth academic year in primary school. In such a context, the respondent claims that it has become paramount for parents to play an active role in their children's lives, simply to "nullify" all such influences that she termed as being removed from Islamic teachings, and to make sure that they remain as Muslims and do not stray from Islam under such circumstances. Thus, she has opted to put all her focus in her children's upbringing and the performance of household tasks, with her husband taking full responsibility of financial affairs, and thus working professionally full-time. Her husband was also interviewed, and he put forth a similar view to the respondent as to the fulfillment of the primary roles allocated by Islam to be necessary, but

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[35] "Prevent" is part of a four-way anti-terrorism strategy enacted by the UK government in 2003, which aims at initiating systems where tendencies towards terrorism are reported before they can be enacted (for details, see Grierson, 2018). The other three parts of this strategy are termed as "Pursue", "Protect" and "Prepare".

no hard and fast rules as to what the male and female should do in addition to these roles. He even states that there is now a debate among certain scholars that housework does not come under the purview of the woman's role either, and the husband should pay for someone to perform these tasks if the woman is not up to it.

The case of one particular female British Pakistani respondent, who is 38 years old and married to a British Asian (Other) (Afghani), is considered to be unique, not in the gender roles prevalent in her household, but in her discontent of such a division of roles. According to her, her husband works very long hours, and therefore she is solely in-charge of her toddler son and the household chores along with having to maintain a part-time job as a hairdresser. She states that Afghan men are very "traditional", in the sense that it is not the "done thing" to help their wives out. When she was pregnant with their son, he clarified to her that he would not involve himself much in childcare, rather she would have to do a lot of it by herself. An example she gave was of her husband expressly refusing to change his son's nappies. She said regarding such a circumstance:

>I don't agree with it, but don't really have a choice.

Another example which she states of Afghani men being traditional is of their preference for women to be as housebound as possible. Therefore, they do not go out to eat in public places. Also, she is not permitted to go to her local mosque either, even though it is a norm for many Muslim women in her community to regularly attend religious activities taking place in that mosque. Furthermore, he discourages her from using social media in any form and forbids her to post any picture of herself or their family on any platform. Although she agrees with his point of view regarding social media use, she feels discontent regarding the other restrictions placed upon her, but is still acting in accordance with his wishes. However, when it comes to decisions regarding her son's education, she claims that her husband has given her the responsibility, as he is a recent immigrant to the UK and has limited knowledge regarding the prevalent system of education.

When taking the male British Pakistani respondents under consideration, it was observed that the first scenario (where the wife was solely responsible for household tasks and seeing after the children's needs) was more prevalent among their households. One of these

respondents, who is a 36 year old British Pakistani married to a 37 year old British Kenyan (see pg. no. 80 for details of marriage), used his interpretation of Islamic Shariah to put forth a more fixed conceptualization of gender roles than many of the respondents stated above. According to him, due to the emphasis on the prohibition of free-mixing between the two genders in Islam, it is permissible for women to have a career, but only if she does not have to have contact with the male gender in seclusion at any point in time. Therefore, he encourages women to start their own businesses (example includes a tutoring business for school children), where they can work on their own terms in an environment controlled by them. However, he stated the first and foremost role of the woman to be to her household and children, and if the male of the house is out throughout the day working "long jobs to pay the bills", the woman should understand his predicament of being unavailable to see after household chores, and make the domestic domain her main focus for a smooth running of the family unit. His wife was also interviewed, who was a housewife at the time of said interview. She was more open to the prospect of working professionally than her husband, and especially emphasized on males playing more of an active role in the upbringing of their children. The only restriction which she perceived to be important to take under consideration is that women should take up jobs that do not require a particular uniform to be worn, and hence they can wear the standard *hijab*, *abaya* and *niqab* to the workplace (she herself saw the wearing of these items of clothing as compulsory, and religiously donned them in front of *ghair mahram* men, and whenever she left the house). However, the reason why she did not work professionally at the time of the interview was due to her focus on looking after her five children, who were all under the age of 13. According to her, she is solely responsible for all household chores and the looking after of the children. Her husband provides minimum input in terms of domestic tasks, due to his long working hours as a school teacher and a Muslim marriage counsellor, and his suffering of frequent migraine attacks.

Some of the non-British Pakistani female respondents were also included in the first scenario. One such respondent, who is a 38 year old British Bangladeshi married to a British Pakistani, stated herself to be a housewife with full responsibility over the household and the children. She wishes to work professionally once her children have settled in school (she has three sons, the youngest was born 4 weeks prior to the interview)

115

and has the support of her husband to have a career. However, her previous experiences with her parents when they found out about her involvement with a British Pakistani caused her to lose confidence in herself with regard to public interaction. They rejected the match based on her future husband being a non-Bangladeshi, and on the respondent's meet-ups with him while she was alone, which she kept hidden from her family. They took her to Bangladesh to get her away from him, and kept her there for three years, trying to convince her to get married to a Bangladeshi, (see pg. no. 67 for details). Once she was allowed to come back to the UK, her family did not allow her to leave the house alone, and this situation prevailed for up to 2 years before she was able to marry her husband (her family still disapproves of the match to this day). The respondent always wished to be able to "live independently" and focus on having a career, but was not able to carry through with her plans based on what she states to be "very low self-esteem and difficulty in public interaction" because of the social isolation which she endured for many years before marriage. Therefore, her sole focus since marriage has remained to be that of her children and her household.

The second scenario, in which the husband performs some form of a domestic role to help out his wife, along with also being the main breadwinner of the family, was observed among many of the female British Pakistani respondents, but to a lesser degree when compared to the prevalence of the first scenario stated above. One such case includes a British Pakistani respondent (36 years old, and married to a 35 year old British Asian [Other, Iraqi]). She stated her primary and preferred role, in light of the Islamic values which she followed, to be that of raising her two children, a son and a daughter. However, she still works full-time even with her two children, in order to make enough money along with her husband to support their children's needs. She had the intention to focus on her role as a nurturer to her children from before marriage, and therefore consciously made educational and career decisions over various times in her life that enabled her to take up the role of a qualified primary school teacher, which does not require long working hours. In this way, she has been able to secure a job at the same school as her children, and thus her working hours are the same as her children's school hours. Her husband commutes inter-city every day to reach his workplace, and is thus out of the house till late evening and cannot spend as much time with the children. Therefore, she is able to work full-time

without sacrificing any time in which she looks after her children. However, the respondent did concede that because of her need to earn in order to fulfil the family's monetary requirements, her husband understands that she cannot perform household tasks solely on her own, and thus pitches in wherever he can to relieve some of the burden off of her. They especially split the responsibility of cooking by alternating the days on which each part of the couple would be responsible for preparing the meals to be had by the family.

Many of the cases related to the non-British Pakistani female spouses also manifested the second scenario observed in the present subsection (with husbands having more of an active role in household tasks and interacting with the children). One such case involves the 31 year old African British (Black, born and brought up in France) married to the 38 year old British Pakistani. According to her, her husband was raised by his grandparents, as his mother died at a very young age, and his father was not very interactive when it came to child care. However, over time he learnt to play a more active role in the household under his wife's influence (already discussed in detail, see pg. no. 104). Another non-British Pakistani female respondent, who is a 47 year old British Asian (Other, Malaysian) married to a British Pakistani, also described a similar case in her household as the one described before. She states her understanding that there is a division of roles when it comes to what is detailed as per Shariah law. However, she also claimed that along with the performance of these roles there should be a "mercy" in terms of the attitudes towards each other in this day and age. She states:

> I would not say that a man should be totally financially responsible for everything, and a man should not say to his wife that she has to do all the cleaning and cooking. Women should definitely be involved in something like working, studying, activism, or wider community work.

Therefore, she made sure that her husband and her older children (a son and a daughter aged 18 and 21 respectively) played an active role in the household affairs apart from the task of the cooking, which she managed. According to her:

> Men are adults, they can take care of themselves. Otherwise, we are infantilizing men.

When considering the one inter-faith couple included in the present research (the 48 year old British Pakistani [husband] married to the 48 year old White British [Other, Spanish, wife]), it was observed that the applied gender roles in their family changed over time, depending upon the context. Both parts of this couple were interviewed, and the husband stated that although he is the main breadwinner of the family, there were periods of time in their marriage when his wife had to become the major earner to support the family when he was between jobs and thus he stayed at home with their two children (a son and a daughter) during that time period. However, the wife stated that at present (in the time period during which the interview was conducted), the roles are more "traditional" in the sense that she does the main household tasks and is the primary caretaker of their children, with a flexible job as a graphic designer for a printing shop, while her husband focuses on his job as a lawyer. She says about such a dynamic:

> I would like him to have a more active part in childcare and housework, as he has fallen into the traditional role of "I bring the money home". I didn't think that he was like that when I met him, but he has slowly turned into an "old man" over the years.

In conclusion, it can be observed that within the major theme that has emerged of women as nurturers of children, and men as the breadwinners of the family, most of the British Pakistani female respondents fell under the category of the first scenario, with women playing the major role in the household, while most of the non-British Pakistani female respondents came under the second scenario, where males had more of an active role in household tasks and childcare. Both British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani male respondents came under both categories.

6.1.2. Fluidity in gender roles

In this particular theme, those respondents are considered whom had orientations that were divergent to, or modified from the main opinion that came forth regarding the Islamic responsibility of the male and female to fulfil their particular roles as part of being a family unit. One such respondent, who is a 44 year old British Pakistani married to a 52 year old American Mexican (see pg. no. 73 for details of marriage) was previously married to a Pakistani, and had moved to Lahore after the marriage. However, she was greatly infuriated

by, and eventually got divorced due to the rigidity of gender roles prevalent among her in-laws, where men did nothing other than going out to work, while the women were restricted to the house, expected to perform all household chores and without having any say in the matter. According to the respondent, such a conceptualization of gender roles in the Pakistani community are justified under the pretense of Islam, but in no way has any actual basis in the teachings of what she called a "beautiful" religion. In her opinion, women are not to be restricted in the house, rather the whole reason why they have been instructed to wear the *hijab* and cover up is so that they are permitted to go out, and even take up a professional career if they were willing to do so. If it was intended for a woman to stay in the house under Islam, there would have been no provision at all regarding what the code of conduct should be when they do leave the house in the first place. Another point she raised was that there is no rigidity in an Islamic marriage regarding gender roles, rather:

> Marriage is a contract between two parties. If you get what you want in your contract, it goes. Anything goes. That's what I love about it.

Therefore, she describes the atmosphere in her household to be that of a "tag-team", where if one person cannot perform a task, it will be tagged or allocated onto the next person, regardless of the type of task or gender. Her husband was also interviewed for the present research. He also had similar views to his wife, and stated:

> Both of us have to play the role of a parent. Apart from that I don't believe in roles. If you are able to do the job, then you are able to do the job, regardless of whether you are male or female.

One of the non-Pakistani respondents was also open to a more fluid dynamic when it came to perceiving gender roles in their own households. This respondent, who is a 31 year old African British (Kenyan, having origins in Pakistan) married to a 33 year old British Pakistani, stated that in the British society at present, due to the inclination of both parts of the couple to have a career out of the house, or work part-time, on many occasions it occurs that men still play their "traditional" role of going to work, coming home late, and not involving themselves in any other matter pertaining to the household. On the other hand, women go out of the house to work, but are still required to be responsible for most of the housework and childcare. Due to such a scenario, she posits that men have taken advantage

of such a situation and have become "lazy", simply because they have someone helping them in bringing in money for the family, and do not have to play a significant role in household matters. Women have to perform double the amount of tasks than men do, and because of this they are "tired and exhausted". Therefore, she states that men should help out their wives wherever they can even in domestic jobs, as it is unfair to expect the women to bear the burden of majority of the responsibilities that come about with running a household. Nevertheless, she still feels that a woman should have some form of job outside the house, even if it is part-time, so that she can have a reprieve from household matters. She gives her own example where she now works a sales job only once a week to free up more time to look after her four young children (all under the age of 7), but still loves that time away from home as she states that it is the only time she feels, in her own words, "mentally challenged and not brain-dead", and interacts with people "other than 2 year old children."

Thus it can be inferred that fluid gender roles was scarcely perceived to be the way to go among the respondents in the present research, apart from the cases included in the present subsection. The reason may be attributed to the increased religiosity among most of the respondents, due to which they were more inclined towards what they called "traditional" roles under their interpretation of Islamic Shariah.

6.2. Decision making power

Three major themes emerged among the respondents regarding matters of decision-making with regard to familial affairs, where either one part of the couple had the final say in all matters; decisions were made through mutual consultation; or there was a division of situations where each part of the couple made decisions based on their area of expertise in the running of the household.

6.2.1. Decision making in the hands of one

A major finding which emerged indicated that many of the respondents, both British Pakistanis and non-Pakistani spouses, believed that the role of decision making should be allocated to the husband due to their perceptions of him being the head of the household

based on Islamic Shariah. Two scenarios were observed here. The first one entailed decision making based on discussion between the couple, with the husband having the final say only if the two cannot seem to be able to come to a consensus. Among the British Pakistanis coming under this category, one respondent, who is a 40 year old British Pakistani married to a 36 year old Black African British (Ugandan) stated that although she believed in the fluidity of gender roles beyond the basic roles allocated to men and women as per Islamic Shariah, she recognizes the role of the father as the head of the family. The wisdom which she observes in such a division of roles is that it reduces familial conflict to a greater degree, as all members of the family then understand what each person is responsible for. Therefore, even though most decisions are made through discussions, her husband "wears the trousers" when it comes to decision making, which she allows due to the reason that Allah has made man the guardian of his family, and he will be more answerable for the whole family than his wife if any action is performed that is questionable as per Islamic jurisprudence.

One of the non-British Pakistani respondents (a 41 year old British Indian [born and raised in Mumbai] married to the 47 year old British Pakistani) also stated the importance of consulting her husband in all matters before making a final decision, whether in household matters, or matters involving the children. According to her, he would not mind her taking on certain responsibilities regarding the children, but she makes sure that he approves of all her plans before carrying them out, as she states:

> I have to give due respect to the man who does everything for us…
> My children would not have the lifestyle they are living at present
> what with all their private and grammar school expenses, and extra-
> curricular activities, if their father did not work day and night to
> bring the money home to make all this possible.

The second scenario observed is that almost all matters are decided upon by the husband, with minimal consultation from other members of the family. One female British Pakistani respondent coming under this category, who is 40 years old and married to the 42 year old British Indian (Memon), stated her husband to be in charge of all decisions pertaining to matters dealing with the running of their family to the extent that she calls her husband a "control freak". However, she states that she is satisfied with her husband taken on such a

responsibility, as it helps her to focus on her role of the nurturing of her children. Furthermore, she states that her family has expressed their disdain on the situation, as they claim that she has no say in any matter, but she states that she does not mind not having to constantly deal with large responsibilities. Also, she posited that her husband enjoyed taking charge of situations, as it enabled him to the task of organizing and planning, which she claims that he is quite proficient at. She gives the example of picking out restaurants for family outings, where they would not just get up and go to any place, rather her husband would spend a very long time researching and organizing a well-thought-out plan to make the experience much more worthwhile, while enjoying himself at the same time. Also, she has no idea about the amount of mortgage to be paid for their apartment, and states that she feels, in her own words, "proud" that her husband has not burdened her with such matters and deals with them himself.

One of the male respondents, who is the 36 year old British Pakistani married to the 37 year old African British (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan), put forth a unique perspective regarding decision making processes. According to his interpretation of Islam, decision making should be in the hands of the husband. However, he states that this does not mean that such a power should be abused. Rather, instead of demanding his wife to follow his orders, he should try to coax her and convince her in a certain way that it may look like the couple has mutually agreed, but the husband put forth the idea in the first place. He claims that the husband has to play wisely in these delicate circumstances.

Among the non-British Pakistani female respondents, one of them stated her husband to have more of a hand in decision making processes. However, she felt disdain on certain matters on which they disagreed on, but on which she has no choice but to follow what her husband says. She gives the example of what she calls him to have a "keyhole perspective" with regards to her children. According to her, her husband likes to joke with the children by shedding a lot of focus on some of their physical features, including the colour of their skin, which he thinks is darker than other Asian children around him. The reason he gives for such remarks passed is that the children need to hear stuff like this to build strong characters, as they will be bullied in school due to these features. However his wife disapproves of his reasoning, stating that this would cause a building of low self-esteem

among the children as they go into their teenage years. She calls her husband's perspectives on such matters as a keyhole perspective, because he does not spend much time with the children because of his work schedule, and so does not know their personalities enough to make such calls regarding their upbringing. He can only comment on the brief information he has about his children. Nevertheless, she claims that she has no way to deal with the matter, and says:

> I just have to do what I am told… Usually it's his way or no way, I'm not going to lie.

6.2.2. Decisions made through consultation

The present theme under consideration was not as prevalent to that of the husband making all decisions, but was nevertheless still highlighted among a few of the respondents, both British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani spouses. One of the couples, which entailed the 40 year old British Pakistani married to the 42 year old British Indian (Gujrati), was observed to be prone to making decisions only after reaching a consensus about the matter at hand. According to the wife, since both couples had previously failed marriages, and had thus gone through many different types of life experiences before they got married to each other, they respect each other's opinions and thus have a 50/50 contribution to any discussion pertaining to household matters.

A non-Pakistani respondent (the 39 year old White British [Other, Polish; previously Catholic, accepted Islam] married to a British Pakistani) also stated her preference to discuss important matters related to the family first, then decide the path to take. According to her, South Asian men are notorious for holding all decision-making power in their hands. However, she avoided such a situation by asserting her voice in decision making matters very early on in the marriage, and at this point she can even make decisions alone if she needs to, if her husband is not around. Otherwise, most decisions are made through consultation and mutual agreement in her household.

6.2.3. Decision-making based on area of expertise

The present theme was not observed to be as prominent as that of the husband being the sole decision maker. However, it still manifested among some of the respondents. According to this theme when it came to the children, the wife was usually responsible. Financial matters came under the purview of the husband. One of the respondents, who is the 36 year old British Pakistani married to the 35 year old British Asian (Other) (Iraqi), was a primary school teacher and had the most say, and the most involvement regarding her children's educational performance. However, her husband took responsibility for their Islamic education, and sent them to a Sunday school for Quran recitation. He also takes charge of making the children complete the tasks that are allocated by teachers at the Sunday school. When it comes to financial matters, including paying of the bills, her husband has the final say.

A female non-British Pakistani respondent (the 47 year old British Asian [Other, Malaysian] married to a British Pakistani) also claimed for there to be a division in decision making power based on area of expertise. She was the in-charge of the children's educational decisions and their academic performance based on her master's degree in the area of Mathematics, ongoing PhD degree in Sociology, and her job as a secondary school teacher at an Islamic school. On the other hand, decisions relating to finance were taken by her husband. An example that she gave was of shifting houses, where her husband decided when they would shift, and where they would go.

In conclusion, it was observed that main decision-making power was in the hands of the husband, whether it was sole power, or in the case of disagreement after consultation. However, two other themes also emerged, albeit to a lesser degree, in which decisions were either made after consultation between the husband and wife; or the decision-making power was split between the two, depending upon the domain that each part of the couple was responsible for.

6.3. Interactions of parents with the children

The present section deals with two aspects regarding the dynamics between parents and their children: preferred childrearing techniques among parents; and the conceptualization of gender roles among them when dealing with their children.

6.3.1. Childrearing methods

Since almost all respondents that have been interviewed lived in nuclear family system, it has been observed that only the mothers and fathers had the main role in their children's upbringing. Among all inter-ethnic couples under consideration, five major themes emerged which detailed the techniques and orientations through which they preferred for child-rearing: Upbringing as per Islamic values; balancing between *deen* (religion) and *dunya* (wordly matters); increased focus education (both secular and religious); making the child as one's confidant; and making sure that both the husband and wife were on the same page in matters dealing with their children.

More than half of the couples under consideration focused on using the Islamic values brought forth through their interpretation of Islamic Shariah for the purposes of child-rearing. A major guideline from Hadith was brought forth by two respondents in this regard (the 30 year old female British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi; and the 42 year old male British Indian [Mumbai] and *maulana* at a mosque, married to the 40 year old British Pakistani). According to them, the Hadith puts great emphasis on the praying of the *Salaah*, and outlines that till the age of seven, the child should be allowed to "live freely, enjoy life, and learn through nature". Then, from the age of seven to ten, guidance to the children should begin regarding the performance of *Salaah*. From the age of ten, this guidance should take on a stricter form and small punishments should be doled out to the children (for example, taking away of treats) to reinforce the practice of *Salaah* even further, so that by the time they are *balig*[36] at around age 14 to 16, they are well versed in this all-important practice. The 30 year old British Pakistani married to the British Bangladeshi stated on the basis of this Hadith that the present custom prevalent in the UK

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[36] The age when a person has reached the point of sexual and mental maturity.

of sending children for formal schooling from age three is absolutely wrong, as a child's brain is still developing at that stage, and there is no point in placing them in a robotic and standardized environment where they are not able to think out of the box, and explore freely at their own pace and per their own interests and capabilities. According to her, the age of seven is the best time to start formal schooling, as a child's brain would have been developed to its full capability in the performance of both formal and informal interactions, and therefore would be in its best condition to deal with a standardized environment. She said:

> The schooling environment puts pressures on children that they cannot even understand fully at such a young age, including exams, and having to be the best in everything. Life's too short to have to deal with these kinds of pressures all the time, and children should be allowed to be children and not be made to grow up too quickly.

Apart from early schooling, other points were also raised regarding the British education system which many of the respondents deemed to play an especially negating role when it comes to the inculcation of Islamic values among their children. One of the respondents, who is the 43 year old British Pakistani (key informant) married to the 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati), stated the Prevent strategy to be highly oppressive when it comes to the freedom of speech of Muslim children (see pg. no. 113 for details). Another point which she raised was that of the early onset of sex education given to all students at very young ages (also see pg. no. 113 for details). A third point which she raises, and that was also raised by the 33 year old male British Pakistani married to the 31 year old African British (Kenyan, having origins in Pakistan), is that of the introduction of topics aimed at increasing acceptance towards the phenomenon of homosexuality among the official school curriculum in the UK. Since according to them, homosexuality is not permitted in Islam, it is very hard to negate these teachings among their children, and efforts have to be made to constantly speak to the children to counteract any influences such a school curriculum may have on their thought processes.

In a similar context, another respondent who is a 22 year old British Arab (half Egyptian, half Moroccan) married to a British Pakistani (at the time of the interview she had been married for 2 months) stated her aim to avoid the exposure of her children to the British

education system by having moved to an Islamic country with her husband by the time she had children, so that they are not opened up to multiple cultures in the UK that may cause an increased risk towards children following paths that she considers to be non-Islamic. One of the examples which she states is that of the lack of respect towards elders that children growing up in the UK eventually develop, where they are prone to act in "whatever way they want" without heeding the wishes of their elders.

Another respondent, who is a 40 year old British Pakistani married to a 36 year old Black African British (Ugandan), focused more on the religious upbringing by stating her reduced preference for what she called "secular education" and positing that in her eyes, there is no point in gaining multiple degrees of education if one neglects his/her religious responsibilities in the process. She has two daughters (ages four and six) and claimed that she would be happy if her daughters went on to pursue higher education, but was content if they did not make such a pursuance their ultimate aim. A second point which she raises is her interpretation of the role of a father as per Islamic injunctions. According to her, a mother is a nurturer to the children, but the father also has a major role in their upbringing, as he is the one who has to be "answerable to Allah" for the children and their good and bad deeds. Therefore, she states that her husband is very, in her own words, "hands-on" in his daughter's matters, makes sure he has a friendly relationship with them, and is especially aware of their daily activities and needs. Also, she states that daughters raised by their fathers are much more confident, and would not just choose any man as their life-partner, as they would already have a high standard to go from in the form of their loving father. Another aim put forth by one of the respondents, who is the 31 year old Black African British (born and brought up in France) and married to the 38 year old British Pakistani, in order to inculcate religious sentiments among her children, includes that of her daughters achieving the title of *Hafiz-e-Quran* (the person who has learnt all Quranic verses off by heart). She posited that her ultimate aim is to be a Quran teacher herself, so that she could impart her knowledge of the proper recitation and *tafsir*[37] of the Quran to as many people as possible. In line with such an aim, she wants her three daughters (ages

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[37] Tafsir can be referred to the critical explanation and interpretation (exegesis) of a certain text ("Tafsir", 2009).

seven, five and three) to become Hafiz-e-Quran so that they can also fulfil the same aim, and so that:

> They can become one of the leaders of the Ummah, and teach the next generation of Muslim children.

One of the male respondents, who is the 36 year old British Pakistani married to a 37 year old African British (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan), put forth a unique perspective in the sense that where most other respondents perceived any form of cultural influence in a negative light as compared to what they stated to be an Islamic way of life, he claimed Pakistani culture to be very close to what he interpreted such an Islamic way of life to be. According to him, respect for elders is a major lesson that is needed to be taught to children, and that has roots in many places in the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He compares such an Islamic requirement to his own experience of being brought up in a Pakistani household, and gives an example of the way his mother used to instruct him and his siblings to treat guests. He claimed that whenever they had guests in the house, him and his siblings were always made to come into the room where they were sitting and greet them properly, and were also made to stay in the room until the guests left. In this way, they showed respect through the gesture that the guests were important enough for the whole household to have spent valuable time with them. He states that such a practice is uniquely Pakistani, and is a very important signifier of the way he perceives that Islam instructs children to treat their elders.

The second major theme which emerged regarding preferred techniques for childrearing was to strive to teach children to balance one's *deen* (religion) and *dunya* (wordly matters). One such respondent, who is the 45 year old British Pakistani married to the 42 year old British Indian (Memon) stated that she placed special emphasis on her children's (one son [nine years old] and one daughter [six years old]) Islamic education, including sending them to Islamic schools, and teaching them to pray *Salaah* five times a day. In addition, her husband stated that another aim of theirs was not just to inculcate such a form of Islamic values, but to teach them to live in harmony with and be proud of these values in the face of their interactions with the wider British society. He said:

> I want them to be as naturally comfortable in their faith as possible, and focusing on both secular and religious education is the key to that.

Non-British Pakistani respondents also focused on the balance between *deen* and *dunya*. One such respondent, who is a 47 year old British Asian (Other, Malaysian) married to a British Pakistani stated her disdain for the focus on religious rituals rather than on fostering a love for Islam in the Pakistani community. This focus, in her opinion, has caused great inequality between males and females due to an aggressive emphasis on type of clothes worn and inter-mingling between those of the opposite sex, for which the female is under greater surveillance and is held more accountable for and judged more than males among Pakistani families, when both should be equally scrutinized. She states:

> There is a need for building character before enforcing rituals.

She also posited that one cannot always control the actions of their children. Rather, there is only so much one can do to prepare them to face the world, after which a time will come when they will become accountable for their own actions. Therefore, there is a need to give children space to figure out and face life on their own, and stop dealing with them with an iron fist. Also, she states that an element of "realism" is required when dealing with children and their wants. She explains such a statement by giving the example of her children learning to play the piano. Her husband was against them performing such an act, but she convinced him by claiming:

> We even stop our children from listening to pop music, and they don't listen. So isn't it better that they listen to and play a form of classical music which is more of a benefit than listening to what is out there today in the form of pop culture?

A third theme which emerged relates to an increased focus on education of the children, whether secular or religious. Such a sentiment has been observed in almost all couples under consideration, and is best summarized in the following case put forth by the 43 year old British Pakistani married to the 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati). According to her, her generation of parents are much more involved in their children's formal schooling than when they themselves were younger, as their parents had minimum experience regarding the British education system (most of them were first generation immigrants from their

countries of origin). She states her own example, where her parents had no idea, nor had any input about the subjects she and her five siblings picked up at school, especially during the level of GCSEs. Rather, they were more interested in inculcating "Pakistani culture" among her and her siblings (an example includes a keen interest in Bollywood movies among all her family members that was brought about due to her parents' insistence on only watching South Asian content; according to the respondent, much of Indian, Pakistani and Bengali culture had to be fused together so as to have a standing against racist attitudes that were prevalent in the 1970s). Her parents saw education as a method through which children could become independent and as a result, much more "Westernized". As a result, she and her siblings felt neglected, and were of the opinion that they would have performed much better both professionally and academically if their parents were more encouraging. On the other hand, in present times, these children have become parents themselves, and have preferred to be more involved in their children's education, as, according to the respondent, not only has the academic system become more competitive, but also children need the attention and guidance when it comes to major life decisions as to career choice. She states about her family unit:

> I always want my kids to know that they matter. I always say to them, "whatever you want to do, make sure it's halal, and then try to do your best in everything.

One of the British Pakistani respondents (33 years old, and married to the 31 year old African British [Kenyan, origin from Pakistan]) put increased focus on his children's education to the extent that he was willing to spend money to send his children abroad, if he saw that it would help them achieve their academic goals. Another British Pakistani (47 years old, and married to the 40 year old British Indian [born and brought up in Mumbai]) was also willing to spend as much money as needed when it came to his children's education, in order to give them, in his words, "the best chance at succeeding in life". Therefore, out of his three children, his oldest son was going to a grammar school, and his daughter was going to a private school. Although the grammar school has no fees to be paid to attend, admissions to such schools are highly competitive, and many parents opt to send their children for tuition to prepare for the admission test. Thus, the respondent paid for all his son's needed extra tuition sessions. The private school's fees is high, but the

respondent was still willing to pay however much so that his daughter could attend the school she wanted to go to. His youngest son was in a state school, but they also planned to shift him to a grammar or private school when he began his secondary stage of education.

The fourth theme which emerged regarding child rearing techniques among inter-ethnic couples is that of treating one's kids as confidants. One such respondent, who is the 36 year old British Pakistani married to the 35 year old British Asian (Other, Iraqi), stated that her and her husband's relationship with their two kids, a daughter and a son, is more friend-like, where they take the time to really talk to them, take interest in their affairs, and come down to the level of the children so that they can really understand what they are going through. She also stated that she made sure to spend considerable amounts of time individually with each child as well, for example going on long walks with just her daughter or her son, so that such one-on-one interaction would make the children much more comfortable to share their stories with their parents. Her husband was also on the same page as her, and also added that it is important to be patient and forgiving with the children as well, as humans are prone to making mistakes all the time.

The fifth major theme that emerged among two of the non-Pakistani respondents (the 31 year old African British (Black, born and brought up in France married to the 38 year old British Pakistani; and the 39 year old White British [Other, Polish, previously Catholic, has accepted Islam] married to a British Pakistani) involved both parents always needing to be on the same page regarding matters pertaining to the children. Both of these respondents put forth similar views, and stated that both parents need to be strict with the children, otherwise they usually take advantage of the situation by going to the parent that that they think would be most agreeable to their demands, no matter how impractical. In both of their cases, the husband acted as the "good cop", while the wife acted as the "bad cop" (in the words of the African British respondent), and the children usually got away with a lot of their demands by appealing to the "good cop" nature of their father, who gives in very easily.

Apart from the major themes highlighted above, a unique case was observed among the one inter-faith couple that was included in the sample for the present research (the 48 year

old British Pakistani [Muslim] married to the 48 year old White British [Other, Spanish, Catholic]). When the wife was asked regarding the preferred path taken for her children's upbringing, she stated that aspects like a focus on education, and teaching the children to respect their elders may be common to other parents who are involved in marriages within their own cultures. However, the one aspect that separates her and her husband from these other couples is that they have not provided the children with any one religion. They came to the understanding before marriage that they would answer any questions that the children had as honestly as they could, if they ever showed interest, and then they would be allowed to choose what religion to follow for themselves. In such a circumstance, both their children (a son aged 10, and a daughter aged 12) have been to mosques and churches and attended all sorts of events in these places of worship, including communions and confirmations. They also observe all religious festivals associated with both Islam and Christianity, including the month of Ramadan, and Christmas[38]. Furthermore, she states that her husband's sister and niece are more practicing Muslims in the sense that they pray *Salaah* regularly, and wear the *hijab* and *abaya*. The respondent's daughter used to copy them while praying, and used to enjoy trying on headscarves when she was younger. Therefore, they tried to maintain a balance in their lives regarding religious practices.

6.3.2. Gender differentiation among children

There was no clear divide observed among the respondents in the matter of perceived gender differentiation among their children in the sense that almost half of both the British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani respondents spoke in favour of encouraging gender divide, and half spoke against such a notion. The reasons that they stated for such opinions have been detailed in the present subsection.

Two major reasons were given by the respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani, regarding their disapproval of differentiating between genders when it came to child rearing. The first reason stated was that of "the uncertainty of life", and unforeseen circumstances that one may have to face, forcing both the man and the woman to perform

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[38] Christmas, an English word derived from the phrase "mass on Christ's day" is a Christian festival celebrated on the 25th of December to commemorate the birth of Jesus (for more details, see Hillerbrand, 1998).

jobs that they would find hard if not allowed to do previously based on gender disparity. Such a perception was brought forth by the 46 year old British Pakistani married to a British Indian (Memon), who stated:

> This is real life, where anything can happen. A woman may get divorced, or her husband may not be around, so she might then have to play all the roles for the sake of the children.

The second reason which came forth was with regard to perceived Islamic justifications of refraining from gender differentiation among children. One respondent, who is the 36 year old British Pakistani, married to the 35 year old British Asian (Other, Iraqi), gave such a reason by stating that men need to be the breadwinners of the family, so they need to obtain education in order to be able to get a job that is satisfactory enough to fulfil his family's needs. However, she also states that Islam has also put great emphasis on women's education, as:

> Educating the woman means educating the whole Ummah.

Her husband was also interviewed, and he stated that it is important for women to be able to contribute to society in order to improve the perception of Islam as a religion of peace around the world. Thus, in his eyes, education for women is highly important.

One respondent, who is a 50 year old British Pakistani married to a British Asian (Other, Palestinian), gave the example of her son and his preference for the colour "pink". When he was a toddler, he always asked for pink clothes, and she bought them for him, and never told him that his actions were out of the ordinary. He grew out of such a preference himself, and she suspected that someone at school may have said something to him, due to which he consciously stopped going for and wearing pink items himself. According to her, the pink-blue colour association with girls and boys when they are born is a highly Western phenomenon, and is only becoming prevalent around the world due to the presence of social media. It has nothing to do with Islam, and therefore should not be held onto too tightly. Therefore, it is important not to stereotype a certain gender, and let all humans rise to their full potential, with girls growing up as "strong" characters themselves. To

elaborate, she gave the example of a girl she met who was not even able to kick a ball properly, which she found as very "strange and silly".

Among those respondents who agreed that there should be some form of gender differentiation applied between daughters and sons when bringing them up, three major reasons were observed. The first reason which came forth was with regard to the need for protecting women due to perceived physical weakness as compared to men. One respondent, who is the 40 year old British Pakistani married to the 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai), put forth such a reason, and gave the example of her daughter who wished to become a policewoman. She did not let her pursue such a career, as she stated it to be "rough and tough, with no respect for women, and having to deal with big, drunk and crazy men on a daily basis". She also stated her fear of acid attacks on women due to the rise of Islamophobia prevalent in the UK, and therefore was more protective of her daughters in the sense that if they wanted to go somewhere, she would pick and drop them herself, as compared to her sons, who she would especially encourage to use public transport and get out more, so that they could become "street-wise".

A second reason brought forth for differentiating between genders in child rearing was due to a perceived greater threat to a woman's reputation, or "honour" in the eyes of society as compared to men if something goes wrong. A review of literature reveals that the notion of "honour" in the Pakistani community is a fluid concept, and relates to the *izzat* (respect) and *ghairat* (social prestige) of a family. It has both personal and social importance in an individual's lifetime, whether male or female (Knudsen, 2004, p. 4). Man is usually considered the head of the family, and upholder of honour. In many cases, one of the biggest indicators of the honour of a family is considered to be the "chastity" of all its female members. Therefore, man sees the need to maintain the family's social standing with respect to honour, and thus feels the requirement of controlling the code of conduct of the women under his ward, especially with regard to their sexuality. This will entail the successful protective "passing" of a woman from one household (parental) to another (marital) (Lari, 2011, p. 21-22). Most of the respondents in the present research considered such a concept of honour to be completely "outdated" and not in accordance with Islamic values, but more to do with a form of "Pakistani culture" that is vastly influenced by

134

Hinduism from the pre-partition era. Therefore, they claimed to have tried to remedy such a perception by placing equal accountability on both their sons and daughters. However, there were a few cases observed where some of the respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani, were wary of the prevalence of such a concept in not only the British Pakistani community, but also the wider Muslim population, and thus saw a need to "protect" their daughters from the consequences of being *badnaam* (disreputable) in the context of such a social evil. Some of the examples of "dishonourable" acts brought forth by the respondents include wearing of revealing clothes by females, and inter-mingling with males; and if boys indulged in similar acts, the repercussions would not be as severe as when girls perform such acts, but parents would most likely ignore their sons' actions. Such a response was put forth by the 45 year old British Pakistani, married to the 42 year old British Indian (Memon). She gives the example of the schools that she would send her children to when they reach secondary school. At the time of the interview, both her son and her daughter were studying in Islamic schools. However, she stated that she would like to shift her son to grammar school once he starts preparing for his GCSEs, but will keep her daughter in the Islamic school, as she thinks that her daughter is "very loving of the *dunya* (worldly attractions)", and thus needs to be protected more from its vices.

Another respondent, who is the 22 year old British Arab (half Moroccan, half Egyptian) married to a British Pakistani put forth a similar sentiment to the one stated above, by claiming that she would be more strict with her daughters with regard to monitoring their daily activities, and would prefer to keep them in Islamic schools more than her sons. The reason she states for this is:

> In the present society, if a girl goes off track, it is very difficult to bring her back. Also, society only gives a girl one chance. If she loses that chance, she can never get her reputation back.

The third reason brought forth by the respondents for finding the need to differentiate between genders when it comes to child rearing entailed a certain version of Islamic justifications for such a viewpoint. One such respondent, who is the 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi, states that she would have no problem with her daughter wanting to take on a professional career. However, she said that when her

daughter gets married, she would explain to her that for a family to have peace and harmony, it is important for the woman to understand that the man is to be taken as the head of the household, and she has to take up major responsibility of most of the household tasks, and of the children. She states that such a sentiment stems from her understanding of the differentiation that Islam has elaborated upon when it comes to their state of mind. She posits that Islam reveals men and women to have their own qualities. Women can never be well-suited for positions of power, as their physiology includes going through their menstrual cycle once every month, which affects their state of mind due to hormonal changes. She states such a factor contributing to why all of the prophets in the eyes of Islam are male, and also why in legal situations the witnesses of two women are taken to be equivalent to that of one man.

Another respondent, who is the 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai) married to the 40 year old British Pakistani, and is a *maulana* at the local mosque located in Norbury, stated that Islam has put forth a well-balanced system with regard to gender roles. And, although in the present society, many people might find such roles to be restricting to their mobility, especially females, these roles are there to be the best channel through which "one can safeguard his *deen* (religion)". A third respondent (the 50 year old British Indian [Gujrati] married to the 43 year old British Pakistani [key informant]) stated that in his eyes, where males and females are permitted to perform the same roles within reason, an extra factor that has to be added with regard to Islamic teachings when it comes to females, is that of the need for "permission" to be granted by the caretaker of the female for performing a certain task. Males may not have to be bound by such a factor.

Another aspect with regard to gender roles was brought to light when considering the increased emphasis on the wearing of the *hijab* among many of the respondents, both male and female. When considering the sample under consideration, nearly all female respondents (both British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani) apart from two (the 72 year old British Asian [Other, Malaysian] married twice, both times to British Pakistanis, and the 32 year old British Pakistani previously married to a British Bangladeshi for a year, but is now divorced) wore the *hijab* paired with what they stated to be "modest clothing", while many of them preferred to wear the *abaya* when it came to leaving the house, or interacting

with non-*mehram* men. When it came to their daughters, all of these female respondents (and their husbands as well in many cases) stated that they would at least "encourage" their daughters to wear the *hijab* when they become *balig* and foster a love for such a form of dressing among them. However, a major finding which emerged was in relation to boys, and the concept of honour, as elaborated upon above. Many of the respondents stated that in their respective ethnic cultures, such a dress code differentiation is taken to an extreme when it comes to matters pertaining to the conduct and behaviours of both sons and daughters. According to them, increased restriction on dress-code for women has translated to an increased restriction in other matters as well, which has least connection to Islam. Examples include the restriction of women to the household, and a barrier placed upon them if they wish to work professionally as compared to men. According to one respondent (the 43 year old British Pakistani married to the 50 year old British Indian [Gujrati]):

> In many cultures, women are told that they are not to leave their houses, unless they dying or going to their grave. This is absolutely ridiculous. The whole reason why women have been told to cover up is so that they can go out and participate in society. If women were meant to stay within the walls of their houses, why would Allah demand that they cover themselves? Why wouldn't He just clearly state that women should never leave their houses?

In such a context, many of the respondents stated that although dress-code between males and females may be different in the eyes of Islam, but the implications for sinning are equal on both genders. Therefore, both should sons and daughters should be questioned and held accountable with equal measure in all matters, regardless of gender and difference in dress code. As the 42 year old British Indian (Memon) married to the 45 year old British Pakistani stated:

> It works both ways. You can't have women doing one thing, and males doing another. If women have been instructed to cover themselves, then men have also been instructed to lower their gazes. Both have to have a form of modesty, doesn't matter if a person is male or female.

Thus it can be inferred that many of the respondents disregarded cultural practices related to their ethnic background when it came to gender differentiation between their children, and put greater emphasis on perceived Islamic principles to guide such matters. However,

differences in interpretation were observed. Where most of the respondents were more open to both their sons and daughters performing the same kind of roles in the household and professionally (based on either a fluid interpretation of gender roles in Islam [see pg. no. 111 for details], or on the need for women to be more socially active in the present state of society in the UK), some of them regarded gender roles to be more fixed, based on either the arguments of physiology, or a fixed view of such gender roles based on rigid interpretations of Islamic Shariah law.

6.4. Family dynamics and negotiations of cross-cultural contact: A theoretical perspective

Stuart Hall, in his thesis detailing the emergence of a multiplicity of forms of identity in the post-modern era, stated the emergence of the feminist discourse to be one of the five important factors which acted as a bridge between the transition from modernity to post-modernity. Therefore, feminist ideals should take center stage as one of the many ideals that an individual living in a post-modern world would fall back upon in order to navigate the various situations that he/she faces. However, in the context of the present research, where inter-marriage should entail leaning on to such major Western discourses, feminism being one aspect of such a discourse, it was observed that in order to work through cultural barriers that may arise due to cross-cultural contact, religion rather than Western ideals was used as the common ground. Hall reiterates in his writings regarding the role of feminism in producing a post-modern world:

> It [feminism] questioned the classic distinction between 'inside' and 'outside,' 'private' and 'public.' Feminism's slogan was "the personal is political"… It therefore opened up to political contestation whole new arenas of social life - the family, sexuality, housework, the domestic division of labor, child-rearing, etc… It also exposed, as a political and social question, the issue of how we are formed and produced as gendered subjects. That is to say, it politicized subjectivity, identity, and the process of identification (as men/women, mothers/fathers, sons/daughters). (Hall, 1992, p. 611)

In the context of the present research, it can be inferred that many of the respondents' perceptions were seen to be in accordance of Hall's claim regarding a post-modernist

process of questioning and rejecting forms of gender roles that they stated to be oppressive and restrictive, especially with regard to the situation of females viz-a-viz family dynamics. However, where most of the respondents' perceptions diverge from the writings of Hall is in their inherent use of the interpretation of Islamic Shariah law, rather than the feminist discourse, to bring forth what they stated was a more logical and sensical form of gender roles.

What is being criticized here, as per the findings of the research, is the highly restrictive components of a culture having its origins in South Asia. According to a number of respondents, as per such a cultural form, there are certain aspects that they perceive to be highly limiting of women's mobility and derogatory to their status in family life. Some of the characteristics brought forth by the respondents regarding such a form of cultural restraints are: the concept of "honour" and how it has became an increased source of female scrutiny (see pg. no. 134 for details); the implied expectation of women being housebound, and under the thumb of their in-laws without having any say in matters of importance (see pg. no. 114 for details); men playing minimal role in the household and not learning to fend for themselves (see pg. no. 104 details); a focus on rituals, rather than on the aesthetic component of religious sentiments (see pg. no. 129 for details); among other restraints.

How, in the eyes of many of the respondents, does the religion of Islam provide a more feasible alternative to what they perceived to be a restrictive form of South Asian culture in the context of family dynamics? A few of the female respondents did state more of a need for all members of the Muslim community to move "with the times" in order to ensure positive social and professional standing within the competitive British environment, and thus mentioned themselves being partly feminists. However, most of them emphasized more greatly on the need for some form of division of roles in order to ensure a "peaceful and harmonious" form of family life. Where such a form of division of roles diverges from those as brought forth in South Asian culture is in their fluidity. According to many of the respondents, as per Islamic Shariah, the main role of a man is to provide for his family financially, and the main role of a woman is to be nurturer to the couple's children. Apart from these particular roles, both males and females are permitted to perform other tasks as well, so long as the two primary roles are not neglected. Such a conceptualization entails

some form of solid grounding, but leaves avenues open for achieving more than what is allowed in a highly restrictive household system.

Why has there been such a disdain among many of the respondents regarding the gender roles brought forth by the discourse of feminism? A major finding which emerged, especially among the female respondents, is how the feminist movement has caused a placing of an increased burden on the shoulders of women in the UK. Women have now become more active both as a financial provider, and as care-takers for their children. Men have taken advantage of such a situation, and have become "lazy" and have "slacked off" on their responsibilities (see pg. no. 119 for details). In such a context, the 43 year old British Pakistani (key informant) married to the 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati), stated that a division of roles makes life much easier for women, as then there is no constant worry and a compulsion to work to earn for one's family – you work to please yourself, as the male has the main breadwinning responsibility. Also, in the eyes of Islam, the money a woman earns is her own, and the husband has no right to take that money away from her. She states regarding such a viewpoint:

> People hear me talking about women's rights, and say to me, "Oh,
> you must be a feminist". But I say to them, "No, I am not a feminist.
> I am a Muslim, and this is what my religion tells me."

Also, many of the respondents stated that the movement for the "liberation of bodies" and the sentiment of "wearing what you want" has caused an increased focus on external beauty and looking a certain way. According to them, Islam's focus on modesty causes the spotlight to fall on a person's character rather than his/her looks, which is a real testament of a person's character.

Therefore, when considering such a scenario in terms of the interplay between the three discourses relating to Western culture, culture relating to one's ethnic background, and Islam, it can be inferred that in most cases there was a tendency observed to escape what were perceived to be oppressive cultural components, especially related to the role of females in Pakistani households. This was a major reason why many of the female respondents opted to inter-marry in the first place (see chapter 4). However, as per Hall's conceptualization, where the "global Western discourse" should have acted as the medium

of representation for those trying to be rid of such cultural constraints (see pg. nos. 22-25 for details), it was observed that religion played more of a mediating role, where ethnic cultural components were retained based on whether they fell in accordance with perceived Islamic principles or whether they were in contradiction to them. An example included using religion and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to justify men having a more active role in household tasks, rather than feminist ideals. The components of Western discourse that should have been taken into consideration for dealing with such a circumstance, including the discourse of feminism, were co-opted for a more religious alternative, which, according to the key informant of the present research, is not perceived to be a man-made ideology, but one passed onto humanity from the Almighty being Himself. Another major finding that emerged in the present chapter, and that can be considered to be an additional rejection of a powerful component of the post-modernist Western discourse, is that of the rejection and struggle against the efforts made by the British government to garner an increased acceptance towards the phenomenon of homosexuality. Furthermore, such a phenomenon has been used to reinforce the role of the mother as a nurturer among some of the respondents of the present research, as the need for an active figure is required eminently in the household, who can pay attention to, and help undo all such Western components that are greatly pushed upon the children through their school curriculum and pop-culture influences. Therefore, with regard to family dynamics among inter-ethnic couples, the evident role of religion observed makes the situation an alternative one to what Stuart Hall may have predicted.

7. INTER-ETHNIC FAMILIES AND THE FORMATION OF IDENTITY

According to Stuart Hall (1990), certain conditions leading to, and emerging from, the present era of globalization have led to an alternate conceptualization of the concept of "identity", with focus on the fluidity and multiplicity of identities that one acquires over the span of his/her lifetime, rather than on the notion of "identity" as fixed and stable (p. 222-226). In such a context, his conceptualization of the formation of "cultural identity" is dependent upon the interplay of a multiplicity of discourses: an Americanized "global" discourse, focused more on absorption and incorporation of differences rather than the shunning of the "Other"; and other local discourses formed within representation of this global discourse. Cultural identity formed in such a circumstance would be pluralistic, and would entail having feelings of love, desire and ambivalence for the Other rather than a sense of alienation. The following chapter focuses on the processes of the formation of cultural identity as reflected in the various aspects of inter-marriage among British Pakistani inter-ethnic couples, with a focus on the interplay between three discourses that were observed to be impactful in the lives of the respondents: the discourse of "British culture"; Pakistani culture (in case of British Pakistani respondents), or other form of ethnic identity (in case of non-British Pakistani respondents); and that of Islamic jurisprudence. It will be inferred whether the interplay between these three discourses measures up to Hall's inferences on the matter pertaining to global and local discourses, or whether an alternate explanation is present.

7.1. Forms of cultural identity

The following subsection deals with the respondents' perceptions regarding their sense of cultural identity, and how it relates to other perceived forms of identities that they encounter in their daily lives as residents of the UK, and as being part of inter-ethnic couples. These respondents were asked regarding their conceptualization of British culture, and how their self-identity related to such a form of British culture. The findings are quoted as follows.

7.1.1. In the form of a transition

One of the major themes which emerged in the present study includes a journey of "finding oneself" among many of the respondents, both British Pakistani and non-British Pakistani spouses, where they went through a number of different phases in their lives before reaching a point that they are most content with. In many cases, going through these various stages of life turned out to be a major contributing factor in the decision to inter-marry. Among the British Pakistani respondents coming under consideration, one respondent included is 40 years old, and married to a Black African British (Ugandan, revert to Islam). According to her, she found in her initial eleven years of life living in Pakistan that a sense of nationalism towards one country was not a sufficient enough reason to guide one's actions throughout one's lifetime. She became disillusioned by such a form of thinking, and decided to take up a "Western" form of life, that is geared towards more individualistic goals and a preference towards materialistic desires. However, the events of 9/11, and the resultant wave of Islamophobia encountered shortly thereafter caused her to question her place in society, and she decided to look into Islam further as a means to appease her constant sense of dissatisfaction with her perceived purpose in life (for more details, see pg. no. 76). Now, she states that she identifies herself as Muslim before anything else. And, being a Muslim entailed her to constantly struggle with the parts of her that she claimed to be molded by "British culture". Some of the examples which she stated of such forms of Britishness are her tendency towards being "stuck-up" and claiming that she knows better than those of other cultures by virtue of being born and raised in the UK; and her inclination towards taking access to basic amenities for granted, to the extent that she would certainly panic in any unknown situation as compared to people from most "developing" Muslim countries, where they need to improvise on a daily basis. She also stated that the minute she started wearing the *hijab* and the *abaya*, she felt that she could no longer identify herself a "British" to a great extent, as she felt that the non-Muslims in her surroundings were not very welcoming to her after such a decision.

Another British Pakistani respondent, who is 43 years old (key informant) and married to a 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati) also stated a similar journey to the one above, that involved a shift from identifying herself as Pakistani, to being considerably Western, to

being a devout Muslim. She states her frustration with her parents and their strict rules and regulations during her teenage years, and used to often think "Why weren't we born Christian? Why do we have to go through this everyday?" Some examples of her parent's strict upbringing included that of never watching or listening to any Western forms of entertainment, for fear of becoming too "Westernized"; and not being allowed to have any non-Pakistani friends while growing up. She quotes the case of a play which she wanted to participate in at school, but which her father restricted her from taking part in. He only gave in because the respondent's teacher visited her home one evening and talked her father into giving his permission. The respondent stated about such an incident that many Pakistanis used to give in to the authority of "white people" very easily, no matter how strict they are in other matters, as for them, in her own words, "they are outsiders in the white man's land, and become helpless against their whims." She was also not allowed to attend university, and had to secretly fill in the admission forms and send them in, and fight profusely with her parents to let her go once she was admitted. However, her days at university helped her to be exposed to more Muslim friends and circles, and she started looking more into Islamic teachings and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This led her to become, in her own words, more Islamic, and which she claimed had changed her life for the better. At present, she states herself to be a proud Muslim, and can now understand her parent's fears and reasons for her strict upbringing after having children of her own. However, she states a vehement dislike for any form of nationalistic sentiment or attitude, as according to her:

> Nationalism usually stems from a sense of pride in one's culture, which is absolutely senseless, as culture is man-made, and will ultimately have many faults.

Such a sentiment fuels her present wish to be rid of all influences of what she classes as "culture", and to replace them with her interpretation of Islamic values. Her husband also went through a similar experience throughput his lifetime, and ended up inter-marrying due to his wish to find a wife who was "practicing" religion. Although their marriage was arranged, he agreed to marry her due to her inclination towards Islam.

Two more cases of transition of identity were observed among the female British Pakistani respondents. The 51 year British Pakistani married to a British Asian (Other, Palestinian) saw herself moving between different forms of identity, from an aversion to her Pakistani upbringing (fueled mostly by racist dealings of her family with anything not related to Pakistan) to an atheist mindset, to Islamic inclinations after the birth of her son (see pg. no. 78 for details). The 30 year old British Pakistani married to a British Bangladeshi had an increased inclination towards Islam after a series of adverse experiences dealing with sexual harassment from male family members from Pakistan (for details, see pg. no. 64).

Non-British Pakistani female respondents also put forth similar stories of various phases that they went through in their lives with regard to their cultural identity. One such respondent, who is a 47 year old British Asian (Other, Malaysian) married to a British Pakistani stated her change in orientations when it came to perceived strictness of the focus on rituals and practices in Islam. She spent the initial years of her life in Malaysia, where she claimed that although all her family members were Muslim, and believed in Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), not all of them put much emphasis on the practical aspect of Islam. Therefore, they had a fluent definition of what may be perceived to be "modest" with regard to woman's attire. However, moving to the UK for the purposes of attaining higher education caused her to attend many Islamic circles and meetings at university, changing her orientation to focus on a more "performative" role, including the wearing of the *hijab* and *abaya*, performing prayers and a serious focus on gender segregation. Such a change in orientation also opened her up to the possibility of marrying into a British Pakistani family, as she perceived many of their practices to be in line with her mindset at the time. However, when she was made to practically face these cultural practices after marriage, she found herself being averted from them, causing another shift in mindset more akin to her previous orientation that she had in Malaysia. One of the biggest reasons that she stated for such a shift was her witnessing of an excessive emphasis on actions rather than fostering a love for religion, especially with regard to, in her words, "the family's honour that a girl holds in her hands". She said:

> Although perceptions may be changing, with more and more girls
> being educated, but the aspect of the expectation of girls to protect
> the honour of the family is quite overbearing for them, and it always

reduces to the way they dress, and their obedience to the family and husband. In one sense you can understand that you need it to some extent. But, there has to be some level of independent thinking among young people to forward society. Otherwise, if our expectations of girls are only to cover, to sit nicely, quietly and to not cause any trouble, and to give them the impression of being marriageable, and boys are left to do whatever they want, even though their thinking may not necessarily be developed, this will hold back the Muslim community in Britain.

She also stated:

Before it was very much about Asian dress and *dupatta*[39], but now it has morphed into the Islamic dress. So same motivation, different guise. I see this as an Arabization of Islamic values, rather than a true representation of Islam.

However, where her affiliations to Pakistani practices was observed to be dwindling, she was also observed to have had adverse perceptions regarding the popular culture surrounding her being passed around through audio-visual mediums, which in her opinion had its roots in misogynistic and materialistic mindsets, with music being the most lethal of weapons in this regard. According to her, the youth belonging to the ethnic minority populations in South London, where the respondent is resident, are the greatest victims of such derogatory content. They waste their lives away following the carefree and frivolous lifestyles depicted in popular genres and categories of music and movies, enabling aspirants from other hardworking ethnic backgrounds to take up all prestigious jobs and positions. Nevertheless, she states that she has not been able to escape being somewhat influenced by such cultural forms, especially since she has been living in London for most of her married life. Examples include preferring to wear the popular attire of tracksuit bottoms and trainers when at home (she wears *abaya* and *hijab* when going out, not due to a sense of Islamic necessity, but out of habit from when she thought such attire to be crucial to her faith in Islam); road-rage while driving; and rushing around to get things done and being highly impatient with the people around her.

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[39] A big piece of cloth worn traditionally by South Asian women to cover their chests, kept in place by draping over both shoulders (Dupatta, n.d.).

One of the male British Pakistani respondents, who is 36 years old and married to a 35 year old British African (Kenyan, with origin from Pakistan) also stated a transition from a very "Western" mindset, based on a typical teenage lifestyle of following popular culture, and being heavily influenced by rap music to the extent of speaking "foul language". However, he became inclined towards Islam at the early age of 19 (see pg. no. 80 for details), and changed his lifestyle to fit that of the culture followed in Saudi Arabia, where he stayed for many years to study at Madinah University. He now wears thobes on a daily basis, and speaks Arabic with his children as a primary language. However, where his case differs from those stated above is due to his preference towards many aspects of Pakistani culture, and his perception of these aspects to be very close to his interpretation of Islam. According to him, one of the biggest traits which he observes to be prevalent among Pakistani families is the respect that the children have for their elders. Also, he states that the *shalwar qameez*[40], although not an Islamic dress in his eyes, still provides the wearer with a form of modesty that can be attributed to Islam.

In all the aforementioned scenarios, it was observed that the religion of Islam has played a major role in each of these respondents' lives, and in shaping the form of cultural identity that they held at the time of the interview. And in most of these cases, their interpreted Islamic way of life helped to achieve a sense of self-identification that they tried and failed to attain from other forms of identity, namely Westernized ideals, or cultural affiliations related to the respective ethnic groups that they were born into.

7.1.2. Pick and choose according to preference

In the present subsection, those cases have been included where a true interplay between the three main forms of identity (Western/British, Pakistani or ethnic identity of spouse, and Islamic identity) has been observed, with the respondents exhibiting a wide range of cultural traits and responses based on the situation under consideration. Among the British Pakistanis, one such case was observed among the 46 year old respondent married to a British Indian (Memon). According to her, she tried to stay as far as possible from what

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[40] A type of clothing usually worn by South Asian women, and entails a long shirt, with loose and baggy trousers and traditionally a long piece of cloth called a *dupatta*, in order to cover the front of the body (Salwar kameez, n.d.).

she perceived to be Pakistani family practices, based on her perceptions on the stereotypical role of the woman in a Pakistani household. She also refrained from customs that she thought to be far from Islamic teachings. An example includes the Quran *khatam* (a gathering held, usually in remembrance of the death of a family member, where people attend and recite parts of the Quran until the whole Quran has been read, after which a prayer is made in order to place the blessings bestowed by the completion of the Quran onto the departed soul for forgiveness for his/her sins in the hereafter) held on the fortieth day after the death of an individual in a Pakistani household, which she refused to hold after the death of her father. However, she enjoyed the festive nature of cultural events prevalent among the Pakistani community, including that of *Chand Raat* (a celebration in South Asian communities performed due to the sighting of the moon announcing, the advent of Eid the next morning) and Eid festivities, and also was partial to dressing up in traditional Pakistani attire and to various types of Pakistani foods. Furthermore, she stated that although she cannot fully identify with what she calls the "British way of life", as she perceives it to have taken more of an atheistic/agnostic route, she would still rather call herself as British rather than Pakistani. The reason she gave for this is that she would never be able to fit in with people in Pakistan, as she perceives the lifestyle to be completely different to what she is used to in the UK. She gave the example of friends and family in Pakistan, whom she states to have focused their lives on socializing and going out to lunches, instead of performing "productive" tasks for the good of society.

Another British Pakistani respondent, who is 30 years old, and married to a British Bangladeshi, also stated her experience of having to live "dual lives", similar to the case stated above. She remembers while growing up when she lived a typically "Pakistani" life when in the boundaries of her home, including speaking Punjabi, and eating Pakistani cuisine. However she did not feel comfortable enough in exposing such a lifestyle to the people she used to interact with in the wider society, especially her school fellows. A few examples which she states is her inability to tell her class-fellows that she used to eat *salan roti* (curry and chapati) for dinner, and instead used to say that she had "fish and chips"; and her fear that her parents would come to school at parent-teacher meetings and speak in Punjabi to each other, embarrassing her in front of her friends. At present she works at a nursery teaching five and six year old children, and tells about a small Indian girl who

reminded her of herself when she was younger. She tries to make students from South Asian backgrounds more comfortable with their cultural practices by speaking to them in their native language, and by giving talks to the whole class regarding different cultural preferences prevalent among people of different backgrounds. However, the Indian girl refused to speak to her in Hindi, stating that her parents forbade her from speaking in any other language apart from English at nursery. She does not have any children yet, but worries about how they would deal in similar situations, especially as they would have dual heritages (Pakistani and Bangladeshi) and would have even more confused identities than she had when she was younger, as she only had to deal with the Pakistani leg of things.

Non-Pakistani spouses also exhibited a fluidity in cultural affiliations. One such respondent, who is a 41 year old British Indian married to the 47 year old British Pakistani, stated that since she was born and brought up in Mumbai, India, she was already exposed to a highly multicultural environment of people having different faiths from her, including Christians, Hindus and Sikhs. Growing up, she lived in an apartment complex where her family was the only Muslim family in the area. One of her best friends was Hindu, and she used to go to his house regularly and was on very friendly terms with his family members. She also used to take part in their *pooja[41]* ceremonies, and saw no harm in doing so, as long as she was not compromising her own beliefs as a Muslim. Therefore, she states that she is much more open-minded with regard to keeping relations with people from diverse backgrounds, and had no problem with interactions even after marriage, when she moved to an area of Croydon that is highly multicultural. She even encourages her three children to branch out of the Muslim community and keep contact with many different types of people. However, despite such fluidity and acceptance of people vastly different from her in mindset, she could not in any way condone the phenomenon of homosexuality, which she stated as "unnatural". Since this phenomenon is highly encouraged at her teenage son's school, she has had to explain to him what she perceived to be the Islamic reasons for condemning such an act. She has also had to explain to him regarding the reasons why having intimate relations with a "girlfriend" is also not condoned in Islam. Therefore, her

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[41] *Pooja* is a name given to ceremonial worship as performed by the followers of Hinduism. This worship may be performed everyday in the household, or may be in the form of intricate temple rituals. Usually offerings of both objects and eatables are made to a physical representation of a God (Puja, 1998).

children have had to pick and choose the situations in which they can act, in Hall's terms, characteristic to the nature of the Western discourse of "accepting through differences", and when they need to exercise ideals that diverge from such a Western mindset.

Another non-Pakistani respondent, who is a 34 year old White British (Other, Lithuanian) married to a British Pakistani, also stated her preference to pick and choose from practices prevalent both in her husband's family, and from her Lithuanian background. She reverted to Islam before marrying her husband, and took up many of the cultural practices of his family, which is evident from her following statement:

> My friend calls me a half-*desi*[42], as I now can cook 90% of the food, and wear the clothes. You have to give in as a family, otherwise the family won't work.

However, the scenario in which she is reluctant to follow the beliefs of her in-laws is that related to the distinction between gender roles. She states that her husband's immediate family is very conservative, and there are always talks of "woman can't do, man can do" among them, which makes things very complicated, especially for the children. Her daughter, who is 7 years old, sees the boys in her family, including her brother, going to places with limited restrictions, and she gets extremely, in her own words, "ballistic" and starts complaining that "everyone is equal in this country". The respondent also stated that the women in her husband's family have no social life. Their life is limited to the house. The only reason they go out is for weddings, funerals or family gatherings. Also, they are always gossiping with each other, and indulging in tv dramas, as do not have anything else to occupy their time with apart from domestic chores. Any time when a woman wants to have a role outside of the house, she becomes the target of gossiping and taunts from other extended family members, that she is neglecting her own family to attain freedom. In response to all this, the respondent states:

> In the UK we are mature people. We can decide what we want to do. We know what is right and what is wrong, and can make our own decisions.

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[42] *Desi* literally translates to "local" or "indigenous". In the context of the UK, *desi* relates to someone having South Asian origins, and also is inclined towards the cultural practices of the countries in this region.

Therefore, she associates both British and Lithuanian culture to be indicative of "being free and outgoing". With regard to her children, she states that they have both Pakistani and Lithuanian tendencies in them: Pakistani when it comes to the food, clothes and religion (the children are being brought up as Muslim); and Lithuanian when it comes to their adventurous, sporty, and excursive natures.

Some of the responses of the male non-British Pakistani respondents can also be included in the present subsection. One such respondent, who is the 52 year old American Mexican married to the 44 year old British Pakistani, stated his American "Californian" upbringing to have a very crucial influence on his outlook on life. Being a revert to Islam, his religious identity is quite strong in relation to his wish to spend his life in accordance to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). However, his perceptions diverge from those of the cases stated above in his view on the phenomenon of homosexuality. According to him, Californian culture is very liberal, and he has not been able to shake that aspect of his cultural identity, even after accepting Islam and moving to the UK after marriage. Therefore, although he will not indulge in such acts himself, he would not condemn or interfere in the lives of those who follow such a mindset. He states in this regard:

> Two of my bosses are gay, and I have no issue with that. A few of
> the people I know have asked me how I deal with it, and why I don't
> get transferred. As a Muslim, I am ok with it. This is how they live
> their life in Western society, we live our life in our own way. This
> is my Californian laid-back understanding.

Therefore, it can be inferred that in all the above cases, Stuart Hall's thesis runs true as to his observation that an acquirement of a multiplicity of identities causes the individual to draw on the identity that suits him/her the most in the varying situations under consideration. Whether the correspondence is greater towards the identity in line with the "global Western discourse" as compared to the other forms of identity that one acquires has yet to be inferred in light of the overall findings of the present research (see section 7.4. for details).

7.1.3. Prevalence of religious identity

There was one non-British Pakistani respondent, who is a 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai) married to the 40 year old British Pakistani, who affiliations to Islam were strong from a very young age, causing him to reject any other form of0 identification. His father worked most of his life as a *maulana*, and he became highly interested in religion due to his father's influence. He therefore attained a degree in Islamic studies, and went through the required qualifications to become a *maulana* himself. In such a context, when asked about his perceptions regarding British culture, he stated it to be a "culture of freedom, to do what you like, when you like, how you like." He did not feel any sort of affiliation towards such a lifestyle by virtue of his interpretation of Islamic Shariah. He states:

> It is not about fitting in. The wider British culture will not accept the
> Muslim narrative as it is not one of complete freedom in any sense,
> you are restricted. If British culture is open minded in the true sense,
> then Muslims shouldn't have a problem. But it's not. If the British
> believed in freedom, then there should be freedom of religion, of
> what to wear, of how to pray, whether it's any religion.

When asked whether he then felt any affiliation towards his Indian roots, he claimed:

> It doesn't matter what you are. I am only Indian in the sense of
> background and roots, and British in the sense of where I grow up,
> live, and where my children are growing up. Otherwise I am a
> Muslim first.

7.1.4. Husband's ethnic practices

One of the non-British Pakistani spouses included in the present research, who is a 72 year old British Asian (Other, Malaysian) previously married twice to British Pakistanis (divorced the first husband, is a widower from the second husband), was observed to have taken up the responsibility of upholding all the cultural practices related to her second husband's Pakistani ethnicity. She integrated into her husband's family to such an extent, that at the time of the interview, after roughly 45 years of marriage, she has forgotten how to speak Malay fluently, even though she was born and brought up in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia till the age of 20. Her children were also interviewed, and they stated that apart from visiting Malaysia a few times in their life, there was no other sign of any form of

Malaysian culture in their upbringing. Even the food that their mother cooked, and the clothes she wore were Pakistani (she states that she only wears *shalwar qameez*, as it is "comfortable" and is quite capable of making samosas and chapli kebabs [forms of Pakistani food] from scratch, as I observed her cooking these items during one of my visits to her house to interview her and her sons). Another observation which came forth during the interview with the respondent was that in all instances of questions relating to religion, she conflated them to be similar to Pakistani cultural practices. An example includes my questioning of the importance of religion in her life, to which she stated:

> Yes, very important. I send my sons to the mosque to read Quran, and to make sure they grow up as good Pakistanis.

7.1.5. Britain as "multicultural"

Another major theme emerged solely among some of the British Pakistani respondents entailed the conceptualization of Britain as a "multicultural" society to the extent that there is complete freedom to live life in accordance with one's own ideals insofar as to call oneself "British" in relation to such open-mindedness. One such respondent, who is 40 years old and married to the 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai), stated that the British government has done a very good job in fostering different faiths within the region of the UK, because of which they can not only practice their religion of Islam freely, but are also provided with countless facilities to ease up such an endeavor. Examples of some of these facilities include the permission to construct and run mosques; the establishment of prayer areas in public spaces; and the presence of halal meat shops in every neighbourhood. Another observation which she has is that she felt that she was more free to practice her religion in the UK than in Pakistan, where the case should have been opposite as Pakistan is a Muslim country. She remembers going to Liberty Market, Lahore, where she was the only woman out of the hundreds of women gathered there to wear the *hijab*. Also, shop vendors would completely ignore you if you walked in the shop wearing the *hijab*. They would serve the "prettier" girls first, but as soon as she started speaking in English, their tone would change with her. Also, she states that you do not have the support of your family to be able to practice Islam. For example, girls would not be allowed to wear the *hijab*, as family members used to say to them *aise kyun kar rahi ho, shaadi nhi hogi phr tmhari*

(why are you doing that, you won't be able to get married if you do). Furthermore, she gives the example of *jumma* prayers[43], which is a priority among Muslims in London to the extent that more than one *jamaaten* (prayer congregations in a mosque) are held at mosques for the large number of people coming to perform their *jumma* prayers. Although she loves Pakistan, goes frequently, is very connected to her family there, and holds on to many Pakistani cultural components in her and her immediate family's life (including eating Pakistani cuisine regularly, and preferring to wear *shalwar qameez* almost daily), she feels more at home in the UK, where despite the rise in Islamophobia, she feels no restrictions on her desire to practice Islam in the way she feels is right. For this reason, she was proud to call herself as a British Pakistani, with emphasis on the "British".

Another British Pakistani respondent, who is 48 years old and married to a 52 year old American Mexican, states Britain to be multicultural enough to accept people with differences, as being a Muslim, she finds people accepting her more in the UK than in Pakistan. She elaborates upon such a perception by saying that when she goes to Pakistan, people over there treat her as an "alien" by constantly labelling her as "English" in any conversation or situation. However, she has not felt others treating her differently on the basis of her religion or her ethnicity in the UK.

A third female British Pakistani respondent, who is 38 years old, and married to a British Asian (Other, Afghan) stated that the reason why she is happy to be resident in the UK is due to its present multicultural nature. According to her, the diversity of cultures and faiths has brought forth a legal system in which many of those acts are permitted that are forbidden by Shariah law. She sees the disadvantage of such a scenario, as it permits anyone and everyone to be involved in acts that she considered to be morally reprehensible and Islamically punishable (an example which she quotes is of having pre-marital intimate relations, which is punishable by law in Muslim countries, but has no penalty in the UK as long as both partners are legally adults and consent is present). However, she states that she prefers such a scenario, as it then entails that true Muslims are better in the UK in the

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[43] A prayer conducted in the form of a congregation on Friday in place of the afternoon prayer of *Dhuhr* as conducted on the other six days in the week. A *khutba* (religious sermon) is delivered by a maulana, after which the prayer is performed ("All about Jummu'ah [Friday prayer]", n.d.).

sense that they will refrain from sinning, even if they know that there are no legal ramifications for performing sinful acts. Whereas in Islamic countries, you are punished for doing immoral things. Therefore, she is happy to live in the UK, have free will and be a true test to the kind of person she wants to become.

This theme thus depicts an alternate conceptualization of British culture being an open book that exhibits a variety and cultures and faiths, rather than the perceptions of British culture being highly materialistic in nature, with an atheistic/agnostic tendency. In light of such an alternate conceptualization, it was observed that the respondents that held such a view were more willing to greatly identify themselves as "British" as compared to the respondents included in the aforementioned subsections.

7.2. Children's official identities

One of the questions asked from all the respondents was regarding the official label of ethnic identity that they would put down for their children on the census data collection form and on their birth certificates. When considering couples having Asian origins, most of them stated that they had selected the option of "Asian (Other)" for their children, based on differing ethnicities of the parents. Similarly, where one part of the couple was British Pakistani, but the other was not an Asian, the respondents stated that they put down the option of "Mixed Ethnicity" for their children. However, in a few cases observed, the ethnicity of the father was preferred for the children, based on the respondents' perceptions of lineage having to continue from the father's side, and the children having to take up their father's surname, as per Islamic tradition. Where in most cases this was accepted by the female counterpart of the couple, two of the respondents claimed to not be able to accept such a circumstance. One such respondent, who is the 45 year old British Pakistani married to the 42 year old British Indian (Memon), stated an incident in such regard. According to her, when her eldest son was born, she put down her ethnicity i.e. British Pakistani for him on the birth certificate, without consulting her husband. However, a few days later her husband found out, and he stated his anger on such an act without consultation from him, and in anger demanded her to get their son's ethnicity changed to "British Indian" immediately. She initially resisted, but ultimately gave in based on "wanting to keep the

peace in the family". The husband was also interviewed, and he stated that there was no particular reason for him to have demanded for his son's ethnicity to be changed to that of British Indian, as he understands that his children would be part-Pakistani as well. However, he states that the biggest motivator for such a response may have been due to his wife not consulting him in the first place regarding matters of their children's ethnicity, and put down her preferred ethnicity herself.

The second case involved includes the 38 year old British Bangladeshi married to a British Pakistani. According to her, her and her husband have always disagreed upon the ethnicity to be decided of their children. She usually gave in, based on her understanding of lineage being continued from the father's side. However, in a few instances, where her husband was not around to fill the forms in, she secretly put down the ethnicity of British Bangladeshi for her children without informing him of her actions. Thus, she states that they have had little fights over the years on such a matter.

Therefore, the present subsection entails that majority of the respondents acknowledged the multiple heritages that their children were born into, and proceeded to put down the option where both heritages would be represented: that of Asian (Other) (in the case of both parents having origins from Asia), and that of "Mixed/Multiple ethnicities" (where the non-Pakistani part of the couple was not Asian). However, religion also played a role in such a scenario in a few of these cases, as it was conceded that the children should take up their father's ethnicity based on the Islamic tradition of lineage carried on through the name of the father.

7.3. Reflections of identity in preferred cultural attributes

Over the course of the present study, in all aspects under consideration, a major point of analysis which was picked up was the increasing role of religion in shaping major life decisions of most of the respondents included, to the extent that in many cases religious values were stated to be separate from, independent of and more important to what were claimed to be "cultural values". Perceived Islamic principles and guidelines were conferred with in many aspects of the respondents' lives, including the decision to inter-marry, and

the matter of navigating life in a family having, in many cases, distinguishingly variant practices and customs to what one was used to while growing up. However, some aspects of the respondents' ethnic identity, and their association with some form of British culture was observed to be evident in places. In the context of Stuart Hall's conceptualization of the need for multiple forms of identity in a post-modern world, the present section will focus on the extent to which these aspects of their identity were exhibited in their daily lives, and whether religious orientations had any impact on such varying forms of identity.

Languages spoken in the household of inter-ethnic couples were observed to be a major indicator with regard to traces of cultural identity manifested in the daily workings of a family unit. It was inferred that among all of the couples under consideration, English was one, if not the only main language in which children communicated with their parents and the outside world. A number of reasons were brought forth regarding such a circumstance. The first reason observed was the sense of convenience among many of the inter-ethnic couples to converse with their children in a common language that all members of the family would understand. And, since the public language spoken in the UK is English, and all the respondents were fluid in the language since before marriage (whether they spoke it as their first language; or as a second language, with the language of their country of origin acting as the main medium through which their parents used to converse with them), it was taken as the middle ground for ease of communication. In such a circumstance, most of the children of these couples were not fluent in any other language apart from English, which was a source of regret for many of the respondents, as reflected in the response of the 42 year old British Indian (Memon) married to the 45 year old British Pakistani, who stated:

> Language is a sure-fire way to connect with your history. And history is an important part of one's identity. If history is wiped out, there can be no identity.

Another reason of the importance of learning a second language put forth by the 33 year old British Pakistan married to the 31 year old African British (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan), who stated:

> It is very important to know another language, as bilinguals pick up things faster. They are slightly more cleverer than others.

The second reason which came forth regarding the main language spoken being English in inter-ethnic households was that of the children refusing to learn a second language due to the fear of being considered as "freshies" by others. According to the 50 year old British Indian (Gujrati) married to the 43 year old British Pakistani (key informant), "freshie" is a derogatory term used to describe immigrants and their descendants from the South Asian region who either cannot speak English fluently, or cannot speak it in an accent native to any region in the UK. He further states that he was reluctant to learn a second language based on the fear of being called a freshie, however he had to learn to speak Urdu as that was the language his parents preferred to speak in his household while he was growing up. At present his three children only speak in English, and do not wish to speak a second language for the same reason as him, and since him and his wife did not put the same pressure on their three children for speaking in Urdu as his parents applied on him, they can only understand the language but cannot speak it fluently.

A third reason which was observed was related to the 38 year old British Bangladeshi married to a British Pakistani. She has three sons. When her younger son was born, she had decided to speak to him in both Sylheti (which she states as her mother-tongue) and English while he was at home, so that he could become fluent in both languages. However, when he reached school going age, she observed that he had delays in speech development, as learning two languages caused him to not be able to master either one properly, and thus he had problems in expressing himself in either one of them. She was then forced to revert to only focusing on English, as that was the language that her son would need to learn to communicate with the wider society, especially as he had just started going to school. She then regretfully decided to focus on only conversing in English with her other two sons as well, to avoid the situation faced with her first son.

Another major finding brought forth with regard to preference of language was the wish of many of the respondents for their children to focus on learning Arabic as a second language, rather than that of the parents' country of origin. The main reason stated for such a preference was that learning Arabic would enable their children to understand Islamic scriptures and texts much more ardently, especially the Quran. Such an inclination points to a tendency to favour religion over ethnic preference. However, practically speaking,

only one family was observed where Arabic was spoken fluently by the children (the family of the 36 year old British Pakistani married to the 37 year old African British [Kenyan, origin from Pakistan]) and this was only because the couple had spent 8 years of their married life in Saudi Arabia due to the husband's job in Madinah University, and therefore they were quite influenced by the Arabic culture. In other families under consideration, some of the children took Arabic classes, but did not speak it fluently.

When it came to being familiar with the language of one's spouse in case of differences in such an avenue, many of the wives included in the present study were more well-versed with the native language of her in-laws as compared to the husbands and their fluency in the language of their wives' families. Such an analysis can be attributed to the practice of patrilocality prevalent among many South Asian and Arab communities, due to which the wife had greater exposure to the way of life of her in-laws, and became more competent in the language spoken around the household.

Therefore, it can be inferred that with respect to the sentiments and processes around preferences for languages spoken, a multiplicity of discourses where identity is reflected through language spoken are battling it out in a situation that is already culturally charged based on varying backgrounds of each part of the inter-ethnic couple. In the present context, if the English language is taken to be indicative of a Western form of identity; Urdu, or the language of the country of origin of the non-Pakistani spouse taken to be indicative of one's cultural identity related to ethnicity; and Arabic be taken to be indicative of one's identity as a Muslim, it can be concluded that the Western identity came on top as a means of survival and interaction with the wider society, despite the reluctance of the couples under consideration. However, joint family situations in which case the wives initially lived with their in-laws after marriage, the culture of the husband's family was given importance in the sense that the wives became increasingly familiar with the language spoken among her in-law's even though they may not have any knowledge of it from beforehand. Such a state of events brings forth the implication that no matter to what extent one would claim himself/herself to identify with a master status that is important to him/her than all other matters in one's life (in this case, religion), one cannot escape the influences of wider society and has to in some way place oneself in relation to that wider

phenomenon. This is, in a way, what Hall wished to theorize. However, basing such an inference only on the aspect of language is premature, especially in light of the importance of religion observed in the previous chapters of the present research. Therefore, two other major indicators have also been included as focuses of study, especially in relation to family life, to further explore processes of identity formation: dress preference, and type of food/cuisine popular in the various inter-ethnic family settings.

With regard to type of cuisine preferred by members on inter-ethnic families, there was more of a preference for cultural identity related to ethnicity observed, as cultural foods were the one cultural component that the respondents were willing to openly adopt in their lives which they claimed that did not contradict with their religious beliefs. As already mentioned in detail in the chapter related to family dynamics among inter-ethnic couples, most of the female respondents preferred to take charge of a domestic role in the household, and therefore in most cases took main responsibility of cooking for the family. A major theme which emerged among some of these female respondents, both Pakistani and non-Pakistani, was that they learnt to cook after marriage. In most of these cases, the person who taught these women was their mother-in-law, and they taught the respondents the dishes more related to the culture in which the respondents married into. Therefore, at the time of the interview, it was observed that many of the families under consideration preferred to have more food related to the culture of the husband, as that is what the wife ended up being proficient in cooking.

However this did not mean that other types of cuisines were not also preferred. Rather it was observed that being exposed to multiple cultures in the UK led to curiosity regarding the different types of cuisines among many of the respondents, which led to experimentations in cooking on the part of the females, and in a few cases, the male respondents as well. With regard to English cuisine, most of the respondents stated it to include quick and easy fixes, as most of it can be found easily in supermarkets in the form of frozen foods and quick pasta mixes. Such types of food were more seen to be preferred by children, due to their mild spices and smaller preparation times, which made it easier for parents to feed the children in lesser amounts of time.

Thus cuisine preference was the one area where religion did not play as much of a role, insofar as one was not having any food type that was considered as "haram" in the eyes of Islam. Even the among the inter-faith couple included in the present research (the 48 year old British Pakistani [Muslim] married to the 48 year old White British [Other, Spanish, Catholic Christian]), the husband refused to eat pig meat even though he does not consider himself a rigid Muslim, and is married to a person who is permitted to have pig meat. Cuisine preference was the one arena where the implications of the cultural practices of varying ethnic backgrounds were observed among the inter-ethnic couples, and the husband's cultural preferences were observed to have come to the forefront due to reasons already stated above. Food styles of each culture also played a role in bonding and light-hearted teasing among couples, as exhibited in the response of the 30 year old British Pakistani married to the British Bangladeshi. She stated that there is a preference for fish and rice to be eaten among Bengalis, while Pakistanis prefer to eat chapatis. On the basis of such a scenario, the husband and wife tease each other, with the wife occasionally calling her husband "fish", and him replying back to her by calling her *aata* (flour from which chapati is made from).

Coming to the aspect of dress preference, religion was seen to be eminent, especially with regard to female attire. When going out of the house, women wore what they perceived to be attire as delegated by Islam i.e. *hijab* and *abaya*, or *hijab* paired with Western forms of clothing that were considered to be modest. When at home, most preferred to wear Western attire that they found to be comfortable. However, with the men, more Western attire was preferred, which many of the respondents stated to include items of clothing such as jeans and t-shirts, among others. Thobes (a robe falling up to one's ankles, worn by men in Arab countries) were also an attire of preference for some males when going to the mosque or other Islamic gatherings. Attire from the country of origin of both spouses were observed to be worn more on special occasions, including weddings and on the occasion of Eid. Some of the male respondents also preferred to wear *shalwar qameez* when going for the *jumma* prayer. Furthermore, many of the non-British Pakistani respondents of the present research had to adapt to wearing *shalwar qameez* at certain occasions, especially at any time when visiting their in-laws' house. While most of these respondents were easily able to take up such a task, a few of them refused to do so based on their disagreement with

what they perceive to be a misconception among many people in the Pakistani community that *shalwar qameez* is an appropriate Islamic form of dress. According to the 31 year old African British (Black, born and brought up in France) married to the 38 year old British Pakistani, wearing *shalwar qameez* in front of *ghair mahram* cannot be considered as an Islamic act among Pakistani women, as you can still see the shape of one's body, while an *abaya*, due to being a single large item of clothing, performs the job of providing full-body coverage. She states that she would agree to wear a form of *shalwar qameez* that falls up to her feet, but otherwise refuses to wear it, especially if she has to go out wearing it. Another respondent, who is the 42 year old British Indian (Mumbai) married to the 47 year old British Pakistani, expressed her disdain on the perception of *shalwar qameez* being the only appropriately modest option for women among her mother-in-law by stating that wearing Western attire can perform the same function as well, especially if one opts to wear a shirt long enough to cover oneself up to one's knees. Such a form of clothing would perform the same function as *shalwar qameez* in terms of covering one's body. She occasionally debates with her mother-in-law on such a topic.

Therefore, it can be observed that religion played a major role in shaping orientations regarding dress preference among the respondents, especially among the females. Influences of Western discourse and that of one's ethnic background were present to some extent, especially when considering what women wore in the private sphere of their lives, or the preferred attire for certain cultural events. However, these aspects were allowed only up to the extent where they do not contradict with perceived Islamic teachings on what is considered to be "modest". An example can be provided of the 37 year old African British (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan) married to the 36 year old British Pakistani. When she goes out of the house, she is usually clad in a black *hijab*, *abaya* and *niqab*. However, in the house when her children were younger, she used to wear sleeveless shirts and leggings, as she found them to be comfortable to wear, especially in the summers. However, since her sons are older at present (her oldest son is 13 years old), she has opted to wear clothes that cover her body to a more greater extent than before. She states that she understands that her sons are her *mahram*, and she does not have to cover in front of them. However, she claims that she wishes to uphold a modicum of modesty around her household in order to practically demonstrate to her children the significance of dressing appropriately.

The three aspects of inter-ethnic life as described above are a good indicator of the notion of "the devil is in the details", as an insight into the practical lives of inter-ethnic families has brought forth certain nuances that paint a more complex picture than what was implied. Therefore, there was an aspect observed of "picking and choosing" from various cultural practices. However, the pervasiveness of religious influence cannot be denied, and much of the "picking and choosing" was done based on whether the aspects were perceived to be religiously permitted or not.

7.4. Identity – A stable entity or a fluid dynamic? A theoretical perspective

The main theoretical objective of the present research involved the studying of the interaction between multiple discourses relating to cultural identity in a post-modern world, and how they would play out in the cross-cultural context that emerges due to the scenario of inter-ethnic marriage. For this purpose, the avenue of inter-marriage among British Pakistanis was taken as a case study to further explore this objective, based on Stuart Hall's theorizations on the fluidity and multiple forms of identity that have emerged in a post-modern world. The overall major trends and patterns discerned from the various findings of the present research can be analyzed to be somewhat in accordance with Start Hall's theorizations, at least to the extent of his thesis on the general acknowledgement of various local discourses in a post-modern world, but not without these discourses having to find their footing in relation to an overall global discourse (see pg. nos. 22-25 for details). With regard to the context of the present research, one of the main reasons observed that contributed towards the decision to inter-marry among many of the British Pakistani respondents was to escape certain cultural practices that they perceived to be eminent in Pakistani society. Some examples of such practices as stated by the respondents include the perceived ill-treatment of women and their diminished status in the household as a stay-at-home wife (as justified through Islam, but according to the respondents, has no basis in religious teachings); incidences of sexual assault from family in Pakistan (in the case of one respondent); expectations that a bride has to fulfil at her own wedding, including wearing of red, and not showing any feelings of happiness on the marriage; the handling

of men as "kings" that need their mothers or wives to take care of them; expectation to wear *shalwar qameez*, and its consideration as the only appropriate Islamic attire; among other examples. Sticking to Stuart Hall's theorizations, it was observed that the overarching Western discourse (that according to him, is embedded in a lifestyle pertaining to Western ideals, which is "differant" to the absolutistic concept of "them versus us" to the extent that it is more partial to acceptance of differences but not without these differences having to orient themselves in relation to such a Western lifestyle) did play some roles in navigating these various aspects of inter-marriage to evade components of ethnic culture that the respondents disagreed with. Some such examples were observed, which include: Marrying for love; the use of online marriage websites as a means to inter-marry; pre-marital meetings at common places of work and study (in a few cases); conduction of civil ceremonies for the wedding, in one case a "hippie themed" wedding ceremony; preference for a nuclear family system, rather than living with the parents of the husband; women taking up professional jobs, at least part-time if they are not able to accommodate full-time jobs; husbands playing more of an active role in household tasks; a need for abolishing differentiation of gender roles among children; the use of English language as a common ground for the purposes of communication; preference for Western attire over attire related to the culture of one's country of origin; an inclination towards Western pop culture (movies and tv series); and a tendency to be involved in more wider social circles comprising of a multiplicity of ethnicities are some examples of inter-ethnic life that can be considered to be resultant of the effects of the Western global discourse, and antithetical to cultural components that the respondents wished to avoid in the first place.

However, not all cultural components related to one's country of origin were rejected. Language spoken, cuisine, dressing in cultural attire on special occasions are some examples which many inter-ethnic family units still observed in their daily lives. Therefore, as per Hall's thesis, at least in the context of the examples stated above, it can be inferred that various "local" discourses, (in this case, the discourses related to cultural aspects of one's country of origin) are lauded and accepted under a banner of "live and let live", but certain components have to be taken up from an ideology having its roots in the White Anglo-Saxondom Protestant Ethic, and based on the notion of mass consumerism (i.e. the global Western discourse), in order to deal with aspects from one's identified "local" with

which he/she may not agree with. In terms of cultural identity, it can be analyzed that a multiplicity of identities have been presented to the respondents as per being part of the post-modern British society. Where it has been seen that they may identify with the "local" discourse that may best explain their origin story, points of departure from such an affiliation should, in Hall's terms, be covered by borrowing components from the global, thereby donning a Western form of identity for the time being. Till this point in the discussion, such a theorization by Hall seems to be valid.

However, further analysis reveals that there is one influence in the lives of the respondents of the present research that, when added to the mix in the analysis stated above, changes the balance of affairs with regard to the aforementioned theorization. This influence may be related to the assumed nature of the "global" discourse. According to Hall, the characteristic of such a type of discourse is Western in nature, absorbing differences in its wake (see pg. no. 23 for details). However, a major finding that was highlighted in almost every aspect of the inter-ethnic couples' lives was that of their inclination towards, or aversion from (only in the case of one of the one inter-faith couple under consideration) religious tendencies. And since all respondents apart from one are Muslim, the religion of Islam acted as a major guiding force in many instances brought forth by the respondents. Where the effect of the Western discourse was observed to play some form of role in their lives, it was small when considering the depth of devotion that many of the respondents had towards the religion of Islam. In fact, the effect of Islam was pervasive in many instances to the extent that a general sentiment which came forth was that religion and culture are two separate entities that should not be mixed, as confusing one for the other has pervasive negative effects on society that brings forth many injustices, especially with regard to the status of women in society, and the misconception that women have no other function in life apart from being housebound. In the context of such an orientation, many examples of religious influence were brought forth in the present study where perceived Islamic teachings guided the actions of the respondents, which include: the selection of a marriage partner out of one's ethnic group, while still adhering to religious boundaries in most cases (even in the instances of respondents that were previously non-Muslim, conversion to Islam before marrying their Muslim spouses was a trend observed in all cases apart from one); an aversion towards a sense of "nationalism" towards one country of

origin and residence, based on being a part of one Muslim "Ummah"; omitting any custom or tradition from wedding ceremonies conducted that were perceived to be in contradiction to Islamic teachings among many of the respondents; speaking out against ethnic discrimination faced due to inter-marriage based on religious justifications of their decision to marry outside the Pakistani community; use of interpretation of Islamic Shariah to justify their conceptualization of the fluidity of gender roles instead of the discourse of feminism (where the Western influence is seen to diminish is in the insistence of some form of gender roles based on Islamic teachings, but not as rigid as what they perceived to be in South Asian households); speaking against the aspect of forced marriages that was perceived to be prevalent in many South Asian communities by stating the Islamic right of both a male and a female to be able to refuse a marriage proposal; the imminence of Islamic teachings when it comes to childrearing, especially a focus on the performance of *Salaah*, and sending children to the mosque and other centers in order to learn to read and understand the Quran; a preference among many of the respondents for children to learn to speak Arabic rather than the language of their country of origin; the wearing of the *hijab* among most of the female respondents; among other examples. Even when one considers the examples of Western influence in the lives of inter-ethnic couples stated above, going into the details on the motivations of such actions depicted elements of religiosity rather than adopting of aspects from wider society. For example, the marriage websites which the respondents used for finding a match when they could not find a suitable partner in their place of residence were geared exclusively towards Muslims, and thus the need for branching out was fulfilled while still remaining within religious boundaries. Another example includes, which has already been stated above, is a preference for a fluidity in gender roles, and to reduce gender differentiation between one's sons and daughters. Instead of feminist narratives, examples from the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are quoted to justify such fluid roles. A third example includes an orientation towards Western pop culture, where although the respondents stated preference for movies and tv dramas, most of them claimed to try to refrain from listening to any form of music based on Islamic teachings. The same cannot be said about their children, however, where in most cases they were quite aware of and followed modern forms of Western music.

How would one relate such a scenario when considering Hall's debate on the processes of the global and local discourses? The point of departure observed in such a context comes forth when comparing the nature of the global discourse that Hall put forth, and of the one that has been observed in the findings of the present research. Considering the Islamic narrative prevalent among the respondents as a "local" would be neglecting the acknowledgement of the actual impact of religion to navigate the differences brought forth due to cross-cultural contact in inter-ethnic families. Therefore, it may be more pertinent to call the discourse of Islam as brought forth among the Muslim community in the UK as the "global" worldview which the respondents in the present study wish to follow. This is especially reflected in their perceptions of one united "Muslim Ummah" taking precedence over any form of ethnic affiliations or divisions based on a country of origin, and this may also be a reason why the term "global" may be attributed to such an affiliation. Therefore, as already indicated in the examples stated above, the narrative of the religion of Islam as the "one absolute truth", may cause it to be considered as the "global" discourse in at least the eyes of the respondents of the present research, with Western culture and cultural aspects relating to one's country of origin acting as the two "locals" that are formed within representation of the perceived guidelines and worldviews relating to the religion of Islam.

How may such an interplay between an implied global religious discourse, and subsequently implied local Western and other ethnic discourses be reflected in the cultural identity of the respondents under consideration? Hall posits a formation of a continuum for each individual, a certain place on which would entail a particular combination of various forms of identity in a specific circumstance. These forms of identity are usually placed within representation of the global discourse. Such a scenario is a shift from the previous conceptualization of master statuses prominent in the modern era, as stated by Hall (see pg. no.17). With regard to the present sample of respondents, such a continuum is observed to be present in the one inter-faith couple included, where a multiplicity of forms of identity is especially evident with regard to child-rearing, where no particular cultural and religious orientation is given preference. However, most of the other respondents claimed to be more religiously inclined, and it showed in their responses. Therefore, by just basing the analysis on the respondents' life stories and verbal responses related to being part of an inter-ethnic couple, a prevalence of a master status may be observed in the form of Islamic identity.

This is especially reflected in the instances where the sentiment of "us versus them" (i.e. Muslims vs the wider British society) was uncovered, especially with regard to such topics as a rejection of the phenomenon of homosexuality among the respondents, and the Prevent strategy employed by the British government to root out "radicalized tendencies" among the masses, which according to some of the respondents is directly affecting Muslims and their right to practice their religion without any restraints. However, as per the statement "the devil is in the details", the respondent's affiliations were not as black and white with regard to religion. For example, when it came to the wedding ceremonies, both parts of the inter-ethnic couples still brought cultural components to the celebrations, including the wearing of cultural dresses, and in some cases, the conduction of certain customs including that of the *joota chuppai*. Another example can be taken of the preference of the use of English as the main language to be spoken by the children of a number of inter-ethnic couples, and its utility as a means to bridge the communication gap between members of varying cultures in inter-ethnic settings. Such a preference can be considered to be a Western influence on part of the children. A third example can be taken of the inclination towards Western forms of entertainment among many of the respondents (movies and tv series in the case of parents; music also included in the case of children; most parents stated to have a lowered inclination towards Western musical preferences based on explicit and misogynistic content and a sense of religiosity that urges them to refrain from such avenues). This may indicate a multiplicity of forms of identity, with each part manifesting depending on the situation at hand. However, it cannot be denied that strict religious boundaries were adhered to when such Western and other ethnic cultural influences were taken on board, there is a conscious effort observed to limit oneself from taking influence from such components as much as possible.

Therefore it can inferred with regard to the scenario stated above that although there is a manifestation of a multiplicity of identities among the respondents that is unavoidable when one considers living in a society like the UK boasting multiple cultural groups, the use of their Islamic identity as the overarching global discourse was more pervasive in the lives of the respondents than if one considers the extent of influence of the global Western discourse that should be present as per Hall's theorizations. The Islamic and the Western discourse may retain the common factor of the absorption of differences. However, the

main distinguishing characteristic between the two may be that where the Western discourse retains a semblance of such differences to the extent that they may be able to foster an illusion of independent operation depending on the circumstance (see pg. no. 23 for details), the particular Islamic discourse that is influencing the respondents of the present study reduces such differences to the extent that Islamic identity is considered superior to other forms of identity in most circumstances. Thus, although the most of the respondent's Islamic identity cannot be absolutely termed as a master status, but it may be the closest thing to a master status that one may be able to adhere to in the present scenario of the phenomenon of globalization in the post-modern world.

What may be the reasons of such an increased inclination towards religious tendencies rather than Western influence in the present sample? One reason can be taken to be the realization among many of the female respondents regarding "oppressive cultural components" with regard to women in both Western culture, and the culture related to one's country of origin. The influence of Western culture may be imminent in the initial realization of the oppressive components in various "local" ethnicities prevalent in the UK. However, such an interest in Western discourses of women empowerment dwindled over the lives of many of the female respondents, especially due to the insurmountable pressure added on the shoulders of women who are then expected to play all roles to the best of their ability, with men becoming negligent in such a department as they do not see the need to work as hard anymore. In such a state of affairs, many of the respondents turned to studying the religion of Islam in more depth, after which they realized that the role of women as ordained in Islam is much more liberating than what Western society tries to impose on women, especially as Islam places most of the burden on the man by stating him as the head of the household. This led them to become more religiously inclined, and to marry out of a culture that they perceived to be oppressive in favour of a someone who is "least culturally inclined and had the same Islamic interpretations as them". A second reason may be attributed towards a rise in Islamophobia, especially after the incidents of 9/11 and the which has caused people to turn back to Islam and to study it in much more detail in order to justify their stance and their standing in UK society. As of 2018, there was a 40% increase in religious hate crime taking place in England and Wales, and these crimes were faced mostly by Muslims in more than half of these occurrences (Dearden, 2018). Criticism

and opposition towards an ideology may also cause people to hold onto it closely and become much more defensive about it.

However, it should be noted at this point that such a debate formed cannot be generalized to all the British Pakistanis in the UK, simply because the phenomenon of inter-marriage is still small when comparing it to the practice of endogamy among the Pakistani community as indicated through a review in literature. Also, it cannot be generalized to all Muslims in the UK either, as the present analysis is based on, and thus can only apply to a small sample of inter-ethnic couples and some of their offspring residing in the towns of Croydon and Norbury situated in South-West London. Nevertheless, such an implication opens up avenues for further research, especially with regard to processes of inter-marriage among other British Pakistani communities in different localities around the UK, and also involving inter-marriage among other British Muslim communities.

8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present chapter aims to provide a summary of the overall findings of the study. It also includes an attempt at arriving at a conclusion, and a section outlining further research that may be conducted on the basis of the present findings.

8.1. Summary

The phenomenon of inter-marriage is one that is shrouded in mystery and intrigue, due to the unending possibilities of outcomes and scenarios that may come about as a consequence of cross-cultural contact. A number of attempts have been made to understand the underlying attributes of such a phenomenon, especially in the context of multi-ethnic societies, where there is an increased chance to inter-marry based on greater exposure to people from the outgroup. In such societies, many theorists claim inter-marriage to be an indicator of increased assimilation and acculturation into the host population. However, the opposite may be true as well, with inter-marriage being used as a means to an end with regard to upward social mobility. Nevertheless, this phenomenon has various facets to be explored in greater detail.

In the case of the UK, where there has been observed to be an overall increase in the probability of inter-marriage, or more particularly, inter-ethnic marriage (as official government departments in the UK categorize people and publish statistics based on the notion of "ethnicity", which is officially described in the form of an amalgamation of constructs, including country of birth, nationality, language spoken at home, skin color, national/geographical origin and religion), certain ethnic groups had lowered propensities for such forms of marriage, with British Pakistanis as one of these ethnic groups. However, lowered propensity does not mean that the phenomenon does not occur at all. Rather, a reduced tendency towards a practice makes the phenomenon all the more interesting, as then particular light can be shed upon the reasons why one would deviate from the norm. And this is one of the reasons why British Pakistani inter-ethnic families have been taken as the subject of the present research.

A number of avenues were explored with regard to inter-ethnic families among British Pakistanis in the present study with the help of qualitative research methodology in the locales of Norbury and Croydon, Greater London. First of all, where inter-ethnic marriage denotes marrying outside of one's community, the respondents of the research did not go too far out, based on the considerable number of South Asian non-British Pakistani respondents in the sample. Also, where they did opt to marry out of the South Asian community, in most cases, they still married a Muslim. Therefore, they married out of the ethnic group, but not out of the religion. The more influential factor in this regard was observed to be finding someone who had the same interpretation of the Islamic Shariah as oneself, especially with regard to the role of the woman in the household, and it did not matter whether the other person was a Pakistani or not. Where "love" was stated to be the main factor for choosing to inter-marry, religious boundaries were still adhered to in all cases but one, as especially evident in the aspect of the conversion to Islam among some of the non-British Pakistani female spouses just before getting married to a Muslim British Pakistani.

However, not marrying too far out in many of the cases did not necessarily mean that differences did not have to be overcome with regard to cultural practices. An example of such a form of differences includes the feelings of animosity between Indians and Pakistanis, based on the rocky relationship between the two countries due to the unresolved issue of the Kashmir conflict, which caused the passing of many comments and cultural slurs by both sides of the extended family of the interethnic couple. Furthermore, ethnic discrimination faced due to the choice of one's marriage partner was also evident, especially with regard to the skin colour of both the non-Pakistani part of the inter-ethnic couple, and the children born of such a union (especially among the children of those couples where the husband or wife are Black Africans). Difficulties with regard to language difference was also a major hardship for many respondents to navigate. Where English was used as the common language of communication, in many cases not knowing the native language of the country of origin of one's spouse caused rifts among the individual and his/her in-laws. An important aspect observed in this regard is that most cases of hardships faced due to cultural barriers were among women, mainly because of the prevalence of patrilocality in many South Asian and other Muslim communities, and therefore wives had

more of an exposure to, and subsequently had to face more instances of ethnic discrimination than their husbands. Another important aspect that was reflected in various places among many of the respondents was the aversion to a sense of "nationalism" towards one's country of religion. Instead, there was an inclination to find common ground not in similar cultural orientations, but in religious affiliations. Religion was considered as the higher ground to confer with in case of any form of animosity or disagreement, as religious injunctions were stated to be "ordained by Allah", while a sense of nationalism towards a country was an inherently man-made, and thus more likely to be a flawed sense of being.

The form of family dynamics brought about due to cross-cultural contact as per inter-ethnic marriages is also an avenue of interest among researchers, especially in the context of identity formation among the members of such families, and the gender dynamics that play out in the negotiation of cultural familial roles. The present research revealed that with regard to such negotiations, there is a need for a common ground between both parts of the couple that can act as a "proverbial middle-man" in times of crisis. And, in most of the cases under consideration, the religion of Islam, and common interpretations of Islamic Shariah acted as that all-important "common ground" that helped in solving issues related to cultural differences in the perceived functions that each member should play as part of being a family unit. An inclination towards following a form of gender roles as demonstrated in Islamic Shariah and through the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that is more fluid than cultural dictations of them, but not as fluid as that brought forth by the discourse of feminism is an example of using religion to support one's viewpoint about life. Not differentiating between genders with regard to the role of one's sons and daughters in the household and in the workplace through religious justifications is another such example.

How do all the processes with regard to British Pakistani inter-ethnic marriages among the Pakistani population of the towns of Norbury and Croydon, Greater London, as stated above, play a role in how one would identify oneself in a multi-ethnic society? According to Stuart Hall's theory on the navigation of multiplicity of identities, living in such a post-modern multi ethnic society would entail the influence of some form of "global discourse"

that does not overshadow all other local discourses, but gives them a reference point to be followed so that they can survive in harmony with each other while still maintaining some form of uniqueness with regard to their cultural attributes. Hall intended for such a discourse to be that of "Americanness" that has its roots in Anglo-Saxon Protestant way of life but is different from a totalizing influence of the previously widespread notion of the English-gaze in the modern era. However, in the context of the inter-ethnic couples of the present research, another global form of discourse was evident. This second discourse, as already indicated above, is the sense of being part of the religion of "Islam", that works across all cultural differences to unite all Muslims under the banner of worshipping one God, and following the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Where traces of the Western influence were depicted in the lives of inter-ethnic families, for example, the preference of Western clothes over other forms of attire (with the exception of the wearing of the *hijab* and the *abaya* in public places), and the speaking of English in most scenarios, these traces may be analyzed to be smaller in comparison to the influence of religion in the lives of the respondents. An aspect of "picking and choosing" of cultural attributes is evident, however only those aspects are picked in most cases that are not in contradiction to perceived Islamic principles. Therefore, where a holding of a master-status may not be as easily possible in the myriad of influences one may face in the imminence of a multitude of discourses, the present research indicates that through religious orientations, one can come as close to having a master status as possible in such a polarizing post-modern globalized world.

8.2. Conclusion

The notion of inter-marriage may be assumed one that is complicated to navigate when it comes to practically living life, based on the varying and in some cases, even polarizing cultural components that may have played a major role in each part of the couple's lives and upbringing. In such a case, there needs to be some form of middle ground that both parts of the couple can reach towards in times of conflict due to differences in cultural orientations. In the context of the scenario exhibited in the present research, religion (Islam) was analyzed to play the role of that all-important middle ground, cutting through all other dimensions of family life, including those related to power dynamics with regard to gender,

174

cultural attributes related to one's country of origin, or preferences towards a "Western" mode of living. Although the results of the study are not intended to be generalized over the whole British Pakistani population, they can provide us with an inkling of how there may be a change in orientation in the upcoming generations of British Pakistanis. A review of literature reveals the preference of endogamy and in many cases, transnational marriages among Pakistani communities, depicting an attempt to hold onto one's cultural background in a backdrop of a society made up of multiple forms of cultures and identities. Therefore, marrying out, and that too for the purposes of meeting one's religious goals in life, may point to the notion that there has begun a religious awakening on the basis of which people are willing to shed customs prevalent in their families for generations to follow a lifestyle that they perceive to be "the real purpose of life". This opens up an avenue for further research in British Pakistani communities, where such a phenomenon can be investigated in further detail.

8.3. Recommendations for future research

What other academic endeavors can be made based on the findings of the present study? The focus of this study is upon those British Pakistanis who are part of inter-ethnic families. However, since a review of literature reveals the tendency towards endogamy among British Pakistanis, studies can be conducted on the overall British Pakistani population regarding their perceptions on those marrying outside the Pakistani community. Furthermore, the scope of this study with regard to the various aspects of inter-ethnic marriages is broad in the sense that efforts have been made to explore as many facets of the lives of the respondents as possible. In such a context, additional studies can be focused on a more detailed analysis of the individual aspects of inter-ethnic lives among British Pakistanis. A cross-regional examination of the aspect of inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis can also be conducted to obtain a larger picture on exogamy in British Pakistani communities in the UK. Furthermore, as already indicated above, since the present study brings forth a major finding with regard to the role of religion in the lives of British Pakistanis, this aspect can be explored in further detail in other locales around the UK as well, so as to gauge out whether or not there is a shift in orientation from cultural preferences to religious guidance in other British Pakistani communities as well.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A

Informed consent form

Assalam-u-Alaikum!

I am a student of Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. The research I am conducting at present is a requirement for the fulfillment of my degree for MPhil in Anthropology. The aim of this research is to explore the factors leading to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis; to investigate the perceived lived experiences faced due to the decision to inter-marry among such British Pakistanis; to identify the resulting dynamics of family life exhibited in inter-ethnic marriages among them; and to determine the relation/depiction of the decision for exogamous marriages to one's nature of identity and cultural preferences.

For this purpose, I will conduct an interview with you on these matters. I assure you that any information you provide, including your identity will be kept confidential, and will only be used for research and academic purposes.

I will be highly grateful for your cooperation.

Signature of the Researcher

I have carefully read all the information provided above and agree to be a part of this research. However, at any stage if I feel the need, then I can withdraw from the research.

Signature of the Interviewee

ANNEXURE B

Interview guide for British Pakistani inter-ethnic couples

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Education: _____

Occupation: _____

Hometown (non-UK): _____

Hometown (UK): _____

Residence: _____

Marital Status: _____

Number of Children: _____

Parents' Occupation: _____

Number of Siblings: _____

Religion: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Objective 1: To explore the factors leading to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis

1. Where were you born?
2. Where did you grow up?
3. If I asked you to describe yourself in a few sentences, how would you respond?
4. How do your parents/guardians identify themselves?
5. When were your parents married?

6. What were the circumstances of their marriage?

7. How were you brought up by your parents/guardians?

8. How would you describe your stage of childhood/adolescence?

9. How did you meet your spouse?

10. What were the circumstances surrounding your marriage?

11. Did you ever consider marrying within the Pakistani community?

12. Do you know anyone else who has undergone inter-ethnic marriages?

13. What were the circumstances surrounding their marriage?

Objective 2: To investigate the perceived lived experiences of both parts of the couples due to being part of an inter-ethnic marriage.

14. How has your life changed after marriage?

15. Has the decision to inter-marry caused any changes in your cultural orientations/beliefs?

16. Has the decision to inter-marry impacted the life of your children?

17. How was the response of your family/friends (or extended family/friends) on such a decision to inter-marry?

18. How did your work-fellows respond to such a marital choice?

19. Have you faced any form of racism in your life?

20. Have you had any out of the ordinary experiences while out on the street?

21. Has your gender had any impact on your decision to inter-marry?

Objective 3: To identify the resulting dynamics of family life exhibited in inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis due to cross-cultural contact

22. What are your aspirations in life?

23. What is the reason for choosing your current occupation?

24. Could you please describe your daily routine?

25. What are your responsibilities when it comes to your family as a unit?

26. What are your spouses' responsibilities in the same regard?

27. How do you perceive gender roles to be?

28. What do you believe to be the most appropriate choices when considering child rearing techniques?

29. Does having a spouse from a different cultural background affect your rearing practices when it comes to your children?

30. Do you believe in differentiating between genders when considering child rearing processes?

31. Who has more of a hand in decision making processes?

32. How involved are you in your children's studies and decisions regarding education?

33. How much time are you able to spend with the members of your family?

34. What are some activities that you perform together as a family?

35. How often do you interact with your extended family members?

36. How often do you interact with the extended family members of your spouse?

37. How often do you spend time with your friends, away from your family members?

38. Do you have a life/connections outside of your immediate family?

39. In your opinion, how important is it to learn to drive?

40. Are the female members of your family permitted to go out alone?

41. Do you have any form of understanding regarding the concept of izzat (honour)? If yes, please elaborate.

42. What is your perception regarding the notion of "pardah"?

43. Do you abide by such a notion? (for Muslim respondents)

44. Would you direct your daughter or any other person under your ward to observe "pardah"?

45. Do any members of your family observe pardah?

46. What is your perception on the notion of "working woman"?

47. How such a notion is reflected in your life decisions?

Objective 4: To determine the relation/depiction of the decision for exogamous marriages to one's nature of identity and cultural preferences

Nature of Identity:

48. What is, in your mind, culture?

49. How important a part does culture play in your life?

50. How do you perceive "British culture" to be?

51. How do you perceive yourself in such a "British" cultural environment?

52. What cultural environment were you brought up in?

53. What cultural practices do you believe in?

54. Can you pinpoint certain cultural values that you would term as "Pakistani"?

55. Do you inculcate such values among your children?

56. Can you pinpoint some marriage-related Pakistani cultural values?

57. How often have you been to Pakistan?

58. Have your immediate family members (spouse and children) visited Pakistan?

59. What have your experiences been there?

60. What is your opinion about Pakistan as a country?

61. What is your perception regarding transnational marriages?

62. What is your perception regarding cousin marriages?

63. What is your perception regarding arranged/love marriages (depending on the marital status of the respondent)?

64. What is, in your opinion, the most appropriate age for marriage?

Language:

65. What would you say your mother tongue is?

66. How many languages can you speak?

67. What is your spouse's mother tongue?

68. What would you say is the mother tongue of your children?

69. What language do you speak with your spouse?

70. What language do you speak with your children?

71. What language do you speak with your friends/extended family?

72. Do you have any preference for a certain language to be learnt and spoken?

73. How did the decision come about regarding what language should be taught to your children?

74. In your opinion, what is the importance of learning a particular language?

Religion:

75. How important is religion in your life?

76. To what extent is your life influenced by religious injunctions/practices/events?

77. How religious is your spouse?

78. How receptive are your children towards your religious preferences?

79. How receptive are they towards your spouse's religious preferences?

Dress Preference:

80. What type of clothing do you prefer to wear in your daily life?

81. What type of clothing does your spouse like to wear?

82. What type of clothing do your children wear?

83. Has there been any change in dress preference over the course of your life?

84. How would you comment upon the different forms of attire prevalent in society?

85. What is your opinion regarding Pakistani attire?

Cultural Events:

86. What do you like to do in your free time?

87. What are your activities that you indulge in as a family?

88. Are there any events held in your community that you are aware of?

89. Are there any particular cultural events that you attend?

Food/Cuisine:

90. What type of food/cuisine do you prefer to have in your daily routine?

91. What cuisine preferences does your spouse have?

South Asian Pop Culture:

92. Do you follow pop culture in any form?

93. What are your musical preferences?

94. What are your cinematic preferences?

95. How often do you go to the cinema?

96. How aware are you regarding South Asian forms of entertainment?

97. How aware are you regarding the various popular forms of entertainment of your spouse's culture of origin?

Company:

98. How diverse is your social circle?

99. Do you prefer to keep connections with people of a particular cultural orientation?

100. Were there any preferences/restrictions regarding who to keep as your friends in any walk of your life?

101. What are your activities with such friends and other members of your social circle?

ANNEXURE C

Interview guide for offspring of inter-ethnic couples

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Education: _____

Occupation: _____

Hometown (non-UK): _____

Hometown (UK): _____

Residence: _____

Marital Status: _____

Number of Children: _____

Parents' Occupation: _____

Number of Siblings: _____

Religion: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Objective 1: To explore the factors leading to inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis

1. Where were you born?
2. Where did you grow up?
3. If I asked you to describe yourself in a few sentences, how would you respond?
4. How do your parents/guardians identify themselves?
5. When were your parents married?

6. What were the circumstances of their marriage?

7. How were you brought up by your parents/guardians?

8. How would you describe your stage of childhood/adolescence? (depending on the age of the respondent)

9. How did you meet your spouse? (if married)

10. What were the circumstances surrounding your marriage?

11. What qualities do you look for in a spouse? (if not married)

12. How would you choose your future spouse?

13. What is your perception regarding inter-ethnic marriages?

14. Do you know anyone else who has undergone inter-ethnic marriages?

15. What were the circumstances surrounding their marriage?

Objective 2: To investigate the perceived lived experiences of both parts of the couples due to being part of an inter-ethnic marriage.

16. How do you feel being part of a mixed ethnic family?

17. How is your relationship with your parents?

18. How is your relationship with your extended family?

19. Has your mixed origins caused people to treat you differently in any way?

20. Have you faced any form of racism in your life?

21. Have you had any out of the ordinary experiences while out on the street?

Objective 3: To identify the resulting dynamics of family life exhibited in inter-ethnic marriages among British Pakistanis due to cross-cultural contact.

22. What are your aspirations in life?

23. What is your desired level of education?

24. What is the reason for choosing your current occupation?

25. How would you describe your everyday routine?

26. Who are you more close to in your family?

27. How would you describe your family structure?

28. How do you deal with any form of familial conflict?

29. How would you describe your childhood/adolescence?

30. How is your relationship with your siblings?

31. Are there any pressures on you from your family in any aspect of your life?

32. Do you observe any difference between the practices of your family and those of families comprising of people of single cultures?

33. How do you perceive gender roles to be?

34. What are your responsibilities when it comes to your family as a unit?

35. Who in your family has more of a hand in decision making processes?

36. How much time are you able to spend with the members of your family?

37. What are some activities that you perform together as a family?

38. How often do you interact with the members of your extended families?

39. How often do you spend time with your friends, away from your family members?

40. Do you have a life/connections outside of your immediate family?

41. How often do you go out?

42. In your opinion, how important is it to learn to drive?

43. Are the female members of your family permitted to go out alone?

44. Do you have any form of understanding regarding the concept of izzat (honour)? If yes, please elaborate.

45. What is your perception regarding the notion of "pardah"?

46. Do you abide by such a notion? (for Muslim respondents)

47. Do any members of your family observe pardah?

48. What is your perception on the notion of "working woman"?

49. How such a notion is reflected in your life decisions?

Objective 4: To determine the relation/depiction of the decision for exogamous marriages to one's nature of identity and cultural preferences

Nature of identity:

50. What is, in your mind, culture?

51. How important a part does culture play in your life?

52. How do you perceive "British culture" to be?

53. How do you perceive yourself in such an environment of "British culture"?

54. What cultural environment were you brought up in?

55. What cultural practices do you believe in?

56. Can you pinpoint certain cultural values that you would term as "Pakistani"?

57. Will you inculcate such values among your children?

58. Can you pinpoint some marriage-related Pakistani cultural values?

59. How often have you been to Pakistan?

60. Have your immediate family members (parents and siblings) visited Pakistan?

61. What have your experiences been there?

62. What is your opinion about Pakistan as a country?

63. What is your perception regarding transnational marriages?

64. What is your perception regarding cousin marriages?

65. What is your perception regarding arranged/love marriages?

66. What is, in your opinion, the most appropriate age at marriage?

Language:

67. What would you say your mother tongue is?

68. How many languages can you speak?

69. What are each of your parent's mother tongues?

70. What language do you speak with your parents?

71. What language do you speak with your siblings?

72. What language do you speak with your friends/extended family?

73. Do you have any preference for a certain language to be learnt and spoken?

74. If you were to marry and have children, what language would you teach your children to speak?

75. In your opinion, what is the importance of learning a particular language?

Religion:

76. How important is religion in your life?

77. To what extent is your life influenced by religious injunctions/practices/events?

Dress Preference:

78. What type of clothing do you prefer to wear in your daily life?

79. What type of clothing do your parents like to wear?

80. What type of clothing do your siblings (if any) wear?

81. Has there been any change in dress preference over the course of your life?

82. How would you comment upon the different forms of attire prevalent in society?

83. What is your opinion regarding Pakistani attire?

Cultural Events:

84. What do you like to do in your free time?

85. What are your activities that you indulge in as a family?

86. Are there any events held in your community that you are aware of?

87. Are there any particular cultural events that you attend?

Food/Cuisine:

88. What type of food cuisine do you prefer to have in your daily routine?

89. What cuisine preferences do your parents have?

90. South Asian Pop Culture:

91. Do you follow pop culture in any form?

92. What are your musical preferences?

93. What are your cinematic preferences?

94. How often do you go to the cinema?

95. How aware are you regarding South Asian forms of entertainment?

96. How aware are you regarding the various popular forms of entertainment of your non-Pakistani parent's culture of origin?

Company:

97. How diverse is your social circle?

98. Do you prefer to keep connections with people of a particular cultural orientation?

99. Were there any preferences/restrictions regarding who to keep as your friends in any walk of your life?

100.   What are your activities with such friends and other members of your social circle?

ANNEXURE D

Maps of school locations in London Borough of Croydon[44]

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[44] Retrieved from London Borough of Croydon (2018a, p. 33, 2018b, p. 18).

Location of secondary schools in Croydon

St Joseph's College

Virgo Fidelis Convent School

Harris City Academy. Crystal Palace

Norbury Manor
Business & Enterprise
College for Girls

Harris Academy South Norwood
(including Upper Norwood)

The Archbishop
Lanfranc – Pegasus
Academy Trust

Oasis Academy: Arena

Harris Invictus
Academy Croydon

Oasis Academy: Shirley Park

Orchard Park High School

St Mary's Catholic
High School

Shirley High School
Performing Arts College

Coloma Convent Girls' School

Archbishop Tenison's
CE High School

Coombe Wood School
proposed site

Harris Academy Purley

The Quest Academy

Thomas More
Catholic School

Meridian High School

Woodcote
High School

Riddlesdown
Collegiate

Oasis Academy: Coulsdon

Key

Types of School (A) Academy   (V) Voluntary Aided School

School	No.	School	No.	School	No.
Meridian High School	1	Harris City Academy Crystal Palace	9	Thomas More Catholic School	17
The Archbishop Lanfranc – Pegasus Academy Trust	2	Harris Academy South Norwood	10	Virgo Fidelis Convent School	18
Archbishop Tenison's CE High School	3	Norbury Manor Bus & Ent. College for Girls	11	Harris Academy Upper Norwood	19
Oasis Academy: Shirley Park	4	Riddlesdown Collegiate	12	Woodcote High School	20
Coloma Convent Girls' School	5	St. Joseph's College	13	Harris Invictus Academy Croydon	21
Oasis Academy Coulsdon	6	St. Mary's Catholic High School	14	Oasis Academy: Arena	22
Orchard Park High School	7	Shirley High School Performing Arts College	15	Coombe Wood School	23
Harris Academy Purley	8	The Quest Academy	16		

ANNEXURE E

Socio-economic survey form

Number of people in household: _____

_____

_____

Gender of each member: _____

_____

_____

Age of each member: _____

_____

_____

Education status of each member: _____

_____

_____

Occupation of each member: _____

_____

Hometown of members (Pakistan): _____

_____

_____

Hometown of members (Other country): _____

_____

Hometown of members (UK):

Residence (town and street):

Marital Status of members:

Number of Children in household:

Religion of members:

Ethnicity of members:

ANNEXURE F

Socioeconomic survey form - filled sample

ANNEXURE G

Profile sheet of the respondents

ANNEXURE H

Glossary

Abaya	A long robe that is loose-fitted, worn by certain Muslim women around the world as a form of covering of the body
Afro	Hair comprising of tight curls, usually characteristic of Black African populations
Badnaam	An Urdu term, translated to "disreputable"
Balig	The age when a person has reached the point of sexual and mental maturity
Chand Raat	A celebration in South Asian communities performed due to the sighting of the moon announcing the advent of Eid the next morning
Deen	Religion
Dua	An act of supplication or calling out to God in the form of a conversation as a means of manifesting one's faith to Him
Dupatta	A big piece of cloth worn traditionally by South Asian women to cover their chests, kept in place by draping over both shoulders
Dunya	Translated to "world", in the case of the present research, means "wordly matters"
Eid-ul-Fitr	One of the two major Islamic occasions of festivity (second being Eid-ul-Adha), celebrated in felicitation for the month of Ramadan to have successfully ended
Eid Salaah	A prayer held in the mornings of the two major festivals of Muslims i.e. Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha as a form of celebration
Fitna	Arabic word for "test"
Freshie	A derogatory term used to describe immigrants and their descendants from the South Asian region who either cannot speak English fluently, or cannot speak it in an accent native to any region in the UK
GCSEs	Stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. A system which holds a set of examinations for students aged 14 to 16, which they have to undertake in order to qualify for their A levels

Ghairat	A term used in South Asian communities, roughly translated to social prestige
Grammar school	A type of secondary school in the UK where education is free, but only children ranking high in academic abilities are admitted after passing the 11+ exam
Hadith	Records of the quotes and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Hafiz-e-Quran	The person who has learnt all Quranic verses off by heart
Hijab	A form of covering for Muslim women whether of the hair, face or body
Izzat	A term used in South Asian communities, which roughly translates to "respect"
Jamaat	Prayer congregation in a mosque
Joota chuppai	A wedding custom prevalent among South Asian communities where the sisters of the bride take the groom's shoes and hide them, after which they demand a price for the shoes, usually in the form of money
Jumma prayer	A prayer conducted in the form of a congregation on Friday in place of the afternoon prayer of *Dhuhr* as conducted on the other six days in the week
Khala	Mother's sister
Lehnga	A South Asian form of dress for females, consisting of a blouse and a long skirt up to the ankles
Mahram	Those men whom a Muslim woman is not allowed to marry under any circumstances. A *ghair mahram* (non-mahram) man can become a woman's mahram through marital ties.
Maulana	A Muslim scholar. Such a form of address for a scholar is usually heard in certain regions of India
Mehndi	A Hindi/Urdu word literally translated to "Henna". A ceremony traditionally held the night before the wedding in South Asian communities, where henna is applied to the bride's hands, arms and feet, and songs and dances are usually performed as a form of celebration for the upcoming event

Naat	Poetry composed in praise of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Nasheed	A song exhibiting Islamic content
Nigger	A derogatory term used to describe people having "Black" skin colour
Nikkah	An Islamic marriage contract between a man and a woman that dictates the terms and conditions in which they would live together as a married couple
Niqab	A veil or covering worn over the face by some Muslim women, keeping the eyes uncovered
Pooja	A name given to ceremonial worship as performed by the followers of Hinduism towards a physical representation of a God
Prevent Strategy	Part of a four-way anti-terrorism strategy enacted by the UK government in 2003 which aims at initiating systems where tendencies towards terrorism are reported before they can be enacted
Quran Khatam	A gathering held, usually in remembrance of the death of a family member, where people attend and recite parts of the Quran until the whole Quran has been read, after which a prayer is made in order to place the blessings bestowed by the completion of the Quran onto the departed soul for forgiveness for his/her sins in the hereafter
Ramadan	The 9th month in the Islamic calendar which marks a time of fasting, community prayers and restraint from "wordly desires" for Muslims around the globe
Revert	A term used in place of "convert" to denote the Islamic notion of everyone being born Muslim, and people thus come back Islam when converting
Salaah	The second out of the five pillars of Islam, and an obligatory act of prayer performed five times at allocated periods throughout the day
Salan roti	Curry and chapatti; traditional Pakistani food
Shalwar qameez	A type of clothing usually worn by South Asian women, entails a long shirt, with loose and baggy trousers and traditionally a long

piece of cloth called a *dupatta*, in order to cover the front of the body

Sunnah	Refers to the sayings, actions and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)
Tafsir	Explanation and interpretation (exegesis) of a certain text, in this case of the Quran
Ummah	The global network of Muslims based on an Islamic belief of being bound together by a common belief in Islam that goes beyond territorial or cultural constraints to form a global network of "brotherhood" and "religious affinity"
Walimah	A celebratory feast conducted by the husband after the *Nikkah* ceremony

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 1 (Key informant)	Female	British Pakistani (Born in the UK)	British Pakistani (cousin marriage)	38	Bachelor's in Business Management	Housewife, part-time teacher's assistant	Norbury	Faisalabad, Punjab	2 sons and 1 daughter, all British Pakistanis	Islam
Respondent 2 (Key informant)	Female	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, married to respondent 36)	British Indian (Gujrati)	43	Bachelor's in Psychology	Housewife	Norbury	Faisalabad, Punjab	2 daughter and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 3	Female	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, married to respondent 37)	Black African British (Uganda)	40	ACCA in progress	Housewife	Norbury	Lahore, Punjab	2 daughters, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 4	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	British Indian (Memon, Born and brought up in the UK)	46	Degree in law; post graduate degree in management; qualified counsellor	Part time tutor for Mathematics and English	Croydon	Faisalabad, Punjab	2 daughters, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 5	Female	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, married to respondent 33)	Divorced, previously married to an American Pakistani, presently married to a British Indian (Mumbai)	40	F.A. and B.A. completed from Pakistan, also has an early years diploma in teaching	Primary school teacher	Norbury	Okara, Punjab	1 daughter and 1 son from first marriage (both British Pakistanis), 2 sons and 1 daughter from second husband's first wife (both British Indians)	Islam
Respondent 6	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 32)	Divorced from first husband (British Pakistani); second husband is an American Mexican	44	Master's in management economics and politics	Executive head at a primary school	Croydon	Lahore, Punjab	3 sons, 1 from first marriage (British Pakistani), and 2 from second marriage (British-Americans)	Islam

218

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 7	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 34)	British Indian (Memon)	45	B.A. in social sciences	Exams and admissions officer in a girl's secondary school	Norbury	Karachi, Sindh	1 son and 1 daughter, all British Indians	Islam
Respondent 8	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	British Indian (Gujrat)	31	Master's in Pharmacy	Pharmacist	Norbury	Karachi, Sindh	1 daughter, mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 9	Female	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, married to respondent 34)	British Arab (Iraq, Born and brought up in the UK)	36	Degree in Education	Teacher at a school	Croydon	Karachi, Sindh	1 daughter and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 10	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	First husband - British African (Non-Muslim); Second husband - British Arab (Palestinian, Muslim)	51	Degree in Law	Legal case worker	Croydon	Mirpur, Azad Kashmir	1 son from first husband, mixed ethnicity	Islam to Atheism to Islam
Respondent 11	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	British Bangladeshi	30	Bachelor's in education	Primary school teacher	Croydon	Jhelum, Punjab	No children	Islam
Respondent 12	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	British Asian Other (Afghani)	38	A-levels, has completed a beautician's course	Hair and beauty	Croydon	Sahiwal, Punjab	1 son, mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 13	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	British Bangladeshi	27	Master's in social work, undergraduate degree in law	Social worker	Norbury	Mirpur, Azad Kashmir	No children	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 14	Female	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK)	Divorcee (previously married to a British Bangladeshi, origin from Sylhet, Bangladesh)	32	Degree in accounting and finance, ACCA (in process)	Commercial lending manager for a bank	Norbury	Karachi, Sindh	1 daughter, mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 15	Male	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 29)	British African (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan)	36	Degree in Arabic, diploma in teaching	Teacher of Arabic and head of Arabic department in a secondary school	Croydon	Faisalabad, Punjab	3 sons and 2 daughters, all British Pakistanis	Islam
Respondent 16	Male	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 31)	White British (Other, Spanish, Catholic)	48	Degree in law	Solicitor	Croydon	Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	1 son and 1 daughter, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 17	Male	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 28)	British African (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan)	33	Acquired a General National Vocational Qualification in Information Technology	Team leader for cargo at the London office of British Airways	Croydon	Lahore, Punjab	2 sons and 2 daughters, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 18	Male	British Pakistani (Born in Pakistan, moved to the UK at age 2, married to respondent 21)	British Indian (Mumbai)	47	Degree in law	Lawyer	Croydon	Gujranwala, Punjab	1 daughter and 2 sons, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 19	Male	British Pakistani (Born in Pakistan, married to respondent 19)	Black African British (Born and brought up in France)	38	F.sc (from Pakistan, equivalent to A-levels in the UK)	Works in a dry-cleaning shop	Norbury	Jhelum, Punjab	3 daughters, all British Pakistanis	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 20	Female	Black African British (Born and brought up in France, married to respondent 19)	British Pakistani (Born in Pakistan)	31	B.tech in travel and tourism (incomplete, had to freeze semester due to pregnancy)	Housewife	Norbury	Born and brought up in France	3 daughters, all British Pakistanis	Islam
Respondent 21	Female	British Indian (Born in Mumbai, India, married to respondent 18)	British Pakistani (Born in the UK)	41	A-levels	Housewife	Croydon	Born in Mumbai, India, moved to the UK after marriage	2 sons and 1 daughter, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 22	Female	British Bangladeshi (Born and brought up in the UK, lived in Bangladesh for three years in her twenties)	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, moved to Pakistan [Kharian, Punjab] at 2 years old, came to UK at age 17)	38	B.tech national diploma in health and social care, incomplete degree in health science	Housewife	Norbury	Sylhet, Bangladesh	3 sons, all British Pakistanis	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 23	Female	White British (Other, Born in Lithuania, Southern Europe)	British Pakistani (Born in Hafizabad, Punjab, Pakistan)	34	Degree in Physiotherapy	Housewife	Norbury	Lithuania (moved to the UK in 2005 after marriage)	2 sons and 1 daughter, all mixed ethnicities	Islam (Previously Christian)
Respondent 24	Female	British Asian (Other) (Born in Malaysia, moved to the UK after marriage)	Married two times to British Pakistanis (divorced from first husband, second husband has passed away)	72	Studied till 9th grade in Malaysia	Housewife	Norbury	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	3 sons, 1 from first marriage, 2 from second marriage, all British Pakistanis	Islam
Respondent 25	Female	British Arab (Moroccan and Egyptian, Born and brought up in the UK)	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, origin from Faisalabad, Punjab)	22	Undergraduate degree in education studies	Housewife, applying for jobs	Croydon	Moroccan from mother's side, Egyptian from father's side	No children (newly-wed)	Islam
Respondent 26	Female	British Asian (Other, Malaysia, Born and brought up in Malaysia)	British Pakistani	47	Master's in education and international development	Teacher at a secondary school	Norbury	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	4 daughters and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 27	Female	White British (Other, Born and brought up in Poland)	Divorced from a Polish man, now married to a British Pakistani (Born and brought up in Islamabad, Pakistan, moved to the UK 30 years ago)	39	A-levels from Poland	Works at customer services in a home appliances store	Croydon	Krakow, Poland	1 daughter (first marriage) (White British Other, Polish), 3 daughters (second marriage) (mixed ethnicity)	Christian Catholic to Islam
Respondent 28	Female	British African (Kenyan, origin from Pakistan, Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 17)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Lahore, Punjab)	31	B.A. honours in Arabic and linguistics	Part-time sales assistant	Croydon	Nairobi, Kenya	2 daughters and 2 sons, all British Pakistanis	Islam
Respondent 29	Female	British African (Kenya, origin from Pakistan, Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 15)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Faisalabad, Punjab)	37	Degree in history and politics	Housewife	Croydon	Nairobi, Kenya	2 daughters and 3 sons, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 30	Female	British Arab (Morocco) (Born in Morocco, moved to the UK at the age of 1)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, from Karachi, Sindh, in process of a divorce from him)	40	MBA, and a degree in computer science	Admin officer at a school	Croydon	Morocco	4 children, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 31	Female	White British (Other, Spanish) (Married to respondent 16)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa)	48	Degree in graphic designing	Designer	Croydon	Spain	1 daughter and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Catholic Christian
Respondent 32	Male	American Mexican (Married to respondent 6)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Lahore, Punjab)	52	Technical and vocational qualifications	Works in IT support	Croydon	California, USA (fourth generation Mexican)	2 sons (present marriage) (mixed ethnicity), 1 son (wife's previous marriage) (British Pakistani)	Islam (previously Catholic Christian)

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 33	Male	British Indian (Born in Mumbai, India, moved to the UK at the age of 8, married to respondent 5)	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, origin from Okara, Punjab and spent her teenage years in Lahore, Punjab)	42	Degree in Islamic studies	Imam at a mosque	Norbury	Mumbai, India	2 sons and 1 daughter (first marriage) (British Indians); 1 son and 1 daughter from wife's first marriage (British Pakistanis)	Islam
Respondent 34	Male	British Indian (Memon, married to respondent 7)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Karachi, Sindh)	42	Degree of law, also has a chartered tax qualification	Lawyer	Norbury	Memon, origin from Gujrat, India)	1 daughter and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Islam
Respondent 35	Male	British Arab (Iraq, Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 9)	British Pakistani (Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Karachi, Sindh)	35	Master's and Doctorate in biochemical engineering	NHS healthcare manager	Norbury	Iraq	1 daughter and 1 son, all mixed ethnicity	Islam

	Gender	Ethnicity (In the context of the UK census form)	Ethnicity of spouse	Age	Education	Occupation	Town of residence in the locale of the study	Place of origin in country of origin	Number of children + their ethnicity	Religion
Respondent 36	Male	British Indian (Born and brought up in the UK, married to respondent 2)	British Pakistani (Key informant; Born and brought up in the UK, origin from Faisalabad, Punjab)	50	Bachelor's in computer science	IT Consultant	Norbury	Gujrat, India	2 daughters and 1 son, all British Indians	Islam
Respondent 37	Male	African British (Ugandan, born and brought up in the UK, convert to Islam, married to respondent 3)	British Pakistani (Born in the UK, lived in Pakistan from ages 1 to 11, moved back to the UK)	36	Bachelor's in social work	Social worker	Norbury	Uganda, Africa	2 daughters, all mixed ethnicities	Islam (previously Catholic Christian)

Respondent sheet for offspring of inter-ethnic couples

	Gender	Mother's ethnic group	Father's ethnic group	Age	Education	Occupation	Marital Status	Self-ascriptive ethnic group	Religion
Respondent 38	Female	British Asian (Other, Mauritius)	British Pakistani	32	ACCA (in progress)	Bank manager	Married to a British Bangladeshi with 1 daughter	British Pakistani	Islam
Respondent 39	Male	British Asian (Other, Malaysian)	British Pakistani	33	Has completed A-levels	Airport officer	Married to a Black African British, has 2 sons and 2 daughters	British Pakistani	Islam
Respondent 40	Male	British Asian (Other, Malaysian)	British Pakistani	36	Has completed the National Vocational Qualification, level 1 and 2	Security Officer in Her Majesty's Treasury	Unmarried	British Pakistani	Islam