

**Everyday Racism and Discrimination in France and
Britain:
A Comparative Study of the Educational and Professional
Experiences of Second Generation Graduate Women**

Jawiria Naseem

**UCL
PhD in Sociology**

Declaration of word count

I, Jawiria Naseem, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Name: Jawiria Naseem

Date: 24th February 2016

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jawiria Naseem', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

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I dedicate this thesis to my parents

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and

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Thesis abstract

This thesis investigates the work experiences of second generation, children of Muslim immigrants, in France and Britain. In particular, it focuses on how Pakistani and Algerian women negotiate their social and professional positions.

The thesis takes a qualitative approach involving two interviews with twenty-four female participants (six Pakistanis and six Algerians in each country), all of whom are graduates. It takes an intersectional lens to illuminate how the factors of ethnicity, gender, religion, education, social class and nationality construct the women's employment trajectories. By comparing the experiences of women from well-established groups – Pakistanis in the United Kingdom (UK) and Algerians in France – to those of recent minority ethnic groups – Algerians in the UK and Pakistanis in France – the thesis explores experiences of racism and discrimination in educational institutions, the labour market and society as a whole.

Framed within this comparative perspective, I show how others' fixation on (visible) ethnic and/or religious identities constructs a similar sense of exclusion for both French and British women. In particular, I illustrate how the women's experience of othering, 'materialised' through everyday racism, produces a sense of non-belonging in society as a whole and 'caps' equality in the labour market. I argue that the second generation graduate women in this study experience social mobility and achieve economic inclusion through academic success and accessing highly skilled professional jobs. They do not, however, experience social inclusion and equality in either multicultural Britain or republican France.

By 'de-constructing' the category 'second generation', the research reported here contributes to the understanding of the social and professional positions of second generation graduates and Muslim women in Western Europe.

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Introduction

It was a bit cold in the corridor. Summer had long settled in. The gentle warmth of summer breeze was yet to come. 'I should probably go in? Knock first? I think he is inside.' You cannot even notice there is an office on the right. Facing the ladies'. Light never finds its way in. The window is too high. And too small too. She kept walking. Back and forth. Short steps. Waiting. She was very anxious. She really needed to speak to him *or at least she thought she needed to!* The deadline was close. She really admired him. She enjoyed listening to his discussions. She was a careful listener. In a way he inspired her to work in that direction. Still waiting. Waiting nervously. It was the first time they were going to meet. Well, at the office. 'What's going to happen? What is he going to say? I hope he'll shed some *light* at least'. It was time. *Enough waiting.* Knock. She went in.

'Good afternoon sir! Can I come in?'

'Yes, good afternoon! Come in.'

The office was very small. No wonder you cannot see it! Overwhelming but pleasant *at first*. The books were stacked high. All the way confronting the ceiling. She noticed a window opening onto the courtyard. A courtyard she thought she was very familiar with. 'So that's what's behind the window!' she quietly realised.

What happened next remains unclear. What questions were asked. Who spoke first. Probably him. No, definitely her.

'I really want to try and pass the exam. I think actually both. I know there are more tests for one of them. I think there are two more tests for the Agrégation.'

He listened carefully. His glasses were slipping; as usual. He always looked over the glasses. Never through them. *Why do people do that?* Something was different. Maybe because he was in a sitting position. He usually walks back and forth as he speaks. His quietness encouraged her to pour out everything. Not that he did not listen. He did. *Was he really listening?* Finally! Finally, she was to get some answers. It was very important. At last! He lectured her.

‘Well, you *seem* to have done your homework. But, first of all. You should know that only French nationals can take these exams and now because of this whole European Union thing even other European nationals can. So I am afraid. There is no...’

‘Oh, no, no, no! I am aware of that. Yes, I know. It was the first thing I checked!’

She felt very proud. She *did* her homework. *Did she not hear what he said or just blanked out his last words?* And then the unspeakable was spoken (and with so much pride).

‘I am Dutch.’

Silence. A sudden heat swathed the room. The book shelf behind him caught her eye. It seemed very confined. ‘I should open the window’, she wished. He did not look at her. He *gazed*, piercing sharply through his glasses now. A smirk started to shape his face.

‘Dutch? And probably you are also blond and have blue eyes?’

He sniggered. She did not know what to say. ‘Why did he say that? What does he mean?’ she wondered. *You know now!* She awkwardly smiled back.

'No. I mean. I. Actually. Actually, I'm Dutch just because I was born there!'

What happened next remains unclear. It is a distant memory after all. How could one remember everything about the past? But you do remember certain things; or at least you remember them again when you are able to redefine them. The meeting did not last long. She left soon after that. She later decided to enrol for the exams. But she never spoke to him again. She actually never met him again. *He* was her French professor who gave lectures about minority ethnic groups in Britain. *She* was I.

This encounter with one of my professors at Sorbonne is long past. I did not even remember it until I started this journey. Working on this thesis has brought up so many old memories; memories I have now learnt to redefine. This thesis has enabled me to better understand what I thought I understood previously. It made me reflect on who I am; about my identities, in *plural*.

This research journey soon became a personal discovery journey when I realised that I belong to the French (and some would argue British too) minority ethnic groups I was researching! I may feel Dutch but *is it* the way people see me? A simple yes/no answer would be too simplistic. It is this very complexity about how people define themselves, how they cannot escape others' identification and its ultimate impact on their lives that this thesis examines. Understanding the negotiation processes at the heart of this complexity will help illuminate how individuals' life trajectories and opportunities are shaped, not only by structural factors but also by relational factors (i.e. in interaction with other social actors). These interactions will be explored in greater detail in the findings chapters by looking at specific social settings: societal, educational and professional.

The journey I have completed over the past three years has made me look at the world with a different eye. It has made me question several issues I was used to so often overlook or judge not worthy to pay attention to. Three months into my degree I decided to carry out the pilot study. I wanted to find out how other women who are (supposedly) like me think about their own position(s). How do they deal with issues of belonging? Having always replied 'I am Dutch' to the ultimate 'where are you from?' question in France, I now (reluctantly) say 'I am Pakistani/French' in Britain. But why are the words 'I am Muslim' still so difficult to acknowledge in public? How important are national contexts and the people one interacts with in shaping self-identifications? These puzzles and feelings about belonging and identity are explored in this thesis. More precisely, this thesis is about how perceptions can impact on life opportunities, shape social interactions in society and how these ultimately contribute to one's relationship(s) with others in educational institutions and the labour market.

Moving to Britain after living in France for 16 years offered other possibilities for understanding how individuals' identities can be expressed in the public domain, including education and employment, that is to say not limited to citizenship only. This understanding fuelled my curiosity about these issues. The significance and relevance of this experience will be returned to once the analyses have been presented. Understanding *now* who I am and where I am placed by others has influenced my reading of the women's accounts and how I have decided to write the pages you are going to explore.

Setting the scene

Background

Minority ethnic groups who migrated from former colonies to France and Britain have been the subject of extensive political and scholarly attention. During the post-World War II era, France witnessed a

considerable number of arrivals from Northern Africa, especially from Algeria and Britain attracted (among other groups) South Asians, including Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis (Judt, 2007). These migrants, largely from working class backgrounds, settled in a hostile environment, suffering from racism and discrimination in numerous, if not all, aspects of their lives, ranging from employment opportunities to provision of social services (Rattansi, 2011). The limited resources the majority of migrant workers possessed further limited their opportunities to social mobility which placed them in disadvantaged positions. Following family reunifications in the 1970s, the number of Algerians settled in France increased substantially and so did the number of Pakistanis in Britain. Since then, several political interventions have been (theoretically) designed to foster social interactions, improve the living conditions of migrants and their families and enhance the educational attainment of their children.

The children of these immigrants – the second generation – have also received substantial academic attention. In France, the bulk of research has focused on the socio-economic trajectories of Maghrebis¹ (including Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans) (Aeberhardt et al., 2010); while in Britain, in addition to investigating educational disparities (Hoelscher et al., 2008), studies have also sought to address the topic theoretically (Modood, 2004a) and to document personal experiences (Dale, 2008). In France, while some studies have used a social class perspective to explain unequal educational outcomes between Maghrebi youth and their white peers, others have reported the existence of racism in French educational institutions (Caille, 2005; Santelli, 2001). These findings resonate with a variety of work carried out in Britain (Connor et al., 2004; Ansari, 2002).

¹ In this thesis, the term Maghrebi will be used when reporting research on Algerians (often also including Moroccans and Tunisians). This term is preferred over the term 'Arab' which is perceived and experienced negatively by my Algerian participants due to its derogatory use in the media and political discourse (especially in France). Accordingly, when reporting such use in the media and political discourse, the term 'Arab' will be kept; inverted commas indicate the negativity associated with the label.

The education-to-work transition has also been examined in several studies. French and British findings have demonstrated the existence of racial discrimination (for France see, Meurs et al., 2006; for Britain, see Heath and Cheung, 2006). In Britain, religious discrimination in the labour market has also been highlighted and disparities also exist and persist in occupational attainment between the second generation and their white peers (Martin et al., 2010).

Defining second generation

Although there is no universally agreed definition of the term second generation, broadly speaking it always refers to children of immigrants, but there are variations depending on how researchers define certain factors, namely children's country of birth, their age at arrival in the country and parents' country of birth. In their study of children of immigrants in the United States, Portes and Zhou (1993) defined second generation as children born in the country with at least one parent born abroad or children who arrived in the country before the age of 12. Other researchers have made further distinctions between foreign-born children and those born in the country of migration. Thus, children who arrived at age 16 or above are considered to be first generation (i.e. similar to their parents), those who arrived before the age of 16 are referred to as the 1.5 generation and those who are born in the country are the second generation (Heath and Demireva, 2014). These distinctions are indeed important for a discussion of the labour market experiences of the second generation because children who arrived as adolescents in the country (the 1.5 generation or first generation) are likely to have had different primary education compared to their counterparts born and educated in the country. This difference is not negligible, as important knowledge is built during primary education such as language proficiency and understandings of cultural practices which affect interactions with others.

The notion of second generation is strongly linked to issues of belonging, non-belonging and positioning in society; creating social boundaries between immigrants and their children on the one hand, and the majority white group on the other (Alba, 2005). It has been criticised since it has been used as a binary category, between first and second generations, creating differences in terms of the perceived 'better' socialisation and adaptation of children of immigrants to the culture of their country of birth compared to their immigrant parents (see for example studies by Schnapper, 2008; Safi, 2006). Anthias (2009) argues that this understanding undermines the specificities of experiences between immigrants and their children and within the group itself, that are shaped by different intersecting factors. She criticises the notion of second generation since it raises questions of belonging for the group and its relationship with the country of birth.

Although the use of the term is debated, there is evidence of differential experiences among groups on the basis of their parents' migratory histories which cannot be ignored since they affect individuals' life opportunities (discussed in Chapter 1). It is to highlight the specificity of the experiences of British/French-born children of immigrants that I will use the term second generation. I define second generation as children born in France or Britain to foreign-born Pakistani or Algerian parents. This definition also includes children who arrived in France or Britain before the start of their schooling and are now French or British citizens.

Focus of the study

Why study Pakistanis and Algerians in France and Britain?

Both France and Britain are now home to two of the largest minority ethnic groups in Western Europe (OECD, 2010), namely North Africans in France and South Asians in Britain. Two 'distinct' models for dealing with ethnicity have been developed in the two countries: republicanism in France and multiculturalism in Britain. The republican model puts strong

emphasis on the notions of *one* collective citizen identity and the ‘sacralised’ relationship between the French Republic and its citizens (Schain, 2004), while the multicultural ideology focuses on the recognition and assertion of the ‘right of distinct cultural identities’, seen as beneficial for the nation (Prior, 2010, p133). Both models aim to deal with issues of social cohesion and equality in their respective societies (Favell, 2001b). However, despite this ‘difference’ in approach, a similar social issue is noticeable across both countries: the labour market inequalities experienced by second generations. This similarity forms the point of inquiry in this study.

While studies of both well- and less-established minority ethnic groups have received scholarly attention in Britain, in France, only well-established groups have been the subject of continuous research. In France, only a few studies have sought to investigate the experiences of Pakistanis, an ‘emerging’ minority ethnic group (Moliner, 2009; Hanif, 2007). Similarly, in Britain, only a limited number of studies have looked at the experiences of Algerians (Vincent-Jones, 2009; Collyer, 2008).

A two-level comparison (between countries and between groups) will enable me to understand how life trajectories are shaped within particular social and political settings and how personal histories (related to the position of a minority ethnic group) produce differences and similarities in life experiences (education- and employment-related) (Hantrais, 2009). It will give me an opportunity to study how national specificities affect two similar and also two distinct minority ethnic groups’ educational and professional experiences.

Why study second generation Muslim graduate women?

Born and bred in their home country (i.e. country of birth) but still (potentially) retaining cultural practices from their parents’ country of origin, younger generations have the ability to negotiate boundaries

associated with their identity as children of immigrants and therefore to achieve the socio-economic positions their parents struggled to achieve (Algan et al., 2010). For instance, younger generations are more likely to speak the language of the country and are increasingly participating in Higher Education (compared to their parents). Yet, numerous studies have shown the persistence of unequal professional outcomes of these second generations compared to their white peers despite their academic success (discussed in Chapter 1). Moreover, second generation graduate women suffer higher unemployment rates than their male counterparts (OECD, 2010). Therefore it is necessary to analyse why simultaneous gender and ethnic disparities persist for female second generations.

Following 9/11, the focus on Islam in both France and Britain has allowed new comparisons to emerge within the second generation category. This focus on religious differences has problematised the position of Muslim youth, born and educated in the West, and depicted them as difficult to 'integrate' citizens (Rattansi, 2011; Waddington et al., 2009). Muslim women, especially those who wear headscarves, have become the symbol of this negative depiction (Afshar et al., 2006). These perceptions are fuelled by the continuous poor socio-economic outcomes of the group and the 'shock' that second generation young people were involved in terror attacks against their 'own' countries (Thomson and Crul, 2007). This fixation on religion to explain social inequalities overlooks the multiplicity of social structures involved in producing socio-economic outcomes and sustains racialised boundaries. This ultimately challenges the right of Muslim second generations to belong to western European countries in the name of secularism (Phalet et al., 2012).

Thus, while Muslim minority ethnic graduates have the academic skills to enter professional jobs, they still experience work-related inequalities on the grounds of both ethnicity and religion and face particular challenges because Muslims are criticised for not willing to 'integrate' (Modood and

Werbner, 1997). The complexity of the position of Muslim minority ethnic women graduates will be investigated throughout this thesis.

Research questions

The aim of this thesis is to achieve an in-depth understanding of how the professional positions of young graduate minority ethnic women are constructed by exploring their own sense of identification and processes of belonging (including social inclusion and/or exclusion) and how these are negotiated in social interactions. In particular, the thesis examines key similarities and/or differences in experiences between second generation Pakistani and Algerian women by focusing on the socially constructed nature of their education- and work-related trajectories in France and Britain. A qualitative approach is used in this study to offer an insight into these women's lived experiences. This approach helps to illuminate the intersections of gender, ethnic, religious, educational, class-based and national identities, as they emerge in the women's accounts.

The following overarching research question addresses these aims:

- How do second generation Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women negotiate their professional positions within multicultural Britain and republican France?

To answer this research question, multiple sub-questions will be addressed:

- How does the specific context of each country affect Pakistani and Algerian women's experiences, across groups and within their own ethnic, religious and national groups?
- How do academic pathways impact on their professional opportunities?

- How does the women's status as new graduate affect their employment opportunities?
- What are Muslim women's experiences of and within the labour market?

Significance of the study

This thesis examines the professional experiences of second generation Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women in France and Britain. It explores their experiences in the labour market and investigates how well-educated Muslim women locate themselves within multicultural Britain and republican France. In adopting a qualitative cross-country comparison, the thesis makes empirical and theoretical contributions to the following:

- The understanding of labour market positions as socially constructed
- The identification of national specificities (including structural features and political framework) and their impact on the life trajectories of two well-established and two less-established groups.

In doing so, this study is significant in documenting:

- The professional trajectories of second generation Muslim graduate women from a qualitative perspective
- The experiences of two under-researched groups (i.e. Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain).

Organisation of the thesis

This thesis is divided into two main parts. The first part comprises this Introduction Chapter and Chapters 1-3, which are the literature review,

the theoretical discussion and the description of the methods used. The second part includes the three findings chapters (4 to 6) and the Conclusion Chapter.

Chapter 1 presents a review of the literature and is divided into two sections. The first deals with what is known of the experiences of the well-established minority ethnic groups, namely Algerians in France and Pakistanis in Britain; the second looks at the less-established groups, namely Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain. The groups have been separated in this discussion since they have different migratory histories and there is sparse literature available for the recent minority ethnic groups (i.e. who arrived in the country in the 1980s and/or 1990s). This required me to use parallel studies on other recent migrant groups (including Chinese and Turkish in Britain and France respectively) to depict the experiences of the recent minority ethnic groups in this study. The first section sets the context, detailing the migratory and settling experiences of migrants in France and Britain. In particular, it discusses their experiences of and within the labour market and provides an understanding of how the parents as migrant workers were positioned in society. I then outline the educational and employment experiences/outcomes of the second generation and show how histories of migration influence these experiences/outcomes. The second section follows a similar pattern for the less-established minority ethnic groups. This chapter discusses racism and discrimination as key features that shaped migrants' relationships within society and shows how a legacy of inequalities and disadvantages impacts on the younger generations' life opportunities.

Chapter 2 unpacks the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis. This thesis takes a social constructionist standpoint to address how differences and divisions are constructed and sustained in western societies and how these can be understood. First, I highlight the existence of a persistent discourse of otherness directed at minority

ethnic groups while arguing that a shifting and context-specific definition of the 'other' exists. The othering discourse is very useful in understanding how processes of belonging operate in various aspects of my participants' lives (society, education and work). Then, I deal with the related concept of identity and discuss positioning theory, intersectionality and translocational positionality. I argue that identities are multiple and shifting, deployed as resources in specific contexts.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological approach and provides a rationale for the methods used. It includes discussion of the usefulness of doing a comparative study, the data collection and interviewing techniques and the data analysis process. It presents findings from an interview pilot with Moroccan participants. It also explains why the study sample was changed from Moroccans to Algerians and describes the lessons learnt for the main study.

Chapter 4 is the first of three analytical chapters. It is an overarching chapter since it focuses on participants' relationships within the wider society (excluding schooling and professional experiences). It underlines key issues of (non-)belonging, feelings of otherness and experiences of everyday racism. The chapter argues that despite two different political models, the existence of racism and discrimination in both countries produces similar experiences of social exclusion and otherness as a result of a fixation on identities seen as incompatible French and British citizen identities. This chapter contextualises the findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 5 provides an analysis of participants' experiences from primary school to university. It highlights how participants negotiate between parental expectations, availability of choices and their own aspirations. The chapter argues that the limited availability of parental resources and the existence of prejudice in the schooling system framed participants' academic choices and ultimately shaped their educational trajectories.

Chapter 6 is the last findings chapter and examines the women's professional experiences. It draws on the findings from Chapters 4 and 5 by looking at how the women's positions in society influence their positioning in the labour market and how educational pathways impact on professional outcomes. It is divided into three sections: first, the education-to-work transition; second, experiences in the workplace and third, strategies deployed to counter negative work-related experiences.

In the Conclusion Chapter I bring together the findings of the thesis. I argue that despite achieving social mobility through academic success and experiencing economic inclusion through accessing professional jobs, second generation minority ethnic graduate women do not achieve social equality and emotional inclusion because they are continually othered. It also discusses the implications of the findings for the literature and includes recommendations for future research. The thesis ends by returning to my initial story to make some final remarks.

Chapter 1: From immigrants to children of immigrants: political context, conditions of migration, professional experiences and generational changes

This chapter reviews the literature on the migration conditions of workers who arrived in France and Britain after World War Two and the generational changes among their children. It sets the scene and provides the context within which the experiences of my participants need to be understood. In particular, it provides an overview of the settlement experiences of migrant workers who arrived from Pakistan to Britain in the early 1970s and from Algeria to France after 1945 and especially after the independence of Algeria in 1962. These experiences influenced migrants' economic prospects in their country of settlement and shaped their relationships within society. It also offers an overview of the educational and professional trajectories of their children, the second generation. The literature review covers studies of the 1990s which help outline key social issues which affected these groups, namely racism and discrimination; and more recent studies which offer a new historical perspective on the condition of migration or depict the generational changes between migrant parents and their children. The chapter also provides an insight into the migration experiences of relatively newly settled minority ethnic groups – Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain. It maps the unconventional migration patterns of the groups and focuses on the younger generations' educational and professional situations. Through the literature review, the chapter investigates the ways in which migrant parents' experiences shaped the younger generations' educational and professional positions. The chapter examines how the historical background and political context that affected the first generation influenced the trajectories of the second generation.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section focuses on the settlement experiences of Muslim Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in

France, with a particular focus on the situation of female workers to elucidate how the intersection of gender, ethnicity, education and social class construct migrant women's particular positions in the post-war labour market. Generational changes will be discussed in the second section, also including a close examination of the professional positions of second generation graduate women. The third section is devoted to the more recent migrant groups – Algerians in Britain and Pakistanis in France – following a similar pattern to the first section. However, the sparse literature available on both groups does not allow distinctions to be made from a gender perspective. In addition to this, both the well-established minorities and recent minorities followed different migration paths; hence, they are separated in this chapter. The final and fourth section discusses the social and political changes that occurred after 9/11 and which contributed to the construction of Muslim women's position in Western Europe. This contextual framework will contribute to the understanding of how the women in this study perceive their position as French or British Muslims.

1.1 Racialised post-war migration: historical perspective and contemporary debates

1.1.1 Settling in a tense atmosphere: experiencing racism and discrimination

In the aftermath of the Second World War, both the French and British governments needed to rebuild their respective countries and so recruited workers from outside France and Britain to fill labour shortage (Judt, 2007). Initially the French government recruited South European workers while the British government recruited 'Polish and other displaced East Europeans' (Rattansi, 2011, p22). The recruitment of European workers was a case of first choice since they were seen as more prone to engage with and adapt to British and French cultural practices and norms, because of an assumed cultural proximity between Europeans (Rattansi, 2011; Hansen, 2003). Rattansi (2011) argues that

the belief in white supremacy which fuelled colonial conquest also influenced racialised recruitment practices put in place by the French and British governments in order to restrict the recruitment of colonial migrants, seen as enduringly different from the French, the British and other European migrants. The idea was to limit the ethnic diversification of the French and British populations by favouring the recruitment of white workers (from the colonies and within Europe) and by preventing the entry of other colonial migrants believed to be inferior and backward. However, growing labour shortages pushed both governments to open borders to other colonial workers, at the same time as European workers. Rattansi (2011) further suggests that the British government treated non-European labour workers in the same way as it did when they were in the colonies. Spire's (2005) findings about Algerian migrants' experiences in post-war France resonate with Rattansi's (2011) arguments. Likewise, Spire found that French political measures¹ discriminated against non-European workers so that Algerian families experienced racism, discrimination and socio-economic disadvantages during their settlement after 1945, which resulted in the rise in self-employment among the group (discussed below).

Restrictive and racialised immigration policies and practices were implemented by governmental bodies. For example, the French National Immigration Office (ONI), which was in charge of recruiting migrant workers and regulating migration flow, issued work permits on proof of adequate housing but implemented the policy for North African migrants only, thus limiting their entry compared to other workers (Derderian, 2004)². Unlike France, by giving citizenship status to all Commonwealth

¹ These included making certain medical checks as mandatory for Algerians only prior to entry to France and investigating lifestyle such as alcohol consumption. Failure to pass these requirements led to the refusal of travel tickets. These measures were implemented since Algerians' entry to France could not be restricted by visa legislation. Indeed, the country was considered an integral part of France until the war of independence in 1962.

² France witnessed labour migration from all its colonies but especially from Algeria because of the special status the colony retained – Algeria was considered to be a physical extension of France. Thus, until the beginning of the War of Independence in 1954, Algerians were considered to be French nationals. The Algerian population in

migrants, Britain encouraged migration from Old Commonwealth countries like Canada (Hansen, 2000; 2003). It is only when successive restrictive measures failed to prevent large scale in-migration from the New Commonwealth countries such as the Caribbean and South Asia that all Commonwealth migration privileges were curtailed in 1971. These measures demonstrate the importance accorded by the French and British governments to containing ethnic and cultural diversification, which became the new governmental priority that fed the anti-immigrant sentiment in both countries and was, in effect, racist (Rattansi, 2011).

Based on the analysis of Britain's post-war immigration legislations first aimed at recruiting migrants, then at restricting migration and finally, at dealing with unwanted migrants in Europe, Hansen (2003) described how these policies shaped public opinion; largely an anti-immigrant sentiment characterised by 'ignorance, prejudice, hysteria' and a fear of national cultural alteration (p32). These feelings also prevailed in France (Derderian, 2004). This resentment fuelled racist and discriminatory practices across various levels of society, including employment and housing provision which gave rise to geographical and residential segregation.

Creating feelings of belonging, argues Anthias (2006), is essential for individuals to feel a sense of inclusion, to respond to exclusion, and to find their positions in society in respect to others. Thus, residential segregation was both a result of unfair practices in governmental bodies and migrants' own choice. Clustering in affordable, and so, poor neighbourhoods, was an important means of organisation in response to experiences of racial harassment and violence as shown in various studies (see for example, the works of Virdee (1995, 2001) on the issue

France grew considerably in the decade preceding the War of Independence as a result of the special travel rights they enjoyed; considerably more than the number of European workers recruited by the ONI. Their numbers kept growing even after the end of the Independence War. For a full historical overview of France's migration policies see Derderian (2004). Hamoumou and Schnapper's (1993) work especially documents the case of Algerian workers pre- and post- the Independence War.

of racial harassment in Britain, and the works of Wieviorka (1991, 1994, 1998) on the issue of racism in France).

The majority of both groups of migrants were uneducated and from working class backgrounds. The need to enhance economic growth through industrial development also meant that workers recruited by official bodies were mostly unskilled. Consequently, migrants lacked immediate transferable skills, had limited opportunities to move up the social ladder through professional success and were confined to low paid manual jobs (Tripier, 1990). These characteristics, although true for many male workers, were significant for female migrants too.

1.1.2 The experiences of migrant women in the post-war labour market

In her extensive work on post-war migration of South Asian women to Britain, Brah (e.g. 1993; 1996; 2003; with Shaw, 1992) highlighted the particular work and life experiences of the group by exploring the intersection of gender, ethnicity, education, social class and religion. She pointed to the differences in experiences between Indian and Pakistani women. For instance, while many Indian women (mostly Sikh and Hindu women) arrived in the 1950s and entered the labour market, the majority of Muslim Pakistani women arrived as housewives to join their spouses during the family reunifications of the 1970s (Brah, 2003). She explained the difference in labour market participation (partly) as a result of the economic mutations of the 1970s. The immediate post-war economic growth allowed many Indian women to work in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs; whereas the decline in the industrial sector in the 1970s meant that the recently arrived Pakistani migrant women could not be involved in the economy in a similar way to their Indian peers (Brah, 1996; 2003). Yet, the understanding of these women's positioning in the labour market cannot be limited to economic changes and professional abilities only.

Brah (1996) also suggested that the women's life stages and social class position impacted on their professional prospects. She argued that many migrant women were compelled to stay out of work or take on jobs, such as homeworking or unpaid work in family-run businesses, which would allow them to combine both work and family responsibilities. These findings are in keeping with other studies (e.g. Evans and Bowlby, 2000; Afshar, 1989).

Brah (1996) also reported the limited professional opportunities available to these women outside the family home as a result of stereotyped perceptions and the low expectations of South Asian women in society. She argued that these migrant women were subject to attributions that were in operation during colonial times (such as discourses that their cultures are constraining) which negatively influenced the support the women received from governmental and other educational bodies and subsequent jobs employers offered. In addition, the need to maintain strict cultural, ethnic and gender identities in certain South Asian groups placed migrant women as symbolic bearers of these identities, thus reinforcing pressure to conform to cultural expectations and ultimately confining women to the private sphere as daughter-in-laws, wives and mothers (see for example, Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992).

Similar to South Asian women, some North African women arrived in France during the family reunifications of the 1960s, while others migrated during the 1950s for work-related purposes. However, unlike South Asian labour migration to Britain, North African migration to France was not gender-divided. For instance, in 1950, there were over 40,000 women immigrants in France compared to 50,000 men (Daguet et al., 1996)³. These migrant women were mostly employed in semi-skilled and unskilled jobs in the industrial sector such as textiles but also worked in the service sector doing cleaning jobs (Dayan et al., 1995). However,

³ Although before 1962, Algerians were legally French, in official statistics, they were still grouped with immigrants (Daguet et al., 1996).

they suffered high levels of unemployment because of discriminatory practices in the labour market (Meurs et al., 2006; Dayan et al., 1996; Dayan et al., 1995). In their longitudinal and comparative studies on the employment patterns of immigrants and their French-born peers, Dayan and his colleagues (1996) showed that Algerian migrant women were more likely than any other minority ethnic women and men to experience unstable professional positions throughout their employment history. In addition to racial discrimination, the authors also found four other reasons for the women's low levels of employment: (1) lack of language competency, (2) lack of relevant/high educational qualifications, (3) age at entry in the job market and (4) dependent children. Thus, both education and gender-related factors limited Algerian migrant women's employment prospects.

The recent work by Merckling (2012) sheds further light onto these issues. She undertook mixed method research on the labour market experiences of immigrant women and especially Maghrebi women (two thirds of her 46 interviewees), bringing together the first and second generations. She found that migrant women with non-French educational or professional qualifications could not find appropriate jobs after migration and ended up under-employed, that is to say they took on jobs for which they were over-qualified. Merckling argued that inability to get accreditation for their non-French qualifications further limited well-qualified Maghrebi women's professional opportunities. However, despite providing useful insights into women's professional experiences, Merckling restricted her analysis to professional competencies, overlooking the impact of racism and discrimination as highlighted by Wieviorka (1994, 1998) which further limited the women's economic participation.

Other studies accounted for the importance of the gender and cultural dynamic within Maghrebi families which paved the way for professional participation among these women (e.g. Cyprien and Vincenzo, 2001;

Bekkar et al., 1999; Bouamama and Sad Saoud; 1996; Hammouche, 1994). In their qualitative work of Maghrebi families, Bouamama and Sad Saoud (1996) reported the transformation of Maghrebi women's role within their families as a result of their husband's absence (i.e. long working hours; divorce; death). These women became in charge of handling administrative issues, dealing with school staff, managing daily household purchases, mediating conflicts within the neighbourhood and/or the family. The authors argued that these 'new' social responsibilities, traditionally attributed to Maghrebi men, gave these women gradual independence vis-à-vis their husbands and positioned them as new authority figures within their families. The authors further suggested that this social independence allowed many housewives to become professionally active for the first time. In their literature review on Maghrebis families' post-war settlement in France, Cyprien and Vincenzo (2001) also noted that existence of racism and discrimination which produced high unemployment among Maghrebi men pushed many Maghrebi women to work in order to provide for their families. Thus, both personal motivations (e.g. to gain economic independence) and structural inequalities (i.e. racism and discrimination affecting the spouse's employment opportunities) contributed to many North African women's entry into the labour market post-migration.

In sum, while many South Asian and Maghrebi women remained in traditional gender roles post-migration (limited to domestic and maternal duties), many others experienced a shift in their social positions. Some of these women experienced working in an industrialised country while others experienced economic activity for the first time. Both groups' professional participation was affected by their family lives (e.g. caring duties), their educational and professional skills, the economic situation of the country (e.g. industrial restructuring) and the existence of racism and discrimination in society. Yet, Maghrebi women were more likely to be economically active (partly) as a result of a change in their role within

the family/neighbourhood (e.g. social independence), which has not been identified among South Asian women.

1.1.3 The current labour market situation of migrant men and women

When they first arrived, labour workers (predominantly men) were confined to manual and unskilled jobs which positioned them at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In the decades that followed, an increase in self-employment among the first generation in both Pakistani and Algerian groups improved their financial situation (Ram et al., 2000; Hodeir et al., 1992). In their quantitative study of entrepreneurship trends in France, Hodeir and her colleagues (1992) found an increase in the number of Maghrebi business owners in the 1980s. The authors attributed these changes to economic mutations: the decline in the industrial sectors and development of the service sectors. This explanation, although true to a certain extent, provides a limited understanding of the more complex positions of Maghrebis within the French socio-economic structures of the 1980s. Indeed, their empirical work does not account for the persistence of racism and discrimination in French society (Wieviorka, 2012); a social factor to which many British scholars have paid more attention to in similar research (Virdee, 2010; Ram et al., 2000; Modood and Werbner, 1997). For instance, through their qualitative work carried out with restaurant owners in Birmingham, Ram and his colleagues (2000) argued that in addition to the rise in unemployment during the post-industrial era, cultural preference *and* a response to a lack of employment opportunities in the labour market, particularly due to racist and discriminatory practices experienced by the group in the hiring process, contributed to the development of small Pakistani entrepreneurship. Yet as Ansari (2002) argued, social mobility varied amongst South Asian communities; despite an overall increase in small businesses, Indian migrants were more likely than Pakistanis to experience financial success and consequently, improve their housing

conditions partly because the former benefited from the economic growth of the 1950s.

Qualitative research provides further understanding of the particular positions of migrant women. These studies reveal that migrant women's position is still similar to when they first arrived in the country. In their mixed method research on generational changes among South Asian women⁴, Dale and her colleagues (2002b) found that in addition to being mostly uneducated with low proficiency in English, which restricts migrant women's participation in paid work, the operation of traditional gender roles still strongly influences the division of labour within households. For example, in their study, participants' decisions to take on paid employment relied on their husband's and/or the in-laws's approval. The authors also attributed women's low employment rates to cultural and traditional expectations, such as caring for the elderly and the children as well as to the existence of racism (ethnic and religious) in society. By looking at her Maghrebi migrant interviewees' employment trajectories in France, Merckling (2012) concluded that these women are still marginalised, experiencing low-paid, manual and unstable professional situations (including part-time and/or short-term contracts and unemployment). She argued that the stereotypes associated with migrant women confine these women to the bottom of the social hierarchy.

This overview of minority ethnic workers' early migratory and settlement experiences and current labour market situation shows that social inequalities and disadvantages persist for Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France. However, these groups now face additional challenges as Islamophobia continues to rise in Europe (as well as internationally), as I discuss below.

⁴ These results include both Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. Although the authors acknowledged the existence of differences between the groups, their quantitative and qualitative evidence did not establish significant disparities between them. Thus, the authors did not distinguish between the groups in their analysis.

1.2 Generational changes: educational and employment patterns of the second generation

Minority ethnic migrant workers' experiences discussed so far have been key in shaping these groups' socio-economic positions. The first generation has been highly criticized for not being engaged with the wider society or for having little interaction with others as suggested by media coverage of issues involving Muslims and governmental practices. These racialised perceptions strongly constructed along ethnic, cultural and religious divides have forged Algerians' identity as eternally different in France and Pakistanis' as difficult to include socially in Britain. Positioning the groups as difficult members of society, unwilling to participate or engage with others have had important impacts, for instance, on the sorts of employment migrants were able to take on or their choices of residential areas. In addition, a lack of language proficiency and education levels partly explains the limited engagement and participation of the groups.

The issue of exclusion in society have strongly contributed to creating a sense of non-belonging among these migrant groups, including among the younger generations. Despite being born and bred in France or Britain, questions are raised regarding second generations' participation and engagement with the wider society, a discourse experienced by their parents (Rattansi, 2011). The aim of this second section is to depict how parents' socio-economic background and migratory experiences influenced their children's educational attainment, especially at university level, and subsequent professional outcomes. The focus here is on British Pakistanis and French Algerians only; the other groups' experiences are discussed in the third section.

1.2.1 The educational pathways of French and British second generations

Several country-specific studies have investigated the educational attainment of children of immigrants focusing particularly on their level of education, subject choice and institution attended. One salient finding is that many second generations from the largest minority ethnic groups are confined to the lowest levels of the educational hierarchy. For instance, British-educated Pakistanis⁵ are still more likely to have fewer or no qualifications than other minority ethnic groups (Ansari, 2002); and they are more likely to apply to vocational colleges or stop their schooling before post-16 education than white and other minority ethnic groups (Connor et al., 2004). Similarly, Aeberhardt and his colleagues (2010) demonstrated that French minority ethnic students tend to achieve lower educational qualifications; they are more likely to opt for vocational routes after their GCSEs such as CAP and BEP⁶.

Some studies which examine higher education participation comparatively do not tend to differentiate the 'generational' or migration status of participants, but rather focus on ethnicity (particularly in the UK, see for example, HESA 2009) or nationality and gender (particularly in France, see for example Martinelli and Prost, 2010). Nonetheless, these highlight certain key patterns. Table 1 gives an overview of the percentage of students who graduated in 2009. These are white and Algerian university graduates born in France and white and Asian graduates in the UK⁷:

⁵In Ansari's (2002) study, this term describes Pakistanis born in Britain, as well as those who arrived at a very early age and had their primary schooling in Britain.

⁶The Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (CAP) and the Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles (BEP) correspond to the British National Vocational Qualifications levels 1 and 2 respectively. The CAP allows students to have a smoother education-to-work transition whereas the BEP gives students the opportunity to study further.

⁷ French results are based on the 2014 report of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) by Brinbaum and Primon. The data analysed is based on a survey carried out by INSEE in 2009, including a sample of 22,000 students. The sample here includes 4114 white students and 2750 Algerian students. Both samples include students who attended university and graduated in 2009. For comparison

Table 1: Full-time university students in France and the UK by ethnicity and level of study in 2009

Qualification	France		UK	
	White (%)	Algerian (%)	White (%)	Asian (%)
Postgraduate	20.1	10.1	5.9	0.7
Undergraduate ¹	18.7	12.5	53.6	7.3

Sources: INSEE 2014; HESA, 2009

¹Undergraduate degree corresponds to two years of study for France and three for the UK.

According to the HESA results for 2009, Asian students in Britain are more likely to study for an undergraduate degree (7.3 per cent of all Asian students) than for a postgraduate degree (0.7 per cent of all Asian students). Similarly, French Algerian graduates are more likely to opt for short-term degrees (completing only two years of their undergraduate degree)⁸. According to INSEE (2014), 21.8 per cent of all French Algerian students apply for vocational courses. The majority of French minority ethnic students opt for business and administrative fields and attend mainly technical higher education institutions (Aeberhardt et al., 2010); while the majority of British Asian students in the UK opt for science subject areas at undergraduate level (HESA, 2009).

In their highly influential book *La Reproduction*, Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) theorised the educational pathways and professional outcomes of

purposes, UK data is based on the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) results for all students who also graduated in 2009. UK data includes 1,009,320 white students and 136,265 Asian students. The Asian student category includes Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi students living on a permanent basis in Britain; this category does not distinguish between nationalities. Thus, numbers should be read with caution.

⁸ In France, students on undergraduate course can opt for one of two paths. They could either complete a two-year degree programme or complete a three-year one; the latter being equivalent of the British Bachelor's degree. Both options are recognised qualifications.

French students. They conceptualised differences between students according to their parents' socio-economic background, or to use Bourdieu's (1980) terms social capital, which includes material resources, social networks and linguistic and cultural knowledge. The authors argued that working class students' failure at university and/or in prestigious pathways helps maintain social class stratification in the educational system. Working class students remain at the lowest levels whereas more advantaged students succeed in prestigious studies at prestigious universities. Although their analysis was driven by a social class perspective and ignored the impact of other significant factors such as ethnicity, Bourdieu and Passeron's work remains relevant in understanding the educational pathways of 'second generation' Asian and Algerian people, since they largely come from working class backgrounds and they too possess less profitable social capital.

From that perspective, working-class students who secure a university place 'necessarily undergo a tougher selection process'⁹ that is to say they have to acquire a minimum of cultural and linguistic capital to succeed in higher education (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1970, p91)¹⁰. One of Bourdieu's (1980) central arguments is that lack of social capital among the working classes helps to sustain social hierarchies in society; the less advantaged students will remain at the lowest levels of society, educationally and professionally. In other words, the cultural and linguistic capitals of the working classes/minority ethnic groups do not correspond to the cultural and linguistic capitals taught in higher education; which are shared by the more privileged white groups. Thus, it is only because

⁹ My translation.

¹⁰ Further conceptualising the notion of capital, Bourdieu (1980, 1986, 1989; 1970 with Passeron) established various forms of capital including what he called the four main 'species of capital' namely, economic, social, cultural and symbolic. These forms of capital include tangible and non-tangible resources that an individual can use in given social situations. For example, economic capital includes material assets with 'monetary value' (Bourdieu, 1986, p20); while social capital refers to 'long-lasting social networks' that is to say connections people possess (Bourdieu, 1980, p1). Viewed within a class-based perspective, these forms of capital are weighed against an individual's social class position.

minority ethnic students succeed in their 'acculturation' (to use Bourdieu's term) that they are able to enter higher education.

Yet, as Modood (2004a) persuasively argues, parents' high involvement in their children's education by, for example, raising their aspirations, strongly impacts on the growing number of minority ethnic students' university applications. Modood's conceptualisation of the 'unconventional' educational patterns of working class and minority ethnic students allows for a more flexible approach to social mobility, as achieved through individual agency rather than blocked by supposedly deterministic characteristics (such as a working class background).

UK-born children of immigrants are also more likely to apply to 'post-92 universities' which are of lower status than older universities because of the nature of their educational qualifications. For example, Hoelscher and his colleagues (2008) demonstrated that with vocational qualifications, minority ethnic students are more likely to access 'post-92' universities than prestigious ones (also known as 'pre-92' universities), since the latter select applicants based on their A-level results. Educational choices made after GCSE level are therefore decisive in shaping students' higher education pathways. For example, in their mixed-method study, Connor and her colleagues (2004) showed that very few Pakistani students could successfully apply to prestigious universities since the majority of them studied in further education colleges, which limited their opportunities at university level. Additionally, cultural practices and traditions in Muslim Pakistani families have also been criticized for young women's low level of education (Dale, 2008; Ahmad et al., 2003; Dale et al., 2002b). However, when British Pakistani women pursue higher education, they too are at a disadvantage because of their initial educational choices (such as non-academic routes) (Dale, 2008).

Similar to Modood (2004), moving beyond a Bourdieusian interpretation, Caille (2005) offered an alternative reading of French minority ethnic

students' educational trajectories, suggesting that these students wish to improve their material conditions and to break through the image of themselves as children of labourers. Hence, they prefer work-based learning in technical institutions which, potentially, leads to better professional opportunities after graduation (Caille, 2005). Thus, these students fight against their working class identities by targeting professional jobs rather than manual work.

In addition to socio-economic barriers and prior educational choices, there are other factors that influence minority ethnic students' applications to prestigious universities. Reay and her colleagues (2009a; 2001) suggest that both geographical and psychological constraints influence minority ethnic students' university choices. They argue that working class students tend to apply to local institutions to reduce financial costs, but also because of fears of not fitting into more prestigious institutions. Social class and the feeling of (non-)belonging are therefore important issues as they strongly influence minority ethnic students' university choices especially since most of them come from working class backgrounds.

Some studies have also established that families' socio-economic backgrounds are central to explaining low attainment. In line with Bourdieu and Passeron's (1970) concept, this finding points to migrant parents' poor education or lack of relevant education and their limited knowledge of the educational system of the country, which restricts the practical support they can offer their children throughout their education (see for example, Aeberhardt et al., 2010; Dale, 2008). To use Bourdieu and Passeron's terms, it is the unequal distribution of capital – resources – or lack of profitable capital which strongly influences minority ethnic students' position in education (and also in the labour market as I discuss in Chapter 6).

However, the explanation for minority ethnic students' low educational attainment cannot be restricted to lack of profitable capital/resources, academic and non-academic routes post-GCSE level and university attended. Other external factors contribute to their educational outcomes. The existence of discriminatory and racist practices in schools and higher education has been identified as an important factor in explaining students' low educational attainment in both France and Britain. For example, Ansari (2002) suggested that schools are often ethnically differentiated and provide insufficient support to increase the attainment levels of pupils, especially Muslims. At university level, the existence of 'racial bias in admission processes' also limits these students' opportunities to attend high-status universities (Connor et al., 2004, p134). The French educational system has also been criticized for its discriminatory practices. For example, Santelli (2001) suggested that French educational institutions reproduce negative prejudices towards children of Algerian migrants and consequently, discriminate against them. She argued that some members of school staff relegate these students to vocational qualifications such as CAP/BEP rather than more traditional routes (perceived as more prestigious), thus restricting their future employment opportunities.

So far, discussions on the educational pathways of young minority ethnic graduates have shown how parents' socio-economic background, social class inequalities and personal choices combined with ethnic disadvantages in education significantly impact on students' progression in life, affecting first their school achievement, then their post-GCSE route and finally, the types of universities attended. However, these earlier decisions ultimately affect the labour market participation of second generation graduates. Indeed, in Britain, the institution attended is of primary significance since many employers prefer to recruit candidates who graduated from old universities rather than from new universities, the 'post-92' ones (Connor et al., 2004). In the case of French minority ethnic graduates, subject choices of minority ethnic students tend to be the most

important factor since their chosen fields – administrative and business studies – are oversubscribed; this has been established as a contributory factor for the group’s high unemployment rates compared to their white peers (Aeberhardt et al., 2010; HESA, 2009).

The next part looks at this unequal labour market outcome in detail by focusing on the interrelated impact of gender, ethnic and religious identifications among second generation graduate women in France and Britain.

1.2.2 The unequal employment conditions of second generation graduate women

Many quantitative studies offered a useful insight into the condition of employment of minority ethnic women in Britain compared to white men and/or women and/or other minority ethnic women (e.g. Khattab, 2012; Dale et al., 2002). For instance, Khattab (2012) examined the employment positions of South Asian Muslim women (including Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis). He analysed the 2001 Census data for England and Wales and established that Muslim Pakistani graduate women are less likely to be in full-time employment or in senior/managerial roles compared to white British women. He further showed that Muslim Indian women are more likely than Muslim Pakistani and Bangladeshi women to secure managerial and professional occupations. His study points to the existence of religious *and* ethnic penalties for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women since they lag behind both Muslim Indian women *and* white women. By deconstructing the category ‘Muslims’, Khattab’s research provides a useful insight into the ‘complex’ relationship between religion and ethnicity in the labour market.

In their mixed method research on young Pakistani and Bangladeshi women’s education and employment situations, Dale and her colleagues (2002) reported the concerns of some of their interviewees about the

possibility to combine marriage life and work, highlighting the importance of the family in decision making. They also reported that a higher level of qualification allowed women to negotiate their social position better with their husband; pointing to their participants' feelings of empowerment as a result of completing lengthy education. Dale and her colleagues (2002) also suggested that physical appearance (including wearing headscarves and traditional clothes) limits the access to jobs for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women; this corroborates the findings of previous studies (e.g. Rana et al., 1998; Brah, 1993). Recent interview evidence (with employees and employers) looked at how particular 'visible' markers (clothing and hairstyle) and religious beliefs negatively impact on Pakistani and other minority ethnic women's perception among work colleagues (see for example, Kamenou et al., 2013; Fearfull and Kamenou, 2010). All these studies highlight the intersection of gender, ethnicity, education and religion in the construction of second generation South Asian women's labour market experiences.

French studies have explored similar issues in the labour market by looking at the intersection of gender, ethnicity and/or religion (e.g. Adida et al., 2010; Aeberhardt et al., 2010; Pailhé and Meurs, 2008). Aeberhardt and his colleagues (2010) found that young Maghrebi women experience pay gaps compared to white women and are unlikely to be in senior executive positions; findings that are similar to Khattab's (2012) results (see above). The employment rates for these women in executive roles were 7 and 18 percentage points lower compared to white women and men respectively (Aeberhardt et al., 2010). In 2008, Pailhé and Meurs undertook a secondary analysis of the 1999 census carried out by INSEE, and highlighted the unequal employment positions of Maghrebi women. Including a total of over 70,000 individuals in their sample, the authors compared the employment patterns of French-born Maghrebi women both to white women and French-born Spanish and Portuguese women. This quantitative work uncovered the vulnerable professional situations of highly qualified second generation Maghrebi women in

France: they are more likely to work on temporary/fixed term contracts and be in part-time jobs. Pailhé and Meurs concluded that the combination of gender and ethnicity was highly significant in these women's professional positioning, an analysis that could have been strengthened by considering the impact of other axes of differentiation, especially the importance of religious affiliation in a post-9/11 era, as suggested in other studies.

For example, in their study of religious discrimination in recruitment practices, Adida and her colleagues (2010) undertook a field experiment. Although the study looked at people of Senegalese origin, it remains of particular interest since it investigated the intersection of religion and ethnicity in relation to work opportunities for female graduates. The researchers sent out three 'identical' CVs. In the first two, researchers gave indications of the religious and ethnic background of the candidates; the first candidate's name was Khadija Diouf and the second's was Marie Diouf. The researchers also included information about voluntary work with religious charities; so that in Khadija's CV, employers could find out about her voluntary work with Secours Islamique while for Marie, employers could read about her work with Secours Catholique. The third CV corresponded to Aurélie Ménard; suggesting no particular religious affiliation (no information about any charitable work) and presumably a white woman. The researchers found that minority ethnic female candidates with Muslim names are less likely to be called for an interview than are minority ethnic candidates with Christian names and white women. They concluded that Muslim minority ethnic female graduates are victims of ethnic and religious penalties, as suggested by Khattab (2012) in relation to Muslim South Asian women.

In France, the majority of research on the labour market and/or the second generation is quantitative. However there are a few exceptions: notably the extensive work carried out by Santelli. In her various independent studies and collaborations, Santelli (2008; 2007a with

colleagues; 2006a with Boukacem) looked at experiences of discrimination at the recruitment level, as well as experiences of racism within the workplace among second generation Maghrebis (including men and women). Throughout her studies, Santelli's interviewees reported experiences of religious/ethnic discriminations (especially since 9/11) and experiences of 'ordinary racism' (investigated in Chapters 4, 5 and 6), including inferiorisation and negative representation among work colleagues (Santelli, 2008). The inter-generational study carried out by Merckling (2012) provides further insights into the professional experiences of second generation Maghrebi women. In particular, she looked at the impact of family life on the women's work. She argued that young Maghrebi women, married to Maghrebi men, found themselves in precarious employment situations (e.g. taking part-time and/or fixed-term roles; being under-employed) 'to compensate' for the high unemployment rates experienced by their partner. She also suggested that caring responsibilities further restrict opportunities for professional mobility (e.g. taking on full-time roles). Thus, the intersection of gender, ethnicity and social class produces limited professional opportunities for Maghrebi women.

Bearing in mind the above inequalities, today the second generations in France and Britain lag behind in the labour market even when highly qualified, (partly) as a result of discrimination in the hiring process experienced by Maghrebi women (Pailhé and Meurs, 2008) and prejudices held by potential employers about Pakistani women (EOC, 2006). Social disadvantages together with the negative identifications to which these women are subjected, influence their education-to-work transition and progression in the labour market. Accordingly, these women gain the lowest returns on their university qualifications; in simpler terms, they are more likely to be unemployed and/or under-employed compared to white women with similar qualifications (Rafferty 2012; Pailhé, 2010; Chevalier and Lindley, 2009; Silberman and Fournier, 2006).

1.3 Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain: settlement experiences and generational changes

So far, I have reviewed the experiences of Pakistani and Algerian labour workers and the educational and professional positions of their children in Britain and France respectively. The section below is devoted to the 'new' minority ethnic groups: namely Algerians in Britain and Pakistanis in France. I will first set out the migration patterns of the first generation to provide insights into the socio-economic background of my participants. I will then discuss the generational changes (educational and professional) of their children.

1.3.1 Settlement experiences of Pakistani migrants in France and Algerian migrants in Britain

Post-war settlements prompted by colonial ties led to population movements from the Maghreb to France and from South Asia to Britain (Geddes, 2000). However, after the implementation of strict immigration control policies in the mid-1970s in both countries, this migration pattern became less common.

Through her historical overview of Pakistani migration, Abou-Zahab (2007) showed how France was the least favourite destination for Pakistani migrants. Indeed, in the early 1970s, Pakistanis responded in greatest numbers to labour demand in the Gulf region after the petrol crisis of 1973; followed by North America and Northern Europe and only when visa applications failed for these preferred locations, did they turn to France in the late 1970s. Single men left Pakistan for France, legally and illegally, often coming from poor rural areas of Punjab and Kashmir (Servan-Schreiber and Vuddamalay, 2007). According to Servan-Schreiber and Vuddamalay (2007), when France further tightened its immigration control policies, some Pakistanis claimed political asylum after Zia Ul Haq's military coup in 1979, further increasing the number of

Pakistanis in France. By 1982, there were an estimated 5,396 Pakistanis (excluding undocumented migrants) settled in France, especially in the Parisian suburbs, but the numbers rose sharply with the mid-1980s family reunifications (Legrain, 1986). Similar to other migrant workers in France, Pakistanis mainly occupied manual jobs in factories but rapidly started their own businesses in the food and clothing industries, which allowed them to improve their living conditions and access home ownership (Abou-Zahab, 2007). This change in employment patterns was also witnessed for the two larger minority groups in both France and Britain, as discussed earlier.

Today, there is no consensus about the number of Pakistanis living in France. While INSEE surveyed 16,300 Pakistanis in its 2005 population census, the OECD (2008) reported 11,731 Pakistanis settled in France in 2008, while the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis claimed the number to be six times higher, reaching 60,000 (Abbasi, 2010). Despite these contradictory figures, it is clear that the Pakistani population in France is growing and has started to attract attention in the social sciences and at the government level, although still not as much as other more established minority ethnic groups such as the Maghrebis.

Similar to Pakistani workers who migrated to France as a last option, Algerians' migration to Britain was not a case of first choice (Collyer, 2005). Through his extensive work on Algerian migration to Britain, Collyer (2003a; 2003b, 2004; 2005; 2008) showed how Algerians sought refuge in European countries such as Germany and France as a result of political disturbance and civil war between 1988 and 1995, but came to Britain only when other countries failed to provide them with a stable livelihood, for example by stopping labour migration. Unlike Pakistani migrants who came to the UK, the initial wave of Algerian refugees included intellectuals, well-qualified individuals and politicians (Collyer, 2003a). It is only during the late 1990s that individuals from more remote, poor and rural areas joined the growing Algerian group in Britain (Collyer,

2003b). Algerian migrants settled primarily in London (The Change Institute, 2009), although evidence has been found of the group living in other parts of the country such as Sheffield (Vincent-Jones, 2009). Algerian migrants mainly worked in industrial sectors, similar to other working class migrants who left their country with limited educational levels. Similar to the Pakistani group in France (and even the well-established groups as seen previously), some Algerians opened small businesses such as cafés and grocery stores (The Change Institute, 2009). The above characteristics are shared by the majority of all four groups of migrants (Pakistanis *and* Algerians in France *and* Britain).

In 1991, there were only 3,453 Algerian nationals living in Britain (Collyer, 2003b); today, there are an estimated 22,000 Algerian-born individuals living in Britain, mostly in England (Migration Policy Centre, 2013). It is predominantly a male population; very young and for the most part with no academic qualifications (The Change Institute, 2009). However, Collyer (2003b) argued that well-qualified but undocumented Algerians are unable to secure professional jobs as a result of their illegal status in the country. Similarly, he pointed to the limited possibilities for Algerian health care professionals to work as independent practitioners because of the language requirements necessary for the recognition of their qualifications. This evidence shows that the existence of structural barriers limits opportunities to secure a stable livelihood in Britain for more qualified migrants.

Thus, in many ways, during their settlement, the 'new' minority ethnic groups experienced similar challenges to the 'old' minority ethnic groups (Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France). These challenges were associated with their social class background and poor educational qualifications which (partly) restricted possibilities for social mobility. This similarity in experiences points to the importance of migration in constructing socio-economic positions for the first generations in France and Britain. However, other researchers suggest that there are also

similarities in experiences based on religion. For example, Modood and his colleagues (2006) suggest that there is a 'European-wide anxiety' about Muslim immigrants and their children (p18); often translated into racist and discriminatory practices. Both socio-economic disadvantages and the religious factor are important components of migrant workers' settlement experiences.

Having discussed the settlement experiences of the first generation, the next section looks at the educational and professional positions of the younger generations. From this point on, readers should assume that discussion is about Pakistanis born in France and Algerians born in Britain.

1.3.2 Educational and professional outcomes for second generations: a European comparison

The number of French Pakistanis and British Algerians is relatively small since the first generations settled in the countries less than three decades ago. To date, no specific study has been conducted on the educational patterns of French Pakistanis and British Algerians. In order to highlight the intersecting factors that may shape their experiences, I draw a parallel here between these groups and other minority ethnic groups in Europe. To understand the educational and professional situation of Pakistanis, I will draw a parallel with Turkish students in Europe, especially those living in France. Looking at the structural barriers present in France, a commonalities can be found for Pakistani students, who like their Turkish peers are members of a fairly recently settled Muslim migrant group. Similarly, for Algerians, the parallel will be drawn by looking at the experiences of other minority ethnic groups in Britain.

In their special report on second generations in Europe, Crul and Vermeulen (2006) compared the educational and professional outcomes of children of Turkish immigrants in five countries (Germany, Austria,

France, the Netherlands and Belgium). They compared Turkish students' achievements in Germany and Austria, where they represent the largest minority ethnic group, to Turkish students in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. They found that Turkish students fare better professionally in Germany, but fare better academically in France. Based on their analysis of the educational system in France, the authors suggest that there is very low support for the education-to-work transition in France, which explains these students' low participation in the labour market. In line with Bourdieu and Passeron's (1970) argument discussed earlier, other studies have described the impact of social class inequalities combined with ethnic disadvantages which affect Turkish students' educational outcomes in France (see for example, Boado, 2004).

The impact of social class differences on Turkish students' educational achievements in France, as discussed by Boado (2004), has also been mentioned in Moliner's (2009) mixed method research on South Asian students in France¹¹. The author concluded that with a similar socio-economic background to white students (that is to say middle class), French-born children of Pakistani immigrants have comparable educational outcomes to their white peers, suggesting a Bourdieusian interpretation of social class and educational hierarchies. However, Moliner also highlighted that prejudice held against children of Maghrebi origin results in rather positive attitudes towards children of South Asian origin, seen as '*immigrés modèles*' further pointing to the importance of ethnic stereotypes and in this case, also, a supposed absence of negative prejudice against South Asians. In her conclusions, she argued that South Asian students fare better academically because they are numerically overshadowed by other minority ethnic students such as the Maghrebis who face the highest levels of prejudice at school. In doing so, the author failed to account for important similarities between the Algerian

¹¹ In her work, Moliner used a much broader definition for South Asia compared to what it is usually understood in Britain (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh). The South Asian groups included in Moliner's study and who took part in the interview stages are the following: Indians, Sikhs, Gujaratis, Malagasy, Mauritians, Pakistanis and Bengalis.

and Pakistani groups such as social class and religious similarities; the latter being even more important in a post-9/11 context. Thus, she reinforced stereotypes by opposing two minority ethnic groups (Algerians and Pakistanis in France) and by portraying Pakistanis as a model minority ethnic group. She also undermined the existence of specificities not only across groups, but also within groups. The South Asian label worked as an umbrella under which she lumped together groups inconsistently, that is to say according to different factors (religion, ethnicity and geographical location). For instance, she compared groups identified according to religious markers, – e.g. Sikhs – to groups identified according to geographical locations – e.g. Pakistanis. Therefore, although Moliner's study is useful since she investigated an under-researched group (Pakistanis), the oversimplification of group differences and the reinforcement of stereotypes offered limited insight into the position of second generation Pakistanis in France.

In the UK, scholars have studied the educational achievements of different minority ethnic groups: numerically dominant groups such as Pakistanis (see for example Modood, 2006) and also less numerically important ones such as the Chinese (see for example, Archer and Francis, 2006). Both Modood (2006) and Archer and Francis (2006) used a social class and ethnic perspective to explain the educational patterns of younger generations. On the one hand, both studies concluded that parents' input in their children's education (partly) explains young pupils' academic success whether at primary, secondary or tertiary level. On the other hand, the intersection of social class and ethnic inequalities were used to account for the disadvantages younger generations face in the labour market despite succeeding academically. Thus, ethnic penalties, as outlined by Heath and Cheung (2006), not only seem to affect established minority ethnic groups, but also less-established ones. Bearing in mind the importance of social class and ethnicity and subsequent (in)equalities, a similar pattern can be expected for second

generation Algerians, who are children of working class immigrant parents.

This parallel with other French and British minority ethnic groups, although limited, provides a useful insight into the importance of class-based and ethnic factors in (potentially) shaping French Pakistanis and British Algerians' academic and professional outcomes. The importance of recognising the impact of multiple social divisions is very prominent in the French context since educational outcomes are only understood from a social class perspective (see for example, Payet and Zanten, 1996). However, the relatively small number of Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain means that both groups have attracted less scholarly and political attention than the more established groups, Algerians in France and Pakistanis in Britain. The over-emphasis on the situations of the latter groups in political debates, the media and scholarly discussions overshadows the experiences of the former groups and limits recognition of the diversity of these groups as well as the specificities of their experiences and so reduces the possibility to understand their particular positioning in society. Crul and Vermeulen's (2006) study of Turkish students in five European countries points to the usefulness of comparing a similar group across countries. The disparity in educational attainment they observed seems to suggest that national level structural differences further contribute to second generations' socio-economic outcomes. Thus, by comparing Pakistani and Algerian second generations cross-nationally and in particular contexts (society, education and employment), similarities and differences in experiences can be identified for the groups shaped along social class, ethnic, religious and national specificities.

1.4 Muslim minority ethnic groups in France and Britain post-9/11

In her discussion of migrants' relationships with their 'host' society, Anthias (2006) argues that the construction of migrants as the 'other' crystallises sacralised boundaries; migrants' identities are fixed to that of

a distant and imagined home. She also suggests that migrants are framed as unable to belong to the country of migration or to 'fit in', fuelling the supposed incompatibility of migrants' way of life with those of Europeans. Following the 2001 attacks in the United States of America, similar discourses directed at Muslims have intensified the debate on the allegedly incompatible positioning of Muslims in western countries (Poynting and Mason, 2007).

Weedon (2004) further suggests that in racist and sexist post-colonial societies, Black and Asian people's 'visual iconography' are subjected to 'a long history of negative, orientalist or primitivist representations' by the dominant White group (p18). As such, the depiction of Muslims puts emphasis on the supposed inability of Muslims to fit into western countries, which are seen as home to democracy, human rights and freedom (Weedon, 2004). This discourse of othering reinforces the position of Muslims as a collective group, transcending national boundaries, which does not belong to any western European country (Rattansi, 2011). As a result, Muslim immigrants are still seen as the *inassimilable* other in western European countries (Raymond and Modood, 2007; Brubaker, 1992) and, as such, as antagonistic to democracy and human rights.

In their comparative analysis of the French and British political frameworks, Bassel and Emujulu (2010) argue that, on the ground of ensuring a safer place for the white majority, Muslims are asked to choose between their identity as French/British or as Muslims, i.e. between their nationality and their religion, which denies the right to multiple identities. This strengthens the debate on who belongs and who does not belong to the nation, making borders much less permeable and increasing the fear of the 'other' (discussed further in Chapter 2). The authors further suggest that denying Muslims their right to multiple identities in *both* France and the UK shows that the multicultural and republican models are not as different as generally supposed. These

constructions of otherness have been driven by debates on and reactions to a range of issues. For example, in 2004, the highly controversial headscarf ban in French schools highlighted the debate regarding the position of Muslims in France (Seniguer, 2009). This debate was reinforced by the niqab ban in 2010 followed by the Mohammed M érah affair in March 2012. Mohammed M érah, a French Algerian man, killed four Jews and three French soldiers in Toulouse. He was said to have travelled to the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan in order to train¹². Recently, in January 2015, several employees at the headquarters of the satirical French newspaper Charlie Hebdo were murdered by two French-born Algerian brothers, who also killed police officers and attacked a Jewish-owned supermarket¹³. Similarly in the UK, summer 2014 witnessed the Birmingham schools controversy. This refers to an investigation led by the police, Birmingham City Council and the Department of Education, into several schools in Birmingham alleged to impose fundamentalist values on staff and pupils¹⁴. This event is built on the on-going debates over Muslim faith schools in Britain (Flint, 2007). These examples, among many others, contributed to the constructions of negative reactions and attitudes towards Muslims in both countries. A solidarity based on whiteness allowed a new racialised inequality to exist in which Muslims in both France and Britain have become subjects of hatred and distrust (see for example, Hajjat and Mohamed, 2015 for France and Al Atom, 2014 for Britain).

In this section, I discuss some of the political and social changes that relate to the social position of Muslims in France and the UK, primarily focusing on the timeframe which precedes and overlaps with my data collection period (between January 2012 and August 2013). This overview will help to contextualise the environment within which my participants lived and of their perceptions of Muslims' positioning in

¹²<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/mar/22/toulouse-killings-mohammed-merah> [accessed on 21 July 2015]

¹³ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/charlie-hebdo-attack> [accessed on 21 July 2015]

¹⁴<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/jul/17/leaked-report-aggressive-islamist-agenda-birmingham-schools> [accessed on 8 August 2014]

France and/or the UK. The changes in France will be presented first, followed by those in the UK.

1.4.1 The leadership of Sarkozy (2002-2012) and the rise of the National Front

Since the early years of migration, France's engagement with her Muslim groups (mainly composed of North Africans) has largely been based on the perception of the groups as unable to 'integrate' in French society (Deltombe, 2007; Deltombe and Rigouste, 2005; Dasseto, 1998). In his analysis of the French media from the years 1970 to early 2000, Deltombe (2007) demonstrates how a perception of threat from Muslims entered the French public imaginary. This perception, the author argued, is partly due to a shift from the topic of immigration to that of Islam in France in the media since the 1970s, portraying Muslims as an *inassimilable* group. This perception of inassimilable Muslims has been used extensively by extremist nationalist parties and especially the National Front.

Founded in 1972, the National Front campaigns for prioritising national interests over international goals and the interests of white French citizens over foreigners' interests. In doing so, it has traditionally promoted anti-establishment and anti-immigrant sentiments (Rydgren, 2007). Rydgren (2007) argued that the National Front remained largely marginalised for over a decade after it was founded but achieved growth and popularity by 'transforming and reframing the social and economic crises of the early 1980s into a crisis of national identity' (p169). This fuelled the debates of who has the right to be French and who does not. Accordingly, the party fuelled strong resentment against immigrants and their children, born and bred in France, who can gain French citizenship automatically on adulthood. This animosity was particularly directed at Algerians, in the wake of Algeria's independence in 1962 which was opposed by extremist nationalist parties.

With international affairs such as the attacks of September 11 2001, the National Front, which is the most vocal among radical right wing parties, started to gain popular support for foregrounding and linking issues of national security and Muslim threat (Eatwell, 2002). Cohen (2009) suggested that these debates contributed to making Muslims the new 'other' in France (after Jews); a demonised religious minority group. This image was subsequently used by far right parties to establish their legitimacy in the French political arena. This strategy was successful in securing votes for the National Front for the second round of the 2002 Presidential election, which marked the rise of the party.

The landmark victory of a National Front candidate in 2002¹⁵ led to unprecedented debates and policies pandering to supporters of the National front driven by the centre-right Nicolas Sarkozy, first as Minister of the Interior from 2002 and then as President from 2007 to 2012. The need to 'protect' French national identity became a strong concern for parties across the political spectrum, bringing together left- and right-wing politicians. For instance, following the 2010 riots in Grenoble and Saint-Aignan after the death of a young man at the hands of a police officer, Sarkozy openly declared that any member of the public engaged in violent acts against law enforcement officers would be deprived of their French nationality and, the right to French nationality of children of immigrants would cease to be automatic¹⁶. By borrowing populist language from the National Front, Sarkozy violated a key principle of the post-second World war French Republic; that is the non-identification between French citizens according to their ethnic origin. This need to protect the French national identity strengthened the ethnic and religious amalgam; Sarkozy reinforced the assumed impossibility for Muslim

¹⁵ National Front's candidate secured its place during the second round of the presidential election in 2002, defeating the socialist candidate. In French election history, it was the first time a far-right party remained standing in the runoff round. The election was subsequently won by the conservative candidate.

¹⁶ http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2010/07/30/nicolas-sarkozy-met-la-decheance-de-nationalite-au-coeur-de-sa-politique-securitaire_1393949_823448.html [accessed 18 June 2015]

migrants and their children to ever be *français de coeur*¹⁷ (Brubaker, 1992, p143).

Concern over a supposed Muslim ‘threat’ translated into an ever stricter separation between religious and public life. The 2004 headscarf ban in schools and the 2010 face veil ban in public places are two such examples (discussed in detail in Chapter 4). In 2006, the then Minister of the Interior, Sarkozy successfully introduced a controversial counter-terrorism law which allowed law enforcement officers to seize telecommunications data (including telephone and internet) without prior approval of a judge. In 2012, Sarkozy, then President, vowed to amend this law following the Mohammed Mèrah affair (mentioned above), if re-elected.

In 2009, he also backed his then Minister of Immigration, Integration and National Identity, Eric Besson, who launched an online debate regarding the meaning of French national identity and how immigration could contribute to it. A year later, Sarkozy’s government re-launched the debate, focusing exclusively on the place of Islam in the *République*, further fuelling the perceived threat posed by Muslims to the white French majority ethnic group; a discourse upheld by extremist nationalists¹⁸. This rhetoric accompanied an unprecedented increase in anti-Muslim violence (verbal aggressions, insults and physical attacks) (CCIF, 2013). According to the anti-islamophobia support group CCIF¹⁹, this violence increased by 139 per cent from 5 reported attacks in 2008 to 136 in 2012 (CCIF, 2013). It is worth noting here that the very fact that France has a Ministry of Immigration, Integration and National Identity links all three notions together in ways that is exclusionary for Muslims.

¹⁷ French at heart

¹⁸http://archives-lepost.huffingtonpost.fr/article/2011/02/18/2409777_il-est-perilleux-pour-sarkozy-de-relancer-un-debat-sur-l-islam.html [accessed 14 June 2015]

¹⁹ Collectif Contre l’Islamophobie en France.

Further political action under Sarkozy's leadership, particularly implemented during the revolutionary wave of 2010 in Northern Africa and the Middle East²⁰, included: hardened anti-immigration policy with record number of deportations of illegal migrants in 2011; tighter conditions for naturalisation and work and study visas; restrictions on asylum seekers' and refugees' applications for leave to remain and lower quotas for legal migration²¹.

These reforms triggered strong opposition from human rights and anti-racism groups. For instance, S.O.S Racisme, one of the oldest anti-racism groups in France, opposed the systematic deportation of immigrants to meet official targets in 2011²² and launched a no-vote campaign against Sarkozy's candidacy for the 2012 Presidential elections²³. Several marches were also organised to protest against anti-immigration and anti-racist measures. For example, in March 2012, *Sortir du colonialisme*²⁴, a support group for the rights of migrants, called for a nation-wide protest against Sarkozy's anti-immigration policies and the growth of far right groups²⁵. Some scholars judged Sarkozy's policies as drawing on national extremists' ideology (see for example, Marthaler, 2008), in order to secure votes for the 2012 Presidential election by winning over National Front's supporters²⁶.

After defeating Sarkozy in the Presidential election in May 2012, François Hollande, a centre-left politician, carried forward the legacy of his predecessor by amending the 2006 anti-terrorism law in December 2012

²⁰ Also known as the Arab Spring and Winter, these events refer to the social unrest and civil war which started in Tunisia in 2010 and then spread to other countries in northern Africa and the Middle East such as Egypt and Syria.

²¹ <http://fpif.org/left-failed-frances-muslims/> [accessed 14 June 2015]

²² <http://sosracisme35.perso.neuf.fr/campagne%2030000%20expulsions%20c'est%20la%20honte.html> [accessed 14 June 2015]

²³ <http://elections.lefigaro.fr/flash-presidentielle/2012/04/25/97006-20120425FILWWW00587-sos-racisme-appelle-battre-sarkozy.php> [accessed 14 June 2015]

²⁴ Moving beyond colonialism.

²⁵ <http://dailleursnous sommesdici.org/> [accessed 16 June 2015]

²⁶ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/nicolas-sarkozy/9221848/France-election-2012-Nicolas-Sarkozy-issues-direct-appeal-to-National-Front-voters.html> [accessed 18 June 2015]

(initially planned by Sarkozy). Highly influenced by the Mohammed M erah affair in 2012, a new clause was included which allows the prosecution of any individual residing in France (French or not) found to have travelled abroad to train in 'Jihadist' camps, regardless of any concrete activity undertaken in France or abroad.

These political and social changes that shaped the French landscape over the past decade are not unique to France; similar measures were implemented across other western European countries and notably in the UK, which I discuss below.

1.4.2 The 'integration' and counter-terrorism agenda under Labour (1997-2010) and the Coalition government (2010-2015)

Well before the events of September 11 2001 and the 2005 London bombings, the Runnymede Trust (1997) discussed the development of an Islamophobic atmosphere in the UK. It defined Islamophobia as 'the unfair exclusion of Muslims from mainstream society and 'unfounded' hostility targeted against those who are visible as Muslims' (1997, p4). Many scholars argued that continuous attacks on Muslim migrant groups, such as Bangladeshis living in Tower Hamlets in the 1990s, marked a shift from racist attacks on minority ethnic groups to Islamophobic attacks on Muslim minority ethnic groups perpetrated by extremist nationalists (Lambert, 2013; Poynting and Mason, 2007). These attacks have risen sharply (Faliq, 2010) since '9/11'; as have far-right organisations.

Founded in 1982, the British National Party (BNP) is the oldest established extremist nationalist political party in the UK. Soon after 9/11, the BNP started promoting discourses which implicated all Muslims in the attacks (Lambert, 2013). Lambert (2013) suggested that this discourse contributed to the beginning of widespread Islamophobic violence

perpetrated by supporters of far-right parties as well as ‘lone-wolves’²⁷. However, after increasing political success in local elections until 2009, the BNP softened its rhetoric to attempt to be more mainstream but has lost its political influence. The party won no seats in the 2015 General Election²⁸. While the BNP has now largely vanished from British politics, other far-right organisations are rapidly growing.

Among these are the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the English Defence League (EDL). UKIP was founded in 1991 as a Eurosceptic party. After a decade, its rhetoric shifted towards immigration issues and Islam, winning them a close association with the BNP. In the 2009 European Parliament election, 13 UKIP candidates were elected, making UKIP the second largest party after the Conservatives, and thus increasing their visibility in British politics. Unlike UKIP, the EDL is not an established political party but is a large street protest movement, founded in 2009. However, EDL holds similar perceptions to BNP regarding immigration and especially what they perceive as the threat of Islam posed to the UK (Copsey et al., 2013; Lambert, 2013). Many scholars maintain that anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim news reporting in local and national media is exploited by far-right groups that construct a threat posed by Muslims to the safety of British people (Alam and Husband, 2013; Fekete, 2010; Poynting and Mason, 2006). Lambert (2013) further argued that this anti-Muslim prejudice took a drastic turn after the London bombings in 2005.

In light of the US-led ‘War on Terror’ and notably the events of 2005, successive Labour governments (1997-2010) implemented a series of counter-terrorism policies which subverted human rights, led to the securitisation of Britain and brought nationalism to the forefront of British politics (Alam and Husband, 2013; Fekete, 2010). For instance, Fekete

²⁷ Lambert examined attacks against Mosques, Islamic organisations and centres and their occupants and the analysis of a questionnaire sent to over 1,000 Mosques, Islamic organisations and centres. He also analysed secondary sources including news reports and official publications by bodies such as the Institute of Race Relations.

²⁸ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2015/results> [accessed 18 June 2015]

(2010) argued that the suspension of *habeas corpus* (detention without trial), deprivation of citizenship, and deportation of migrants and naturalised citizens suspected to be 'engaged in subversive activities' are measures that implicitly affect immigration legislation, violate International and European Human Rights and systematically characterise Muslims as potential suspects (p66). Through their analysis of community cohesion policies (implemented after the 2001 riots) and counter-terrorism policies, Alam and Husband (2013) further suggested that the then Conservative government promoted the already widespread notion of Muslims as unwanted by the majority ethnic population, forging mistrust between Muslims and the government.

Yet at the same time, the government sought to create collaborative relations with Muslims in the UK. Many scholars suggested that the 'integration' of Muslims was central in the development of the counter-terrorism agenda (Alam and Husband, 2013; Joly, 2012). Joly (2012) examined several social cohesion initiatives following the attacks of 2005 which contributed to the elaboration of subsequent 'integration' policies. She concluded that a shift occurred from multicultural to multi-faith policies which required extensive work carried out with Muslims in the UK to fight radicalisation among young people (for example by allocating additional funding to Muslim organisations and faith schools). This work in turn contributed to making Muslims 'suspect communities', paradoxically required to 'suppl[y] intelligence information' on Muslims and support the UK's counter-terrorism agenda targeted at Muslims (Joly, 2012, p483). The Labour government continued this work until its defeat in the 2010 General Election.

In the wake of the mounting crisis in Syria and the growth of 'Islamic state' (IS), David Cameron's coalition government (2010-2015) strengthened Labour's counter-terrorism policies. For instance, the Protection of Freedom Act 2012 allows terrorist suspects to be detained for maximum length of 14 days *without* any charges, which is more than 3

times the limit for a murder suspect. In 2014, Cameron announced a new piece of counter-terrorism legislation which would, for example, allow government officials to confiscate the passports of terrorist suspects and prevent British IS fighters from returning to the UK²⁹. In July 2015, Cameron presented his plans for a new Extremism Bill; a five year strategy to stop young people from going to Syria, which included a scheme for parents to cancel their children's passports. This strongly resembles France's anti-terrorist policies, notably in the possibility of divesting individuals of their citizenship.

In both France and the UK, international, European and national events were used by extremist nationalist organisations to ground their anti-Muslim ideology. This ideology spread the fear of Muslims and reinforced the group's perception as not-belonging to western countries. The popularity of far-right parties partly contributed to the re-emergence of a nationalist rhetoric among successive British governments and strengthened the already deeply rooted republican discourse in France. This in turn formed the basis for the counter-terrorism and 'integration' agenda in the UK and anti-terrorism measures in France, which, in both countries, undeniably target Muslims.

The continuous identification of Muslims (that blurs boundaries between first and second generations) as unwanted, eternally different and backward, thus contributes to the assumption of unbridgeable differences between the white majority ethnic group and Muslim minority ethnic groups. At the heart of these discourses (in respect to the scope of this thesis) are Muslim minority ethnic French and British citizens who are caught in what Fekete (2004, p4) called 'an ever-expanding loop of xenoracism'; which extended from migrants and asylum seekers to Muslims in Europe, regardless of their ethnicity or citizenship. These social and political changes were witnessed and experienced by the French and British Pakistani and Algerian participants in the study reported below.

²⁹ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-29008316> [accessed 19 June 2015]

They contributed to many women's feelings of non-belonging as Muslims and feelings that social cohesion was impossible, as I shall discuss in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

1.5 Conclusion

This chapter began with an overview of the migratory and related professional and social experiences of North African immigrants in France and South Asians in Britain. The description of the first generations' settlement experiences depicts the vulnerable positions of migrant workers in former colonial countries, soon after the end of the Second World War. In particular, I have discussed how less profitable social capital and structural barriers – poor initial educational qualifications and racist and discriminatory recruitment practices – restricted migrant workers' life opportunities in what became their new home. The discussions of ethnic and cultural factors further illustrated the particular experiences of migrant women in employment and their positioning in mainstream society. It provided a framework to understand the complex dynamic of the division of labour in both countries and its impact on migrant women's economic activity.

The overview of migrant families' current situation served to highlight three issues. First, the low levels of economic participation amongst the largest Muslim minority ethnic groups to date (Algerians in France and Pakistanis in Britain); second, the persistence of racist practices in the labour market and third the limited experience of social mobility in half a century since the early waves of migration. Both groups still occupy the lowest levels in social and economic hierarchies.

An overview of second generations' educational and professional situations presented in the second half of this chapter provided important contextualisation for this research. Country specific quantitative research has established the low level of educational and professional outcomes

for British Pakistanis and French Algerians compared to their white and/or other minority ethnic peers. Cross-generational studies corroborate these findings since they found that the younger generations, although succeeding at educational and professional levels compared to their parents, are still lagging behind when compared to their white and/or other minority ethnic peers. Some of these studies have offered a social class perspective to explain educational disparities, while other studies have suggested the importance of individual choices (e.g. education-related). Similarly, while some studies favoured a supply and demand explanation for the labour market outcomes of second generations; others also advanced the argument of the existence of racism and discrimination.

Interview based research has provided invaluable insights into the experiences of second generation women (Merckling, 2012; Brah, 1996). These suggest that ethnic, gender and/or religious factors produce particular experiences for second generation women, notably in the labour market. These women have limited access to professional opportunities as a result of negative stereotypes and religious/racial discrimination. Some studies especially argue that the visibility associated with the headscarf/face veil brings Muslim women in 'the full light of the public gaze', something not experienced, for example, by women who do not wear headscarves/face veils (Afshar et al., 2005, p278). This visibility affects these women in specific ways as they become easy targets for radical groups opposing Islam (e.g. Hopkins et al., 2013).

In addition, controversial debates about the 'outsiderness' of Muslims in the French and British nations and the impossibility of their 'integration' into western nations have become commonplace over the last two decades. These raise issues about the complexity of the positioning of migrant families, including second generation members. The boundaries between the majority and minority ethnic groups have become

crystallised not only through class-based and ethnic differences, but also through religion.

Although research carried out so far offers a useful understanding of the labour market situation of Pakistani and Algerian second generations, it raises two main questions which still need to be addressed: (1) in what ways does the perpetuation of racialised discourses affect second generations? and (2) in what ways do the first generations' migratory experiences shape the life trajectories of their children, born and educated in France or Britain? Put differently, how does a legacy of disadvantages and racism shape younger generations' educational, professional and social experiences in France and Britain?

There are a number of factors which have been overlooked in research so far. Firstly, research so far is largely characterised by an assessment of socio-economic inclusion/exclusion using predominantly top-down evaluations. Social inclusion is understood in terms of quantitative outcomes (that is to say educational qualification and employment status), framed within structural inequalities (such as social class) and societal inequalities (such as discrimination). Qualitative studies address this issue by providing insights into individuals' experiences through their own perspective. Yet, although experiences in education, the labour market and society are highly related, these three spheres of investigations are often disassociated in these studies. For instance, studies focus on either one of the three frameworks or link two of these (often education and work).

Understandings of individuals' life pathways cannot be separated from societal influence; thus, this thesis will contribute to the understanding of second generations' position in society by framing participants' professional experiences within other related experiences looking at opportunities and/or constraints in education, individuals' own actions and choices, their impact on employment opportunities and broader

contextual perspectives (such as engagement and relationships with others in society).

Another related point to the educational and professional outcomes of second generations is the lack of comparison across countries in terms of subjective experiences. Indeed, similar to country specific studies, cross-national research – European and international – mostly consists of quantitative evaluations of the groups' outcomes (e.g. OECD, 2010) or restricts analysis to theoretical comparisons (e.g. Raymond and Modood, 2007). Moreover, as discussed earlier, Crul and Vermeulen's (2006) study of second generation Turkish students highlights the usefulness of carrying out cross-country research involving two layers of comparisons: at the country level and at the group level. Hence, this thesis will contribute to the sparse literature on cross-country comparisons combined with cross-group comparison in order to uncover the subjective experiences of second generation women in two of the largest western European countries. Put simply, the experiences of Pakistani and Algerian women are investigated in both France *and* Britain. Moreover, by focusing on the two groups in both countries, this research elaborates on the experiences of 'new' minority ethnic groups who have received little attention to date in Britain (limited mostly to the work carried out by Michael Collyer on Algerians) and in France (where a qualitative perspective is limited to only two studies on Pakistanis, one by Moliner (2009) and the other by Hanif (2007)).

Secondly, research exploring the socio-economic positions of the second generations mostly offers a comparison across generations or with similarly qualified white and/or minority ethnic groups. No insight has yet been provided into the experiences of the second generation differentiating the group according to age; for instance looking at 'older' groups, who are professionally more experienced, and young adults, who recently graduated. I will offer a unique perspective on these issues by exploring the experiences of two age groups: those who recently entered

the labour market and those who have accumulated a considerable amount of professional experience (at least ten years). This additional level of comparison will further contribute to the de-construction of the category 'second generation' which is often treated as a homogenous group, or differentiated according to ethnicity or religion only.

Thirdly, the specificities of experiences within groups and across groups have also not been sufficiently addressed in research so far. For instance, there is a general tendency in research work to cluster different groups on the basis of geographical proximity (based on parents' country of origin) and/or religious similarities. Thus, often studies focus on Pakistani and Bangladeshi women as opposed to Indians or Whites (e.g. Khattab, 2012); the comparisons are based on religious/ethnic differences. Some other studies compare all three groups – Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian – to their white counterparts, using the common label of South Asians. Similarly in France, the term Maghrebi is used as a catch-all label for Algerian, Moroccan and Tunisian women (e.g. Pailhé and Meurs, 2008). Although this approach has established significant differences in the educational and/or professional outcomes of second generations compared to their white and/or other minority ethnic peers, these practices ignore the existence of important disparities within groups. For instance, the Algerian War of Independence impacted tremendously on the perception of Algerians in France as compared to the other two groups; a historical element often absent in research analysis (Stora, 2005; with Harbi, 2003). This tendency to treat groups homogeneously is also noticeable in the literature that emerged after the 9/11 events, which undermines the existence of differences within groups and across groups despite religious commonality. In these studies, experiences are framed only within a religious understanding overlooking the intersection of other significant factors such as ethnic and historic (e.g. shared colonial past) factors as well as the visibility of religion (i.e. headscarf wearing practice among Muslim women).

Some research has taken into account gender differences within these debates but yet again, did not include other important social divisions such as ethnicity (see for example, Afshar et al., 2005). Furthermore, these debates have mostly attracted the attention of British scholars with the rare exception of the work carried out by Deltombe (2007) and Deltombe and Rigouste (2005) in France. The need to acknowledge underlying axes of differentiation within each group as well as across groups will be addressed in this thesis by recruiting two specific groups of women, namely Pakistanis and Algerians, by distinguishing between the experience of those who wear headscarves and those who do not and by further analysing these experiences by considering the factor of ethnicity, age and social class. Moreover, giving the participants the opportunity to discuss their positioning in society (i.e. how they are perceived by others and how they see themselves) and their sense of (non-)belonging will allow a better understanding of the dynamics involved in framing the women's experiences in and out of the labour market.

In sum, the epistemological and methodological perspectives taken in this thesis will contribute to the current literature on second generations in western European countries with a particular focus on the labour market experiences of Pakistani and Algerian women in France and Britain. Attention will be given to pre- and post-labour market characteristics and social interactions. Pre-labour market characteristics include families' socio-economic backgrounds, participants' educational experiences, educational qualifications and social networks. Post-labour market characteristics include participants' employment history, experiences at work and social networks. Social interactions include relationships with the wider society (focusing on identification processes and experiences of exclusion/inclusion). These are necessary points of examination which will help give a fuller picture of how the labour market experiences of second generation Muslim graduate women are shaped in France and Britain.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framing

In this chapter, I discuss key theoretical concepts used to analyse and understand the data in this study. This thesis looks at the experiences of Pakistani and Algerian women in the labour market. It aims to uncover how these women make sense of their professional positions by relating it to their educational trajectories and their perceived position in society. The chapter takes a social constructionist epistemology which will enable me to focus on participants' stories without taking them as transparent reality. Participants' experiences will be understood as socially constructed; that is to say produced within particular social interactions (including in their daily lives and the interview setting) and contingent on broader contexts (including national political settings). This approach is central to capturing the ways in which second generation minority ethnic women negotiate their positioning in the labour market and the wider society by navigating between various social identities. The focus is on how participants understand their experiences and how they construct them in the interview process.

Section One begins by laying out key features of social constructionism in order to offer a framework for the discussions of key theories used in the thesis; namely the concepts of the 'other', everyday racism and (non-)belonging. A social constructionist reading argues for fluid and malleable understandings of these theories rather than fixed ones. The notions of ethnicity and 'race' are defined in Section Two. I will also give a rationale for the use of the term ethnicity rather than 'race' in this thesis through a discussion of the concept of nation. Section Three then explores the notion of racism linked to the concept of the 'other' and contextualises these within multicultural Britain and republican France. Section Four brings together various axes of differentiations such as ethnicity, gender, education, social class, religion and nationality which influence the identity positioning of Pakistani and Algerian women. I argue that these intersecting factors allow the women to construct their multiple, fluid and

situated selves. Floya Anthias's (2002) translocational positionality framework will further help the understanding of how identities are constructed since it pays particular attention to contextual aspects specific to particular times and places. This focus is particularly important since the thesis examines three broader contexts of interaction: society as a whole¹, the educational setting and the labour market.

The theoretical framework discussed below will allow me to bring together social divisions in order to offer an understanding of how Pakistani and Algerian women in this study negotiate their professional positioning and how they view their positions in relation to others.

2.1 A social constructionist reading of theoretical concepts

Opposed to realist epistemology, which states that 'the external world exists independently of being thought of or perceived' and ignores the researcher's role in the construction and interpretations of findings, social constructionism acknowledges the existence of multiple realities, which are produced by different and interacting social processes (Burr, 2003, p204). However, none holds the absolute truth; each reality is true to the time and context in which it occurs in the social world (Burr, 2003). This anti-essentialist and subjective stance places individuals, interaction between individuals and interaction within specific institutions/structures at the heart of the construction and production of knowledge about the social world. The negotiation processes involved in such interactions enable a focus away from the individual and onto the relationships between various individuals and between individuals and institutions/structures. Language in these processes is central to the construction of individuals' identities and events; it allows individuals to make sense of their world and to create meanings through their social engagements with others. The discursive takes central stage in social

¹ The terms 'society as a whole' and 'society at large' always refer to any social setting excluding the labour market and the educational system.

constructionism; in this thesis, the focus will be on the situated use of language (Burr, 2003) that is to say how Pakistani and Algerian participants tell their stories in the occasioned social interaction of the interviews; how they report other social interactions (i.e. with family members and other social actors); and how they make sense of these. The focus is thus on the meaning making process. Accounts produced during the interview will enable access to the women's experiences in their own words in order to gain an understanding of how they see themselves and how they think they are positioned by other social actors.

In this thesis, the term 'claimed identity' will refer to how the women position themselves while the term 'attributed identity' will refer to how (reportedly) others position the women (Anthias, 1991). The term 'identification' will relate to the formation processes of these claimed and attributed identities (Anthias, 1998b). Anthias (1998b) suggests that identity claims and attributions (may) differ since these are contextual and relational, that is to say constructed in specific time and space and in relation to others. This interaction – between the claimed and attributed identities – will be explored through focusing on the concept of the 'other', as constructed in Said's (1981) Orientalism theory, and the related notions of belonging and everyday racism. The thesis looks at two well-established groups (Pakistani and Algerian) who share a colonial past with one of the countries (Britain and France respectively). This particularity will help illuminate how perceptions of these two minority ethnic groups are influenced by their shared histories and colonial legacies. By contrast, these perceptions will be compared to those of the relatively recent minority ethnic groups (Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain) as constructed by the majority ethnic groups. Thus, by adopting a social constructionist standpoint, the aim is to go beyond the simple binary between attributed and claimed identities and to acknowledge the existence of multiple and intersecting identities, which at times may be contradictory. Identity categories are not single categories; they are constructed 'in intersection with other social

categories' and with other people (Phoenix and Pattynama, 2006, p24). In that respect, a social constructionist approach also recognizes the contextual nature of identity formation. This formation is 'historically and culturally' driven, as well as politically and religiously and thus bears multiple meanings (Burr, 2003, p4). For instance, the existence of a French or British nationality is a social structure which has been constructed at some point in time to categorise people; these constructions were set in historical and political specificities. They are political identity categories with real consequences; so, by virtue of a legal status, an individual either has legal rights and obligations or not. Similarly, the association of Englishness/Britishness/Frenchness with whiteness is also socially constructed, but it is a *racialised* identity category with its own historical specificity (Phoenix, 1998). This identity category produces inequalities and exclusions on the basis of skin colour (rather than legal status), by sustaining intersectional boundaries (i.e. economic, social and political) between individuals and groups. Of particular interest will therefore be the impact of intersecting categories and meanings associated with them (e.g. what does it imply when being French or British holds both political *and* racial meanings?).

In that respect, the thesis explores how the othering process is experienced by the French and British minority ethnic women (within and across their ethnic groups) and how it affects their relationships with other social actors in various societal spheres. The identity constructions of my participants will be analysed contextually, within educational institutions; the labour market and society at large.

Phoenix and Pattynama (2006) argue that viewing social divisions (such as gendered, ethnic and religious) intersectionally within discourses of 'power relations, distribution of resources and agency' renders visible challenges of oppression, discrimination and inequalities (p25). This is precisely the aim of the thesis; the impact of intersecting social divisions will be explored in specific social settings, notably in education,

employment and society to analyse how the participants in this study experience, understand and then counter explicit/subtle unequal treatment(s). For instance, the understandings of the ways in which minority ethnic women experience racism and discrimination at work and how they then counter subsequent racist/discriminatory treatments (i.e. practices and verbal interactions) through acceptance, resistance or adopting alternative solutions will illuminate the contextual nature of their shifting and flexible identity positions.

Given the above considerations, a social constructionist standpoint will enable me to place the women's understandings of their social experiences within their own socially constructed world and use a micro-social approach to analyse their accounts. The resulting analysis will take into account both the 'situated nature of accounts as well as institutional practices' (Burr, 2003, p22). The resulting non-essentialist reading will acknowledge complex, multiple and (seemingly) contradictory accounts, but the analysis will help contextualise these by focusing on how the accounts are presented by participants. It is anticipated that examining Pakistani and Algerian women's identities in a wide range of social processes will allow differences and commonalities to be analysed *contextually* within groups, across groups and beyond national boundaries.

2.2 Ethnicity and 'race': understanding definitions

In some academic literature, ethnicity and 'race' are used interchangeably while in others, distinctions are made. This section gives a brief overview of current academic understanding of these terms and then outlines the perspective taken in this thesis.

2.2.1 The concepts of ethnicity and 'race'

Challenges to the notion that those constructed as belonging to a different 'race' necessarily share biological features, led many scholars to develop theories that eschew essentialist understandings of 'race' which posit 'black and white people' as 'separate and opposing groups' (Phoenix, 1998, p861). 'The idea of 'race'', wrote Rattansi (2007, p78), 'contains both biological and cultural elements', including skin pigmentation, faith and attitudes. These biological and cultural features including language and territory are used to define a group and by contrast exclude others, perceived as 'outsiders and strangers' (Rattansi, 2007, p3). Moving beyond the static understanding of 'race', many scholars like Rattansi view 'race' as socially constructed and intertwined with other social divisions such as social class, gender and religion (e.g. Phoenix, 2010; Parekh, 2000a; Anthias, 1996).

A previous understanding of ethnicity which regarded it as a fixed feature, innate to human beings, has also been disregarded by many scholars. In this thesis, my understanding of ethnicity is similar to the definition suggested by Phoenix and Husain (2007), who refer to ethnicity as 'a collectivity or community that is assumed to share common cultural practices and history [...]; religion, language and territory are all included in the term. It is, to a large extent, insider defined' (p4). This definition is a more fluid approach to the concept of ethnicity, in line with Barth's (1979) now classic formulation of ethnicity as socially constructed and serving to maintain boundaries and, Anthias and Yuval-Davis's (1992) notion of racialised boundaries. The attribution and/or the claim of an ethnic identity is subjective; it depends not only on how one defines one's position in relation to others' positions, but also on the position attributed by others. This relational understanding of ethnicity acknowledges the existence of multiple identities, social interactions and the shifting, transformative and contextual nature of identity constructions (Hall, 1994; 1990).

While there has been substantial academic work that offers various theorisations of the concepts of 'race' and ethnicity, both are socially constructed concepts, used to refer to and differentiate between social groups; both being used in conjunction or in parallel, both creating categories, defining and maintaining boundaries (Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Some writers maintain that the use of 'race' inevitably feeds the idea of the existence of genetically different 'races', even as they acknowledge that the concept of 'race' is necessary to the understanding of racism (Miles, 2009; Parekh, 2000b). However, most researchers have now moved away from fixed understandings of ethnic and racial categorisations and have focused on the *processes* involved in ethnic and racial categorisation, as I discuss below.

2.2.2 'Race', racism and racialisation

Writing about 'racism without races', Rattansi (2007, pp86-111) argued that the persistence of inequalities in society between individuals/groups grounded in biological and cultural markers is the result of one group's perceived occupation of a naturally superior position compared to others. This, he concluded, is racism. Racism is grounded within a fixed understanding of ethnic signifiers, which are seen as inferior to the ethnic signifiers of the perpetrator. Consequently, there is an unconscious (or conscious) stereotyping of other cultures that tend to be disrespectful and/or devaluing; a similar differentiating process that was in operation during colonial times (Rattansi, 2007).

Silverman and Yuval-Davis (1999) further note that racism should be understood as a plural concept, grounded in biological differences (i.e. skin pigmentation) but intersecting with other social divisions (such as religion). Many scholars argue that this shift (i.e. from biological to cultural differences) is a continuation of colonial ideology (i.e. white supremacy) (Rattansi, 2007; Brah et al., 1999). For example, Rattansi (2007) and

many other theorists suggest that despite the reference to cultural differences, this type of racism still serves to include those perceived as similar and exclude those seen as eternally different, who are thus inferiorised.

Wieviorka (2010) also points to the shift in how racism operates in contemporary societies: from the real to the subtle, since racism is officially recognised and punishable by the law. He further suggests that both forms often work in combination (i.e. overt and covert) and across various social divisions (e.g. cultural, religious, national) producing unequal treatment between groups by essentialising social differences and maintaining boundaries. Yet, these boundaries are set in specific historical times (e.g. rise of Nazism in the 20th century; September 11 events) and are subject to change.

The term racialisation captures this notion of change, since it moves beyond a fixed understanding of group boundaries and acknowledges the existence of relational, multiple, dynamic and 'continuous process[es]' (Phoenix, 2005, p105). Brah and her colleagues (1999) further underline that 'race' remains a crucial feature within racialised discourses and in the analysis of experiences of racism. Rattansi (2005, pp271-272) captures this ambiguity by suggesting that racialisation:

'[o]ccupies a position somewhere between race and racism [...] race simply describes and racism suggests singularity, in contradiction to the dynamic implied by racialization'.

Racialisation recognises the shifting nature of biological and cultural markers and at the same time recognises the associations of these markers with other social divisions (which are also subject to shift and change).

Closely associated with the concept of racialisation is the notion of ethnicisation, which is also a process involving the creation and maintenance of boundaries. Similar to the idea of racialisation, ethnicisation is 'the social and psychological processes involved in putting individuals and groups into 'racial' or 'ethnic' categories' (Lewis and Phoenix, 2004, p123). However, while racialisation 'feeds on' the notion of 'race' and racism, ethnicisation focuses primarily on cultural and national differences, as suggested by Lewis and Phoenix (2004) and also includes the related debates of citizenship and migration, as outlined by Joppke (2003) (discussed below). While both notions are often used in conjunction, I will use the term racialisation (a process operated by outsiders), for its proximity with the concepts of 'race' and racism, as explained by Rattansi (2005). This use reinforces the idea of an attributed and negative identification process.

2.2.3 The concepts of ethnicity and nation

Strongly rooted in the French Revolution, nationalism², wrote Eriksen (2010), 'stresses the cultural similarity of its adherents and, by implication, it draws boundaries *vis-à-vis* others, who thereby become outsiders' (p47). This understanding of nationalism and thus the formation of a 'national' ethnic group or the nation is akin to the understanding of ethnicity discussed earlier³. Both groups – national and ethnic – are socially constructed to create and maintain boundaries. Guibernau and Rex (2010) formulate this ambiguity in a slightly different way; they argue that the concept of ethnicity is embedded in the concept of nationalism since the nation is assumed to 'predicat[e] continuity with the past and common descent' (p5). The belief in a common ancestry, culture, language and history *rooted* in a particular nation works to create,

² Nationalism is interpreted in a variety of ways. I will not focus on these since this topic is beyond the scope of my thesis. For a full discussion of the debates, see, Smith (1998).

³ Smith (1998) argues that not all ethnic groups (can) become a 'national' ethnic group or as he states a nation. It is the power held by an ethnic group and/or threats posed by other ethnic groups which facilitate its 'transformation' into a nation. For a full discussion, see, Smith (1998, pp145-169).

what Eriksen (2002; 2010) described as the ethnic/cultural nationality, which is opposed to the civic nationality.

Civic nationality, argues Smith (1998), involves a political commitment, rooted in a shared political history but which is not bound to time; the civic nationality can be acquired with time. This is precisely what Castles and Davidson (2000) highlight in their discussions on migration. They argue that in a globalised world, legal membership – through official citizenship – can no longer define boundaries between those who belong and those who do not. Their central argument is about re-defining traditional understanding of citizenship which need not be culturally/ethnically and/or geographically bound (but can, for example, be political). In the context of post-war labour migration, this understanding is very important. Wihtol de Wenden (2007) rightly argues that ‘the myth of national homogeneity and indivisibility’ broke with the arrival of labour workers in the mid-20th century, which brought cultural specificities and ultimately led to the overlap between the civic and the ethnic/cultural nationalities (p48). This is of particular interest in this study of children of immigrants who do not share ethnicity with the white majority group, but as British/French-born second generations may well share national/civic identities. This complex association of ethnicity and nation will be further developed in Section Three (nation and religion) and will be investigated in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

2.2.4 Using the concepts in this study

Discussing the concept of racialisation, Rattansi (2005) wrote ‘distinctions between ‘race’, ‘ethnicity’, and ‘nation’, always blurred, have become murkier’ (p272). It is this very complexity that this thesis will explore. I will investigate how two minority ethnic groups – Pakistani and Algerian women – perceive and formulate their relationship with their nation (i.e. country of birth) and the white majority group (i.e. the ‘national’ ethnic group). This focus is central in understanding these women’s lived

experiences. Moving away from the idea of 'race', yet dealing with issues of racism in this study, I will examine how Pakistani and Algerian women are positioned by others and so, focus on the racialised processes they experience(d). Within a social constructionist framework, I will pay particular attention to the construction of differences and its operational processes (i.e. how it is produced and what impacts it has). I define boundaries of differences as malleable, located within historical, national, political and social specificities. These specificities are crucially important to this thesis, since France and Britain have 'different' ideologies in place to deal with different groups (republicanism and multiculturalism respectively) and the groups studied differ in terms of whether or not they share a colonial past with the majority ethnic group in each country (Algerian in France and Pakistani in Britain).

Bearing in mind the importance this thesis gives to the constructions of national and ethnic memberships, similarities and differences, I will use the term ethnicity rather than 'race' in this study.

2.3 The discourses of otherness in western societies

In the previous section, I discussed how the ethnic categorisation of social groups leads to the construction of relational identities, constructed in interaction between individuals and groups and not free from racist representations. I also discussed Rattansi's (2007) understanding of racism as a 'claim of natural superiority' which hides a form of biological racism even when referring to ethnic differences (p94). Individuals or groups who are subjects of racism are constructed as inferior as a result of their perceived identities. Rattansi further argues that the white supremacy ideology which partly fuelled colonial conquest persists under debates of cultural racism. The hierarchal opposition between 'us' and 'them' still holds a central position in sustaining boundaries between groups or individuals in post-colonial societies. The issue of colonialism is an important aspect in this study since, as discussed above, two groups

share a colonial past with either France or Britain. It is important to bear this in mind in order to understand how Algerian participants in France and Pakistani participants in Britain relate to the country in which they live and how they understand their positions in society in comparison with groups who are not directly implicated in the colonial legacy (i.e. Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain). It will thus help uncover the ways in which group boundaries are defined in both countries for two seemingly distinct migratory groups.

In this section, I will first overview the concept of the colonised ethnic 'other' and various related definitions. I will discuss how the 'other' is racialised in social interactions in western colonial societies, notably France and Britain. I will then move on to the current issue of religious cohesion in western countries. These notions will enable me to argue for a cultural construction of the (non-)colonised ethnic 'other', who is positioned as an outsider; a position materialised by experiences of everyday racism.

2.3.1 The colonised ethnic 'other'

The concept of the 'other' is inextricable from identity debates and power relations between groups. In her discussion on anti-discrimination policies in the United States, Crenshaw (2009, p617) defined the construction of the identity of the 'other' as follows:

'The establishment of an 'other' creates a bond, a burgeoning common identity of all nonstigmatized parties – whose identity and interests are defined in opposition to the 'other''

The discourse of otherness generally refers to assumptions about the 'mind, characteristic behaviour or habits, and predictions of likely responses' of the 'other' (Goldberg, 2009, p227). Both Crenshaw and Goldberg contextualise the construction of the identity of the 'other', as

constrained, subordinated and stigmatised. The naturalised and therefore fixed social positions of the 'other' (and ultimately of its opposite) serve to legitimise the domination of the group in power and the oppression experienced by the 'other'. Of particular interest in this study, is the development of the concept of the 'other' and the operation of the othering discourse, notably where discourses and practices are marked by Orientalism (Said, 1979).

In discussing the concept of Orientalism, Said (1979) looked at a specific binary; the Occident and the Orient, in which the 'others' are the Muslims living at the periphery of the Western Occident. He argued that the establishment of the 'other' was based on the repetition of a denigrating discourse about the Oriental subject which helped both parties to sustain each others' positions, that is to say, their relationship. The nature of this relationship is a coercive one in which the identities and the cultures of non-European groups are inferiorised. Said's now classic phrase 'the West and the Rest' describes the opposition in which western nations are perceived to be superior (e.g. in intellectual advancement, political models, culture and religion). This particular relationship ensures the power of the dominant Occident over the Oriental 'other'. The relationship between the two groups is unbalanced, with the 'other' occupying the subordinate position. Yet, this construction of the 'other' is an imaginary one, revealing 'more about those doing the writing than the real people in a geographical space east of Europe' (Varisco, 2007, pxii).

The unequal power relation between the western Self and the 'other', the highly negative representation of the 'other' (e.g. passive, uncivilised) and its experiences (e.g. oppression) have been criticised by many scholars. Going beyond Said's traditional binary, many scholars opened up the concept by including, for example, issues of 'race'. They argued that the condescending position of western European nations racialised the 'other' (Young, 2009; Radhakrishnan, 2003). Goldberg (2009) for instance points out that the knowledge about the 'other' serves a

particular purpose: that of constructing differences framed within racist discourses produced in specific histories, times and places. The attribution of 'normality' only to western European nations are thus seen as contributing to the perpetuation of unequal social positions and racist practices between groups which need not be the coloniser and colonised only. Thus, potentially, any group can be subject to the discourse of otherness, grounded in any social marker such as skin pigmentation and religion (Rattansi, 2011). Other scholars such as Bhabha (1983) extended Said's understanding of power. Bhabha (1983) noted that both 'the dominated subject' and the 'dominant being' are positioned within a symmetrical relationship in which the agency of the 'other' is acknowledged (p25).

Feminist critics have further challenged this homogenous representation of the 'other', reminding us of the relationship between gender and the construction of the colonised 'other'. Spivak (1990), for example, extended Said's Orientalism theory by bringing gender into issues of power and knowledge (among other aspects). She deconstructed the western exploitation of the East by looking at how the marginalised 'other', woman in the East, is 'exploited' in the discourses of both the white man and the white (feminist) woman and can also be silenced by the more powerful amongst their own ethnic groups. She argues that the 'other' should be given centre stage in the narration of her own experiences; the 'other' should speak for herself and not be heard through the voices of the western Self (whether man or woman) in order to be valued and to reverse the distribution of power and knowledge. Lewis (1996) also questioned the absence of women (whether as subjects of western oppression or as producers of oppression) in Said's oriental thesis. She suggested similarities in women's experiences of oppression as women in the East and the West, since they are all subjected to patriarchal constraints. Lewis, therefore, linked imperialism, gender and culture. She argued for an intersectional reading of the experiences of women, bringing together gender and the othering

process. Likewise, minority ethnic women writers have challenged the male/female binary of western feminist discourse, insisting on the existence of difference within the category of women. In particular, they highlighted the existence of multi-layered processes constructed through both gender and ethnic experiences, in which minority ethnic women represent desired exotic bodies and are feared simultaneously for their potential to mix the 'other' and the Self (Mohanty, 2009; Crenshaw, 2003; Prasad and Prasad, 2002). Crenshaw (2003), for example, brought together racial and gender experiences of oppression to highlight the particularity of experiences of 'women of colour' (p176). Mohanty (2009) further drew our attention to the existence of dissimilar patterns of inequalities for women in the West and the East, including social class.

In France and Britain, foreign workers were the (previously) colonised ethnic 'other' (i.e. notably Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France, as discussed in Chapter 1). They are marked by political, linguistic and cultural differences in opposition to the dominant group. In his essay on the construction of minority ethnic groups (and their identities) in France and Britain, Wieviorka (2007; 2010) demonstrates how the presence of a growing cultural diversity gave rise to new or cultural racism in which the differential characteristics of the (non-)colonised ethnic 'other' are essentialised; this, then justifies denial of the minority group's cultural existence and socially excludes it. This racialisation of the 'other', seen as 'unmeltable minorities' solidifies the boundaries between groups: the colonised ethnic 'other' is positioned outside the civic and thus ethnic nationality/identity of the French and British nations (Eriksen, 2002, p103). Rattansi (2011) persuasively suggests that the othering process experienced by labour workers in the post-1950s era is now also operating against the second generations.

In this study, I will refer to French Algerians and British Pakistanis as the colonised ethnic 'other' while French Pakistanis and British Algerians will be referred to as the (non-colonised) ethnic 'other'. This differential use is

to emphasise the shared colonial history of the former two groups with their respective countries, while highlighting the existence of several 'others' positioned against the white groups in their respective countries. I will investigate how othering processes affect the colonised ethnic 'other' compared to the ethnic 'other'. Do the colonised ethnic and ethnic 'others' have similar experiences rooted in differences between the majority ethnic group and minority ethnic groups? Or have they different experiences produced by the existence of a shared colonial past between the nations and their respective former colonial groups?

2.3.2 Religion, (Gender) and Nation: Muslim (women), the ultimate 'other'?

As Goldberg (2009) and others argue, the construction of the 'other' is inextricably linked with specific times, histories and places. Every nation's political specificity creates its own 'other(s)'. Since the 9/11 events, many scholars highlighted the shift from cultural racism to religious racism as witnessed in Britain, or an exclusive emphasis on religious racism as seen in France (Shah and Modood, 2010; Raymond and Modood, 2007; Macdonald, 2006). Arguably, cultural, linguistic and political disparities no longer form the basis for the othering process; rather adherence to a specific religion (i.e. Islam) has become the epitome of the ultimate 'other', thus transcending national specificities; or put differently, the religious 'other' has become transnational (Bhatt, 2004).

Said (1979) argues that Muslims in the West have become the cultural representatives of fixed sets of meanings associated with Islamic nations such as extremism, fundamentalism and backwardness. This discourse positions Islam outside the West and the identity of Muslim people is fixed to that of an imaginary Muslim nation. In keeping with Said's (1979) Orientalism thesis, Weedon (2004) suggests that when this discourse 'entered mainstream culture and became part of the collective 'common sense'', Muslims became the 'new' 'other' in western societies (p14). She

further argues that the body is central in the ascription of fixed sets of meaning by others. In that respect, Muslims are also defined as 'other' in relation to a white norm on the basis of how they look. Consequently, the Islamic attire of Muslim women is used by white people to position 'overly-visible' Muslim women as the ultimate Muslim 'other'.

Essed (2004, p125) used the term 'over-visibility' in her discussion of black women's experiences of 'everyday racism' in the USA and the Netherlands (this notion is fully discussed at the end of this section). 'Over-visibility' refers to women excelling as individuals (in different societal spheres). They become subject to particular negative attention and practices since they display attributes associated only with the white group. So for example, black women's educational or work-related achievements are seen as exceptional achievements by the white group. In this thesis, I will use the term 'overly-visible' to refer to women who wear headscarves/abaya⁴ precisely because their physical appearance is perceived as an 'abnormality' and used by others to discriminate, inferiorise and oppress these women in a particular way, compared to Muslim women who do not wear similar attire (see for example, Afshar et al., 2006). This aspect is very important in this study since there are participants who wear headscarves, while others do not.

Indeed, feminist writers have emphasised the centrality of gender in a new othering process in the West. For instance, the image of women in veils has become a physical representation of the Muslim 'other' (Afshar et al., 2006; Macdonads, 2006; Weedon, 2004; Bullock, 2002). Bullock (2002), for instance, argues that the western image of the veil as being oppressive for women required a missionary duty to relieve and free these said-to-be imprisoned women within their own nation, as a colonial conqueror and today, from their male counterparts in the West. Afshar and her colleagues (2006) further suggest that the perception of Muslim

⁴ The abaya is a full-length garment covering the body except, the hands, feet and the head. It is often worn together with the headscarf.

women in western societies has undergone a transformation from being treated as different to being seen as a threat. Thus, while the colonised female 'other' was a desired body, initially feared for its potential to unite sexually the 'other' and white groups, the Muslim female 'other' is feared because it is a threat to the very existence of white groups, for its Machiavellian potential.

Building on analyses of these othering processes, many scholars have provided accounts of how the transformation of stereotypes into common knowledge affects Muslim women's life opportunities (Afshar, 2012; Brah, 2003; Bullock, 2002; Brah and Shaw, 1992). They argue that cultural stereotypes and the perpetuation of racist categorisations affect Muslim women in society as a whole, but also once they enter the labour market where they are confronted by an institutional system in which their racialised identity is used to differentiate between their white peers and them. These patronising and stigmatising discourses of otherness are both gendered and racialised, positioning the women outside the realm of paid work and constrain their participation in public life altogether. This binary identification process, Weedon (2004) argues, helps to sustain 'inequalities, exclusions and oppression' in the labour market (p154). Yet, experiences are not uniform; differences exist within this category of Muslim women as Brah (2003) highlights when suggesting the importance of colonial history in the social construction of Muslim women's identity and subsequent professional experiences. The intersecting discourses of visible signifiers of religion along with cognitive representations of Muslim women will be used in conjunction to examine how the women in this study negotiate their employment positions and account for the differences within the group 'Muslim minority ethnic women' by comparing the experiences of women who wear headscarves with those who do not.

2.3.3 The 'other' and everyday racism

Essed (2004) argues that everyday racism is an analytical framework that allows the analysis of micro level processes of inequalities based on racialised differences 'through the eyes of those who [are] considered not to belong, not to be part of the norm' in a white-dominated society (p125). Everyday racism is 'familiar and repetitive' racism that can take the form of behaviour and/or unspoken words which are not tangible and therefore are left 'unquestionable'; these are hard to tackle and create conflict and uncertainty (Essed, 1991, p52). As discussed in Chapter 1, several studies established the existence of racism in both French and British societies which affects second generations' life opportunities. Thus, by listening to the accounts of Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women, the aim of this study will be to investigate 'when, where and how' (and if) racism operates by exploring the underlying racial meanings in these women's everyday social interactions at work, in education and within society at large (Essed, 2004, p120). Essed (1991) also suggests that this subtle racism becomes part of 'normal' practices for the perpetrators and thus hard to establish and acknowledge in societies which pride themselves on their efforts to sustain fair and equal opportunities for every single individual. It will therefore be particularly interesting to see how Britain's multicultural ideology, which celebrates diversity, differs (or not) from France's 'faceless' republican ideology, which shuts down opportunities for diversity. It is noteworthy that both ideologies are meant to strengthen equality in society. Thus, both the notions of the 'other' and everyday racism are bound up with identity constructions and produce subsequent experiences of (non-)belonging (discussed below). Everyday racism will be fruitful in thinking about how discourses of otherness influence the women's everyday lives in society at large, the educational system and, particularly, in the labour market.

2.4 Theorising identity and social axes of differentiation: the intersectionality of ethnicity, gender, social class, education, religion and nationality

In the previous section, I discussed how specific social divisions (i.e. religion, gender and nationality) operate alongside individuals' ethnic identity. Their mutually constructive nature is important in studying social relationships; the recognition of intersecting axes of differentiations is fundamental in creating group boundaries; and more importantly in thinking about *who* is the 'other' or *what* triggers the othering process. As I shall elaborate now, ethnicity, religion, gender, nationality along with other social divisions (i.e. education and social class), all contribute to the multiple social positioning of individuals within society; this requires the taking of an intersectional approach, since these divisions cannot be addressed in isolation.

2.4.1 Positioning theory and intersectionality

In establishing their identities, people take up a particular position in comparison to others. The concept of position and positioning is strongly influenced by Davies and Harré's classic paper of 1990. The authors argue that it is through discursive processes that identity positions are constructed and then taken up and acted on. The construction of an identity position implies a social interaction and a construction of an 'other' set against the identity position that is taken up. The contextual and shifting nature of identity positions captures social interactions and helps us understand the identities people choose in social settings (Phoenix, 2005). It is through the relational that positions are constructed, de-constructed and re-constructed. It is this negotiation process that is crucial for this study since attention is given to how the women express their positions and how they think they are perceived by others. Understanding the identity positions my participants take and are given will illuminate how the relationships between the women and their

interlocutors are constructed. In that respect, by focusing on specific social interactions, positioning theory will help explore how relationships are constructed, how individuals make sense of their positions, how these positions shift and are contested and how individuals act accordingly. Positioning theory will therefore allow me to see the negotiation process in play between the attributed and the claimed identities for my participants, who have a repertoire of positions including, ethnic, religious, national, gender and class-based.

As feminist writers argue, social divisions (and thus the subsequent end positions) cannot be explained and understood separately and in isolation whatever the sphere of analysis (e.g. Archer and Francis, 2006; Phoenix, 2006a; Macdonalds, 2006; Anthias, 2002, 2006). Brah and Phoenix (2004) remind us that issues of 'race', class and gender 'come into existence in and through contradictory and conflictual relations to each other', advocating for a simultaneous analysis of these multiple positions and recognising the importance of power relations (p80). Since multiple positions need to be taken into account in examinations of social categories and relations between individuals, Phoenix (2006a) argues that the concept of intersectionality:

'provides an ontological framework that establishes that social existence is never singular, but rather that everybody belongs simultaneously to multiple categories that are historically and geographically located and that shift over time.' (p28)

In her review, Phoenix (2006a) offers a useful understanding of the debates surrounding the use of the concept of intersectionality in feminist writings. On the one hand, social divisions are framed within societal structures which impact on identity constructions, and on the other, social divisions are decentred (to use Phoenix's term), giving more prominence to individual agency. She favoured the latter approach, since it does not view the individual as merely subject to the domination of societal

structures and acknowledges the flexibility of social divisions. One can occupy multiple positions during the course of interaction with others; identities therefore are not fixed or static but flexible and changing as suggested by Anthias's (2009; 2008; 2002) translocational positionality framework, in which time, context and place are important factors (discussed below).

In this study, the intersectional lens will be used to consider how the women's multiple positions including ethnic, educational, class-based, gendered, religious and national identities operate to produce their experiences in relation to others. It will allow the investigation of the shifting and relational aspects of these social divisions by looking at specific social interactions.

2.4.2 The concept of translocational positionality

Floya Anthias (2002) introduced the concept of translocational positionality in an attempt to capture the multiplicity that is central to theorisations of 'intersectionality' while simultaneously ensuring that identity debates are framed in terms of processes and that the categories to which people belong to are not treated as (fixed) possessions. The crux of her argument is that since identity constructions are situational, the situated aspects also need to be analysed. The concept focuses, therefore, on the 'spatial and contextual' processes involved in the construction of identity positions by bringing together processes of differentiation and stratification (Anthias, 2002, p494). The notion builds on the concepts of positionality and intersectionality but gives 'importance to the broader social context and temporality' (Anthias, 2012, p108). In doing so, translocational positionality combines notions of 'social positioning', describing the process of negotiation in place during social interactions; 'social position', referring to the outcome of those processes within society; and 'location'; focusing on social categories (e.g. gender, ethnicity and social class) used to place oneself within society at a *certain*

time, in a *certain context*. Anthias contextualises social divisions by placing these three notions at the heart of issues of belonging, rather than focusing on identity per se. Translocational positionality, wrote Anthias (2002):

‘recognizes that issues of exclusion, political mobilization on the basis of collective identity and narrations of belonging and otherness cannot be addressed adequately unless they are located within other constructions of difference and identity, particularly around gender and class.’ (p502)

Thus, the concept of translocational positionality gives centre stage to social divisions by paying particular attention to the social constructions of positions. The ‘positionality’ term aims at moving beyond simplistic dualities, essentialised social categories and the homogenisation of collective identities (similar to the intersectionality and positioning concepts). The ‘translocational’ involves the intersection of various spheres in which social relations are produced (e.g. the political, economic, cultural). In doing so, the concept takes forward the notion that social divisions are *contextual* at both the structural and individual levels. It also allows privileging the intersection of certain identity categories contextually rather than ‘in any essential or given way’ (Anthias, 2009, p12).

Identity claims are spaces where individuals can exercise their agency in the construction of their positionalities. These positionalities describe individuals’ understanding of how they are placed in society by others and how they negotiate (multiple) social representations (e.g. what identities they claim) (Anthias, 2009). Thus, by recognizing the importance of time, context and place in allowing shifts, translocational positionality describes the self in relation to the ‘other’: not as fixed binaries but as situated and relational (Anthias, 2002).

In this study, the translocational positionality framework will help contextualise the women's experiences at a micro-level. It is the situated and relational aspect of identity construction that will be focused on in exploring how the women are positioned at different stages in their lives (e.g. education and employment). For instance, it will offer a useful insight into how identity positions are negotiated in and out of the labour market: during unemployment, before and after graduation, during the hiring process, in relation to promotion opportunities and within the workplace while interacting with other colleagues. The focus therefore will be on specific times, places and interlocutors. This particular perspective will illuminate how various axes of differentiation cross-cut and compete in social interactions by looking at the relationship between claimed and attributed identities. The aim is to understand participants' everyday experiences and their feelings of belonging (exclusion and/or inclusion) in republican France and multicultural Britain.

2.4.3 Drawing boundaries: the concept of belonging

In her extensive work theorising the concept of belonging, Yuval-Davis (2006a; 2010; 2011) challenges its analytical limitation in understanding the notions of nationality and citizenship. She makes a useful distinction between belonging and the politics of belonging; the former is associated with emotional attachment, while the latter is grounded within political and power debates. Yet, in both instances, the author suggests, boundaries are shifting, contested and situated, and forms of belonging are interrelated; and so intersectional. For instance, political belonging to a nation through citizenship cannot be disassociated from the emotional dimension (Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). There is no single form of belonging, let alone a national one only.

At the heart of this theoretical understanding is the construction of identity. In line with social constructionist thinking, Yuval-Davis (2011) conceptualises identity as relational and mutually constructed, yet, she

states, 'this relationality is not homogenous' (p17). Accordingly, particular attention is given to the construction of boundaries and sense of belonging formed between the Self and the 'other'⁵. The use of an intersectional framework brings out the multi-layered construction of boundaries between groups. Yuval-Davis argues that regardless of the ways in which identities are constructed, identities always tell about the individual and the collective group and thus shape boundaries between the Self and the 'other'. Similar to the notion of belonging, these identity boundaries are shifting and contested depending on a variety of characteristics ranging from phenotypical differences to legal aspects. Both the constructions of identity and belonging are flexible and overlapping but not necessarily exclusive. For instance, Anthias (2006) distinguishes between a sense of identification and a sense of belonging, stating that one does not imply the other and vice versa, rightly pointing out the situated nature of identity construction and the emotional facets involved within it. A feeling of belonging to a particular nation is not a simple question of cultural cohesion (through cultural acceptance for instance), but implies the social as well, the struggles for power and fight against unequal distribution of social resources (Wieviorka, 2007; Anthias, 2006). It is a two way process (nation-citizen and citizen-nation) operating at multiple and intersecting levels (such as political, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious), and a naturalisation of these boundaries inevitably creates limited flexibility for belonging in society.

This is precisely what Alexander and her colleagues (2007) illustrate in their discussion of minority ethnic groups' position in Britain. The authors (as many other scholars) describe the racialisation process experienced by Muslims which fixed the identity of individuals to their faith and ultimately placed them outside western nations (see for example, Marranci, 2011; Weedon, 2011; Joppke, 2009; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006;

⁵ Yuval-Davis distinguishes between four generic relations between the Self and the 'other' (including 'me' and 'us'; 'me/us' and 'them'; 'me' and 'other' others; 'me' and the transversal 'us/them'). For a full discussion of these relations see the author's 2010 work, *Theorizing identity: beyond the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy*.

Anthias, 2006; Rattansi, 2004). Similar to Anthias's (2006) argument, Alexander and her colleagues (2007) reject defining boundaries within national and cultural contexts, since these position 'minority ethnic 'communities' as culturally bounded entities within, but distinct from (and implicitly opposed to), [the] broader national identity' (p788). This dichotomous constructed notion of identity along ethnic lines (between the majority and minority ethnic groups) and cultural markers (i.e. language) limits the inclusion of those who are identified as legal members of the nation but do not experience a sense of belonging (i.e. lack of acceptance and/or recognition) or, as Skrbiš and his colleagues (2007) suggest, experience a retraction of the right of belonging.

In this thesis, the concept of belonging will be useful in understanding the relationships of the participants with others, especially in the workplace. It will also enable the understanding of participants' attitudes towards their respective societies as an individual (i.e. as a woman, as Pakistani/Algerian, as French/British) but also as an identified 'other' group (e.g. Muslims). The focus will be particularly on the emotional dimension of belonging in order to highlight the women's sense of identification and feelings of exclusion and inclusion. Anthias (2006) suggests that 'you may identify but not feel that you 'belong' in the sense of being accepted or being a full member' (p19). The central issue in this thesis will be to investigate participants' sense of acceptance by others combined with their emotional attachment to their country. Within this framework, the othering process will be analysed to see, whether and if so, how it de-constructs emotional belonging and citizenship by fixing participants' identities to ethnic and religious categories.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the importance of taking an intersectional framework to understand the lived experiences of the minority ethnic women in this study. A non-essentialist reading of their

accounts will enable the understandings of their socially constructed identities and the impact of these in shaping their life trajectories (especially in relation to education, work and society).

The intersectional framework will help capture how different social divisions intersect to construct Pakistani and Algerian women's identities, while the translocational positionality framework will focus on the situated nature of these identity constructions by looking at specific social interactions and broader settings. The analyses will give particular attention to how women negotiate their identities within the contextual and shifting processes of differentiation and identification.

Since the women's accounts are of primary interest, the concept of everyday racism will help to take forward understandings of how these women recognise 'racial or ethnic undertones of certain events' produced in their daily lives (Essed, 2004, p125). The concept of the 'other' will thus be particularly useful in highlighting the ways in which social divisions operate to produce multiple and intersecting boundaries which position the women outside the realm of national and emotional belongings, limit their educational opportunities and sustain their racialised positions in the labour market.

In sum, intersectionality, translocational positionality, the concepts of 'other', belonging and everyday racism will be employed in the analysis of the women's accounts.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological approach used in the present study. It outlines the overall methodology, the methods used and the research procedure carried out during the pilot work and subsequent interviews. It also provides a rationale for using a comparative approach in researching the lived experiences of Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women in France and Britain. The chapter is divided into six sections. In the first, a description and justification of my research design and methods is presented, including the rationale for conducting comparative cross-national research. The second section discusses the process of data collection and the ethical issues it raised, while the third focuses on the interview setting and procedure. The fourth section describes the processes of data analysis. The fifth presents the challenges that I encountered in designing and conducting the study and the final section describes the pilot study and the issues it raised for the main study.

3.1 Rationale

3.1.1 The methodology

The over-arching aim of this study was to investigate how second generation Pakistani and Algerian graduate women negotiate their professional positions in France and Britain. The study was, therefore, designed to examine the women's educational experiences, which help contextualise their professional pathways, and their experiences as Muslim women living in French or British society.

The role of a country's social structure in shaping a group's social positions is better established when compared to the social structure of another country as this, indeed, helps uncover causal effects (Vigour, 2005). By collecting data in two countries, I was able to relate the women's experiences to not only the international context but to the French and British socio-economic and political frameworks (as set out in

Chapter 1). This design, therefore, enabled me to highlight the similarities and differences in the experiences of two ethnic groups within their respective national setting and also across countries.

Gaining access to the women's *own* understandings of their experiences was central to the analysis of how the women negotiate their positioning, enabling me to explore how feelings of (non-) belonging are constructed and how everyday racism operates (as outlined in Chapter 2). The aim, therefore, was to understand the processes involved in the women's negotiation as *second generation Muslim graduate women* related to social interactions in three settings (school/university, in the workplace and in society as a whole). This focus on the women's particular positions in society and their understandings of these required me to adopt a qualitative research strategy.

3.1.2 A qualitative approach

Merriam (2009) suggests that qualitative research 'helps us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena' (p5). This is precisely why I opted for a qualitative research strategy for this thesis since my aim is to produce knowledge about the meanings of a particular social phenomena, that is the low levels of employment among second generation graduate minority ethnic women in France and Britain (as indicated in Chapter 1). In particular, I was interested in understanding the labour market experiences of graduate second generation Pakistani and Algerian women in both countries; an investigation facilitated by qualitative research since this type of research is also concerned with 'understanding and explaining everyday experiences' (Marvasti, 2004, p1).

In this study, I pay close attention to participants' accounts about how they make sense of their experiences in the labour market and the society they live in, exploring understandings of the processes and social

structures involved in shaping the women's positioning. Importance is given to how the participants understand and perceive work-related and societal issues that are important to *them*; how they *understand* their own social position and experiences and how they *construct* these understandings. I opted for a qualitative research strategy since it gave me the ability to interpret participants' accounts but without losing their voices, that is, their own words and perceptions of reality.

Bearing in mind these considerations, this study takes a social constructionist perspective exploring how participants' employment experiences are related to their culture, historical period and socio-economic circumstances and how they understand and tell their stories (Burr, 2003).

Experiences, understandings and perceptions are at the heart of this study. To fully penetrate these, an in-depth exploration of each woman's current situation both within the society at large and the labour market is required. Given these considerations, it was important to find a method that allowed the perspectives of those involved to be taken into account, in order to gain insights into participants' positions within their social world (Pring, 2000). Given the importance of accessing the women's stories in their own words, qualitative research interviews constitute the most appropriate method for gathering my data. Indeed, Slocum-Bradley (2010) suggests that in order to understand others' understanding of identities, one must examine how identities are constructed during social interaction.

The aim in interviewing the women was to give them an opportunity to tell about their work-related experiences, relationships with others while in education, in the labour market and in society at large. In particular, I was concerned with three specific aspects of participants' experiences: (1) their educational trajectories, (2) their employment pathways and (3) their overall experiences in society. Using qualitative interviews (compared to

other forms of data collection such as questionnaires) allowed me to direct the conversation while at the same time, giving interviewees the possibility to talk about issues of importance to them (Kvale, 1996). In that respect, interviews allowed an in-depth understanding of each woman's accounts on these topics (Bryman, 2011, p435-470).

3.1.3 Intersectional research strategy

As discussed in Chapter 2, intersectional research is concerned with examining the lived experiences of individuals from a multi-dimensional perspective. Social categories are perceived as mutually constitutive and interrelated so that no one category exists in isolation. Additionally, both micro- and macro-level contexts are taken into consideration in understanding issues of social inequalities (Hunting, 2014).

An intersectional research strategy (should) 'highlight the everyday interactions' and processes that create ethnic, gendered and other identity categories; while at the same time, disrupt these identity categories and processes (Harris, 2015, p4). In taking an intersectional approach, then, the construction and implications of social categories take centre stage. This requires identifying relevant social categories and interrogating these within the stories narrated to the researcher as well as within the researcher-participant interaction and 'relationship'. The analytical process also involves the researcher bringing forward categories silenced or overlooked by the participants. In doing so, the researcher moves beyond participants' own perceptions and constructions of the social categories involved (Harris, 2015).

In their comprehensive discussion on the importance of developing a practical guide for using intersectional research strategy, Christensen and Jensen (2012) provided tools to analyse social categories and their mutually constitutive dimensions. In line with other researchers' practices, they point out three elements. First, they emphasise the importance of

considering each category on its own that is to say, operating distinctly from any other social category, within its own power and structural levels. Second, they suggest considering the relationship between the research question and the number of categories to analyse. Third, they advise the inclusion of all voices; minority and majority ethnic groups.

The aim of my study is to understand the educational and professional experiences of second generation graduate Muslim women in France and Britain. In keeping with Christensen and Jensen's (2012) analytic frame, I first contextualised the study. The context within which the research was conducted is the current discourses of the supposedly difficult position of first and second generation Muslims in Western Europe (as outlined in Chapter 1). This focus called for an intersectional analysis of the categories of ethnicity, gender, religion, citizenship and education and other 'implicit' categories such as social class and age. Second, the analysis of these categories was also contextualised; the choice of which category relationship(s) I emphasised was made in accordance with my research questions. Thus, for example, in the analysis of my participants' education-to-work transition, I focused on education (i.e. influence of parents' migration history), social class (i.e. social, economic and other resources) and ethnicity (i.e. Pakistani and Algerian). These initial categories provided a starting-point (to use Christensen and Jensen's term) for the analysis of the women's experiences during this moment in their lives. By asking questions about job applications, interviews and first graduate job, I gathered information about this specific life stage, as *they* experienced it, and then analysed *how* the women made sense of these. This allowed me to explore how my initial social categories intersected without directly asking questions about them.

I did not follow the third element in Christensen and Jensen's analytic frame in that I did not include any participant from the majority ethnic group in either country because empirically, their inclusion would not answer my research questions. Instead, and still in keeping with

Christensen and Jensen's suggestion to address similar themes in relation to different groups, I analysed differences not only within groups but also between groups and across countries. Put simply, I analysed the same social categories in three social settings (education, work and society as a whole), in two countries and for two minority ethnic groups (one of which is a well-established minority ethnic group and the other a recently settled group). This strategy allowed me to see the dynamics between my social categories contextually; both from micro- and macro-level perspectives. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 provide full analyses of the women's experiences within the educational system, the labour market and society.

3.1.4 Qualitative comparative research designs

Comparative research is a general term that encompasses both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The most common approach in qualitative comparative research is case study design. Case studies enable the gathering of rich and dense data precisely because they focus on a specific issue and are set in their own historical time and context (Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) suggests that two or more cases can be compared or a single case can be compared over time or in more than one setting. Case selection is not random, but purposeful and information-oriented, that is to say based on the similarity and differences of the variables (Kaarbo and Beasley, 1999). Thus, careful thought needs to be given to the selection of cases.

Berg-Schlosser and De Meur (2009) suggest considering three types of case study design in qualitative comparative research: the 'most similar' systems design and the 'most different' systems design and a combination of both. The first design refers to a comparison of two or more similar the cases, while the second refers to two or more different cases. The fundamental aim of any comparative research design is to

search for similarities and differences in explaining the phenomenon under study and subsequently, to answer the question(s) of interest.

In the most 'similar systems' design, the cases are matched as closely as possible. In such a design, the focus is on societies and/or institutions. With this macro-level of analysis, the aim is to explain 'empirically the relationship between the core subject and the social reality' (Hantrais, 2009, p61). Explanation needs not to be singular; the data can lead to a combination of justifications that describe the relationship.

In the most 'different systems' design, the cases are different with the exception of one variable, which is hypothesised to be the explanatory variable. In such a design, the focus is often on the individual level. Unlike the most 'similar systems' design, findings are used to eliminate possible reasons for the explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

The level of analysis is also an important research decision, which is driven by the research question(s). Hantrais (2009) distinguishes between the macro and micro-levels. In macro-level research, the units of analysis are 'groups of individuals, systems, structures and processes'; in micro-level research, 'individual activities or behaviours' are the unit of analysis (Hantrais, 2009, p55). Thus, a case can be a particular behaviour or activity, a person, a group of individuals, a country, a political framework or a social/historical phenomenon (Stake, 2005; Yin, 1994).

Hantrais (2009, p2) also indicates that in comparative social science research, where the phenomenon under study is set in different social settings, the units of analysis are often 'societies, countries, cultures, systems, institutions, social structures and change over and space'.

This study adapts the ‘most similar systems’ design to analyse two countries and two groups within each country which are my units of analysis. The details of my design are discussed next.

3.1.5 Choice of research design: a cross-national case study

The phenomenon under study in the present research are the strategies Pakistani and Algerian women deploy to negotiate their educational and professional positions in France and Britain. This study employs a two-level comparative design. The first is the country level in which France and Britain represent units of analysis; the second is the group level in which Pakistani and Algerian women are compared. This research combines both the most ‘similar and different systems’ design.

The most ‘similar systems’ design was applied to the selection of countries. France and Britain were selected as they have several points of reference in common. Both are members of the European Union, have histories of colonialism, are home to the largest numbers of children of immigrants in Western Europe, and these groups have low levels of employment (OECD, 2010). The principal differing point of reference is each country’s political framework, namely multiculturalism in the UK and republicanism in France. Hantrais (1999) argues that in conducting cross-national research, the selection of countries is paramount, as this potentially can affect comparability and, as a result, the quality of the data. The background similarities made these countries strong cases for this qualitative comparative research.

The most ‘different systems’ design was used for the group level analysis. Pakistanis and Algerians were selected on the basis of two main differences: colonial history and migration period (as outlined in Chapter 1). The main point of commonality is that the groups are children of Muslim immigrants – second generations. The aim of the micro-level analysis was to understand the experiences of the women involved as

this offers insights into themes arising from the participants' *own* perceptions by creating rich understandings of social context (Stake, 2005; Yin, 1994).

Vigour (2005) indicates that when researchers use a cross-country comparative research design they are in a better position to establish the underlying structural processes at play within the phenomenon under study and therefore to suggest causal effects. Another strong feature of such an approach is the possibility of providing a multi-dimensional perspective at macro and micro levels. For instance, the comparison of each country's political models combined with the comparison of individuals and groups within each country and across countries offers a strong basis for enhancing the understanding of the Algerian and Pakistani women's educational and professional experiences studied here. By reviewing both top-down and bottom-up literature, this research contextualises social phenomena within its historical period and social and economic context, as well as providing a detailed insider view through data collection and comparative analysis (Vigour, 2005, pp64-94). In that sense, this research is not only descriptive but also explicative. This analysis also includes attention to the researcher's role in the research process, thereby reconciling 'complexity, detail [...] context' and reflexivity (Mangen, 1999, p110) (discussed in section 3.5).

3.2 Data collection

3.2.1 The sample

When reflecting upon the answer for how many interviews are enough, Howard S. Becker (cited in Baker and Edwards, 2012, p15) argued that:

'The only possible answer is to have enough interviews to say what you think is true and not to say things you don't have that number for.'

In addition to bearing in mind the aim of the study, that is analysing minority ethnic women's labour market experiences from their own perspective, it was also important to have sufficient data to enable the three levels of comparison: first, between countries, second, between groups, across and within countries and third, within each group. The targeted groups are Pakistanis and Algerians in each country. The aim was to collect data through in-depth and repeated interviews (discussed later) and so I initially set a relatively low number of participants to recruit, including three Pakistanis and three Algerians in each country. However, this number was not sufficient to allow detailed comparisons between groups. For example, the first three French Pakistani women I interviewed offered two different points of view on issues of racism and discrimination. This prompted me to gather further data until data saturation, that is, until no new information was gained or no new theme appeared during the initial coding process (Guest et al., 2006). Therefore bearing in mind the importance of comparison between groups and across groups, I doubled the final total number of participants as follows:

Table 2: Total number of participants in the main study

	France	UK	Total
Pakistani	6	6	12
Algerian	6	6	12
Total	12	12	24

Although 29 women were interviewed in total¹, 24 women formed the final sample. They were recruited and interviewed over a period of 23 months. The 2010 OECD report on the labour market participation of second generations in OECD countries found a discrepancy between the employment levels of highly educated minority ethnic women and, their

¹ The additional five women were: 3 Moroccan participants and 2 French Algerian women. None of the Moroccan women were part of the final sample as the sample characteristics changed from Moroccans to Algerians (discussed in the last section of this chapter) and the two Algerian women did not meet the educational criteria; something I found out during the interview.

male counterparts and white British/French women with comparable educational qualifications (p39). However, it did not offer any explanation for the persistence of these gaps between minority ethnic women and men. It was therefore crucial to control for the factor of education in order to understand the low level of employment for minority ethnic women *with* high levels of qualification. Thus, the women were recruited on the basis of holding at least a French or British undergraduate degree and being in employment at the time of the first interview. In France, women lived in Paris and the *banlieues*². British participants were located in Oxford, London and Coventry³. Table 3 summarises selected key characteristics of participants' educational level and employment sectors⁴:

Table 3: Summary of key characteristics for all participants

		France	UK	Total
Educational level	Undergraduate	7	4	11
	Postgraduate	5	8	13
Employment sector	Education	-	6	6
	Government	-	2	2
	Marketing, Finance and Banking	2	1	3
	HR	2	-	2
	Other private businesses ¹	6	1	7
	Self-employed	1	1	2
	Unemployed ²	1	1	2

¹These comprise real-estate, aviation, research, dentistry, multi-national company and social organisation.

²When these women were recruited, they were in employment. By the time we met for the interview, one participant had left her job and one's fixed-term contract had ended.

² Parisian suburbs.

³ After the West Midlands, the second highest percentage of Pakistani people is to be found in London (Office for National Statistics report of June 2011).

Oxford is my city of residence.

⁴ A detailed list of characteristics can be found in Appendix 4.

3.2.2 Recruitment methods and issues

Whether recruiting women in France or Britain, I used a sample of opportunity to recruit my participants. However, having few contacts in England, it was more difficult to find British participants than French ones. In England, I approached potential participants (who displayed their religious identity through their dress code) on public transport and in public places (e.g. shopping centres, streets...); I also looked for participants by scrutinising names on university staff lists available online; the initial screening being made through noting Asian/Arabic sounding names. I sent out e-mails explaining my research and requesting an initial meeting to discuss the project. I also contacted mosques in London in search of participants as well as approaching community organisations. In addition, I joined selective *Facebook* groups and online forums in order to promote my research and potentially reach a higher number of people than through the means listed above. I also attended an Algerian community event that enabled me to recruit British Algerian participants. However, these methods did not prove to be very successful recruitment strategies overall since only one British Pakistani and two British Algerian women were recruited through these combined methods. Indeed, hardly any potential participant replied to my requests and the majority of those who responded did not fit the criteria. For example, some did not have any higher education qualification or were simply not of Pakistani/Algerian descent⁵. The majority of the participants were actually found thanks to the snowballing technique as once I interviewed one participant, I requested her help to recruit women in her social network. Through this method, I recruited five of the six British Pakistani women and four of the six British Algerian women in the sample.

In France, the process was slightly easier. Having a good knowledge of Paris and the *banlieues*, I recruited all six French Algerian and three

⁵ This was a result of sending e-mails to people with assumed Arabic and Pakistani sounding names.

French Pakistani participants through snowballing and the remaining French Pakistani participants were approached through a social networking organisation.

Overall, I encountered a similar challenge while recruiting French Pakistanis and British Algerians. As mentioned in Chapter 1, both groups' immigration to their respective countries took place fairly recently. As a result, the groups are very small. It thus took me longer to recruit these women, especially British Algerians, compared to French Algerians and British Pakistanis. For example, my last two British Algerian participants were only interviewed in August 2013 while I was carrying out second interviews with other participants.

Initial contacts were made through e-mails or via telephone. A telephone conversation provided an opportunity for participants to ask me questions prior to making a final decision about taking part in the study. However, in practice, the majority of the participants did not ask for any additional information to that provided in the information leaflet (see Appendix 2). The face-to-face interview was arranged during the first phone conversation.

3.2.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was granted in January 2012 (see Appendix 1). I began collecting data soon after that. Information about the aims and objectives of the study were provided to the participants at several points before the beginning of the first interview:

- Before the interview, when contacting potential interviewees. It was either written (when contacted through e-mails) or oral (when meeting informally).
- During the first meeting, an information leaflet was provided.

- Further explanation was given in person on the day of the interview.

This helped to ensure that all participants were fully informed about the aims and objectives of my investigation. It addressed issues that participants needed to know in order to give informed consent. Moreover, it was made clear to all participants that they retained the right to withdraw from the research at any stage, but that data collected prior to the withdrawal would be kept. Only one French Pakistani participant (given the pseudonym Sonia) withdrew from the research when I contacted her for a second interview. Detailed information about all participants (including Sonia) can be found in Appendix 4.

During the first meeting, I explained to all participants that any data collected would be kept securely (e.g. on a password-protected computer and in locked filing cabinets) and that only I would transcribe the interviews. All audio recordings and transcripts remained confidential to me and to my supervisors. Participants were also informed about the possibility that extracts from their interviews could be cited in the thesis, at conference presentations and in any eventual publications from the project. I also explained that in cases of citations, relevant extracts would be anonymised and that I would remove any identifying features (such as name of company where participants work(ed)). I also discussed confidentiality with participants; that it would be guaranteed unless there were clear and overriding reasons to breach it (e.g. if interviewees reported severe abuse).

There were several ethical issues involved in this research project. One of them was about the relationship between the participants and me, as the researcher, and the subject itself. A chain of events has contributed to the participants' present situation and as a result, I was aware that they could be vulnerable. For instance, I was concerned about painful experiences of racism and/or discrimination which would potentially

create difficulties for participants in telling their stories. These experiences might have involved delicate issues related to their gender, social class, ethnicity and religion or something else. Consequently, I was also concerned about situations where participants would become emotional. Bearing in mind these issues, I was prepared to interrupt interviews and continue at a later date or to give the participant time to compose herself. However, in practice, I did not face such situations.

I was also prepared to respond to issues and concerns which were beyond my role of researcher by giving advice on counselling and referring the women to appropriate people to talk to for support and help, for instance, Domestic Abuse Services, Oxford Community Counselling and Support Group, London Abused Women's Centre and SOS Femmes 93. Yet again, no such issues or concerns occurred.

Additionally I was aware that it might be difficult to draw clear-cut boundaries between my role as a researcher and as a Pakistani Muslim woman. I thought about how participants would perceive me; there could be expectations and assumptions about behaviours and ways of thinking, from both sides (e.g. both groups of participants in both countries and me). I reflected on possible unconscious stereotyping of their experiences on my behalf, due to a projection of my own experience onto participants. This was a highly challenging task as it could potentially hurt them, without me even realising it and influence the direction of the interview. To address this, I asked open questions (i.e. avoiding leading questions) and let the participants speak freely (e.g. not interrupting and/or finishing their sentences); the latter proved to be the most difficult aspect to achieve (discussed at the end of this chapter). However, on the other hand, the existence of an assumed shared knowledge and history led many women to talk about issues based on an assumed understanding. How my (perceived) identity affected the interview process will be fully discussed at the end of the thesis in the reflexivity section.

I was also prepared for interviews with Pakistani and/or Algerian friends and family members but in practice, I did not know any of my participants prior to the interview. In some cases, I knew other members of the participants' family especially in France since I recruited most of the participants through personal contacts. I knew three participants' younger sisters since they were friends with my own sisters.

Being aware of all these aspects prior to conducting the interviews helped in pursuing a clear discussion with participants. For example, I made sure to ask further explanation when I felt that participants were leaving part of their stories untold because of assumptions of shared understandings (e.g. reasons for getting married).

3.3 The interviews

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviewing

Qualitative research includes different types of interview such as unstructured, semi-structured and focus group (Bryman, 2011). I needed to find a style of interviewing that was appropriate for the purpose of the study and its social constructionist standpoint, that is to say, acknowledging that the interviewer plays an active role in the construction of meaning (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). I therefore used semi-structured interviewing, as this allowed me to direct questions in pursuit of understanding a specific phenomenon (e.g. participants' work experiences), as well as to leave enough space for participants to describe and tell their own stories (Kvale, 1996). I encouraged participants to talk about various topics by asking a broad question such as 'how did you get your current job?' This allowed them to tell detailed stories, including elements that are important to *them*. This form of interviewing thus allowed insights into the women's professional and everyday experiences, and their relationships with others, which also contribute to their positioning. This allowed an exploration of the women's self-perceptions, as well as their understandings of how others see them.

Asking questions about education, family, professional and everyday life proved to be a useful strategy which allowed 'identity to emerge' through the women's story telling in relation to various factors such as gender, ethnicity, education, social class and religion (Anthias, 2002).

The aim of the interviews was to get an in-depth understanding of participants' professional experiences along with their educational background and their points of view on issues such as the perception of Muslims in the West. I started by asking broad questions about their education such as 'what did you study at university?' This allowed me to guide participants towards my topic of interest and then allowed them to tell me what they thought was important to them (Bernard, 2011). While probing, I paid particular attention to avoiding asking leading questions and to using participants' own language. I then followed up with questions about their employment. However, in practice, topics of employment and education overlapped on many occasions in discussions, for example, on future employment opportunities that would require additional qualifications. Once participants were settled into the interview, I brought up topics that required greater thinking and reflection, such as the issue of Islam in the West and the professional status of minority ethnic women. At that point, I also urged participants to compare France and Britain when possible. Indeed, many interviewees either had personal knowledge of the other country or had experienced it while travelling for holidays or for studies. These topics allowed the women's views to emerge in relation to their perceived positions in society and how they would situate themselves within it. It also enabled me to elicit identity issues that shape the women's professional positions and their relationships with others within their workplace environment and society in general.

Nevertheless, there are several disadvantages associated with this type of method which need to be acknowledged here. This research is a comparative study, hence, there was a paramount necessity to collect

comparable data. As mentioned above, one benefit of semi-structured interviews is the ability for researchers' to use cues or prompts in order to encourage participants to discuss a response in more detail (Fox, 2009). Yet, this benefit, in turn, can lead to the collection of disparate data from one interview to the other (Patton, 2002). Indeed, the answers to unplanned questions provided by participants and the discussion that follows is likely to be unique. Although semi-structured interviews offer more comparability than other methods such as unstructured interviews, comparability is limited across the dataset. For example, I asked all participants about the reasons why they went to university. Although, several mentioned parental influence, the discussions that followed were not necessarily similar in content. For example, some mentioned the need to support their parents financially, while others reported making their parents proud within their social networks and so on. Thus, the responses participants gave me were very diverse.

I addressed this issue partially by asking all participants similar initial questions and by keeping in mind my three key areas of investigations (i.e. educational, professional and general social experiences). This facilitated thematic comparisons of participants' views. Thus, despite the comparability challenge, semi-structured interviewing method proved very useful for this study compared to other type of methods, such as questionnaires, which would have provided limited information and given me no opportunity to gain in-depth insights into my participants' stories and to answer my research questions.

Other limitations of semi-structured interviews, which affected this study, were the dynamic between my participants and me, and how my social positioning contributed to co-construction of the data produced. These two points will be discussed separately in this chapter in Sections 3.3.4 (reflections on the interviewing procedure) and 3.5.3 (reflections on researcher's positionality).

3.3.2 The interview setting

Each interview lasted on average one and a half hours; the longest lasted three hours and the shortest half an hour. In the latter case, the participant agreed to an hour long interview. However, on the day, due to professional commitments, the participant (given the pseudonym Reema) could only meet for half an hour. Besides, as we managed to meet only the day before I returned to Britain, I was not able to see her on a later date. This participant did not take part in the second interview stage.

For the first interview, I met all participants in person except for three participants with whom I conducted a telephone interview. Those three participants were based in London. They had very busy schedules and found it difficult to accommodate face-to-face interviews. All three suggested telephone interviews, although I suggested waiting longer until we could meet in person. My initial apprehension was that telephone interviews might produce poorer quality data and make comparisons difficult, because I would be unable to view the participant in her setting and gather paralinguistic data (Opdenakker, 2006). Another practical concern was the audio-recording, for which I had to practise in order to find the best way of recording effectively. However, the use of different interviewing modes did not affect the quality of data as I initially feared. Instead, it was the participants' approach to the interview that produced differences (discussed at the end of this section).

The first interviews took place between January 2012 and September 2012. Often, venues were selected by participants. When they let me make the decision, my priority was to find a place which was in a reasonable travelling distance (i.e. for participants and me), and which was suitable for interviewing, in terms of noise. The interviews were held in participants' offices or office lobbies when possible; otherwise, we met in cafés or parks.

I prioritised home settings when possible, in order to prevent transcription difficulties (i.e. noise in public places, such as busy cafés) encountered during interviews I carried out at the beginning of the process (e.g. January 2012). I tried to avoid lunch and evening hours but unfortunately, those were the only times that some participants were available. Moreover, home settings seemed to provide a more comfortable and relaxed environment and a better 'atmosphere conducive to sharing personal information' (Elwood and Martin, 2000, p651); something that was not always possible in public places. For example, some participants would speak in a very low voice and/or look around before responding to a question. When interviews in participants' homes were not possible, I first tried to arrange for the interview to take place at the university (for British participants). My last option was a public place, in most cases a coffee shop.

From October 2012 to August 2013, I conducted follow-up interviews. Re-interviewing helped to check previous understandings and allowed me to explore any 'additional thoughts and feelings about, or reactions to, the first interview' (May, 1991, cited in Knox and Burkard, 2009, p6). These interviews were more focused in terms of questioning and probing. The second interviews enabled me to go back to participants I interviewed at the beginning of the process (e.g. in January 2012) and to ask new questions and discuss new topics that arose during later interviews (e.g. September 2012) with other participants (Charmaz, 2002).

Second interviews were conducted in more disparate modes than were the first interviews. All UK second interviews were carried out via phone or Skype during summer 2013. This was mainly because all but one participant lived in London and this meant further travelling costs for me. In France, I conducted the interviews while visiting my family. Upon participants' request, I met in person four of the six participants who agreed to take part in a second interview. Two of them agreed to reply to questions electronically via e-mail. For these participants, I sent one

question at a time. This gave me the possibility to ‘tailor’ the second question after receiving the response to the first one. In total, I carried out thirteen second interviews.

3.3.3 Recording and transcription

All interviews were tape-recorded with participants’ consent, except one. This British Algerian woman (given the pseudonym Karima) did not wish her voice to be recorded despite reassuring her about confidentiality and anonymity. She did not give any particular reason but I heard discomfort in her voice while she requested not to be recorded. I prepared for that non-recorded interview by using sheets marked up with separate sections (e.g. question; participant’s answer; follow up questions). I paid careful attention to distinguishing between her words and my own. Yet, despite thorough preparation to facilitate note taking, I found that exercise very challenging (see section below). I put the notes together within hours of completing the interview in order to avoid losing any information.

All recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim; each pause, emphasis, interruption was transcribed and paralinguistic features, such as gestures (when unexpected) were noted on the transcript. In order to capture changes in emotion, I further added notes when possible. For example, although she remained physically very calm, one French Algerian participant’s tone and pitch of voice changed and conveyed anger when talking about the perception of professional Maghrebi women in France. The transcription conventions I used are presented in Appendix 5.

3.3.4 Reflecting upon the interviewing procedure

According to how participants engaged with the interview procedure, they could broadly be categorised into two groups: (1) interviewees who took the lead and (2) interviewees who let me guide.

In the first case, some participants took the lead during interviews and shared stories at length. They provided a detailed and chronological background for their answers. These interviews lasted the longest, as the respondents did not leave much room for me to interrupt. Besides, as one of the aims of the research was to understand participants' experiences through their own words and let them tell what is important to them, I decided not to interrupt, as long as the story was not completely drifting away. For example, some participants started answering questions by sharing experiences of other people first (e.g. a sibling, friend or work colleague) rather than talking about themselves. In such cases, after a few minutes I tried to shift the conversation back to the participant. This tendency to take charge of the interview could be attributed to some women's talkative nature, which was mentioned by a few of them at the beginning of the interview. However, it seemed evident that some participants had a clear idea about what they wanted to say and how they wanted to say it. This became apparent as their accounts were well-organised, refined and given with confidence. These types of accounts are often observed in narrative research with unstructured interviews, where participants have shared their stories at length on previous occasions (Riessman, 2003). The emergence of this type of account could also be attributed to participants' personal characteristics. All these participants were mature women, over thirty, with family responsibilities, who have been working for the past ten years at least. At times, participants went on a journey of 'self-discovery', seemingly thinking out loud. This was apparent when they drifted away from the initial question and then often stopped abruptly at the end of their account and asked me to repeat the question as they had forgotten it. These types of accounts revealed the impact of certain issues in their lives such as the importance of how they are positioned by others in society.

While more negotiations were required on my behalf with the first category of interviewees, with the second category, I explicitly targeted

discussion on my topics of interest. These participants did not seem to be 'experienced' story tellers, since they often replied with short answers, straight to the point, limiting answers to my question (often fact-based accounts sometimes given in a chronological order); some participants took their time to answer certain questions and others reflected on the topic as they gave their answers (i.e. hesitations; self-corrections). With these participants, I asked broad questions such as 'can you tell me about your choice to become an accountant?' which gave them a topical but 'empty page to fill out' (Witzel, 2000, p5). The semi-structured approach thus proved to be very useful in these cases as I was able to probe participants' answers (Kvale, 1996). However, continuous probing to get more information on a given answer seemed to create discomfort, as this was perceived to be due to misunderstandings on my part. Similarly, some participants' reluctance to respond seemed a reluctance to assert a point of view or to answer in the affirmative (Holstein and Gubrium, 2003). Other participants showed their annoyance with a sigh and some clearly avoided some questions, changing the subject by offering an alternative description (to use Strivers and Hayashi's (2010) term). In my case, respondents sometimes offered a new version of their initial answer instead of replying to the question posed. In such instances, it became very challenging to resist re-iterating my initial probing and instead, I decided to follow on with a new question or to follow up questions that emerged from the new answer in order to avoid further resistance from the interviewee.

In both cases, the use of semi-structured interviews left enough space for participants to tell what was important to them. Similarly, the content and quality of the data gathered through telephone interviews did not differ from the data gathered during face-to-face interviews, except in one case, where it differed markedly in content and length. Therefore, data seemed to have varied from one respondent to another according to their engagement with the interview rather than the interview technique adopted (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004). A discussion of how my role as a

'researcher-researched' affected the interviews is given in the Conclusions of the thesis in the reflexivity section.

Data collection through *repeat* semi-structured interviews also affected the interview process. In total, twenty-two women were approached for a second interview since two participants were no longer reachable. In these latter cases, both women's home addresses, telephone numbers and e-mails were no longer valid. Only thirteen accepted to be re-interviewed. Since participation to this research was voluntary, one participant simply refused to participate; while others mentioned busy schedules (even for a Skype or phone interview). As a result, the in-depth understanding of each participant's experiences differed since the impossibility to probe some of them about initial responses restricted my understanding of some aspects of these participants' life stories.

This in turn affected the analysis of the data from a comparative perspective. Indeed, as I worked through the pilot study and the first 'round' of interviews, unexpected topics of discussions came to light. For example, it was only when I finished the first 'round' of interviews with British participants that issues of family relationships and representations in the media emerged as important topics. Thus, while I included these for the first 'round' of interviews with French participants, I was unable to ask similar questions to some British women who were my first interviewees and who did not participate in the second 'round' of interviews. Similarly, interviews carried out during the final phase provided richer data since these benefited from initial analysis and a better understanding on my part.

3.3.5 Discussions of alternative research methods

When framed within a social constructionist perspective, narrative research views individuals' lived experiences as co-constructed between the people involved in the stories. This type of inquiry aims to gather

accounts as told by participants, allowing them to make sense of their experiences, at their own pace and in the order they wish (Miller, 2005). In that respect, participants give meanings to their lives as they tell their stories. This makes storytelling an important feature in some qualitative research since it enables understandings of how an individual's social life is shaped and what aspects of their life events are *relevant to them* (Andrews et al., 2008).

There are no specific data collection methods associated with narrative research but biographical methods, also referred to as narrative interviews, are often used to encourage an informant to tell a story and share their perspective about a specific event in their life, in detail. This type of interview does not follow the usual 'question-answer' structure. The researcher's influence is kept to a minimum; she/he plays the role of a listener, who does not select the topics of discussion, impose the questions or use words other than the ones shared by the informant (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). Questioning is limited to understanding the chain of events shared by the informant and does not 'invit[e] justifications and rationalizations' (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000, p7).

The use of semi-structured interviewing style instead of narrative interviews was important for my research because I wanted to examine how (potential) earlier disadvantages associated with parents' migration history influenced Pakistani and Algerian women's educational and professional lives in France and Britain. Although the importance was on understanding how the women themselves make sense of their experiences, I wanted to gather their perspectives on *key topics*, including the family, their education, their professional career and their position in a republican or multicultural society. Therefore, it was necessary for me to ask comparable questions (such as what is your highest educational level?) and also to direct the conversations and introduce new questions in order to solicit justifications and rationalisations (such as, for example, the responses to 'why did you

study for this degree?'). This is a mode of interviewing that Jovchelovitch and Bauer (2000) argue should be avoided in narrative interviews.

Thus, although narrative interviews would have provided greater insights into my participants' lived experiences and aspects of importance to them, it would not have enabled me fully to address my research questions.

3.4 Process of analysis

3.4.1 The use of thematic analysis

There is no prescribed way to analyse qualitative data and especially while using a case study approach because of an absence of 'routine procedures' to follow for conducting the analysis (Yin, 2009, p66). The aim of the study and the evidence collected guide the analytic procedure. In order to produce a detailed and exhaustive analysis of my cases (Stake, 2005; Yin, 1994), I adopted thematic analysis. Although there is no 'identifiable heritage' in thematic analysis, such as in grounded theory or critical discourse analysis (Bryman, 2008, p554), some researchers have suggested a framework to synthesise and analyse research material regardless of the research design (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Hartley, 2004; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The aim is to search through all the data for any recurrent patterns that can be developed into sub-themes and then principal themes to be reported in the write up. Braun and Clarke (2006, p87) offer a step by step guide to thematic analysis as follows:

- 1) Familiarizing yourself with your data
- 2) Generating initial codes
- 3) Searching for themes
- 4) Reviewing themes
- 5) Defining and naming themes
- 6) Producing the report

After conducting the pilot study (see last section), the second step began as soon as the transcription phase started by paying careful attention to details such as word stresses and repetitions, which gave me an indication of issues important to participants. Once all interviews were transcribed, a number of themes emerged such as the importance of the identity attributed to a participant by others. I then used NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software, to code my data (i.e. to categorise it). Through initial coding, I put the data into broad categories that best described specific interview statements. For instance, I used the category 'work environment' to label responses that described participants' relationships with work colleagues, work-related incidents and any other aspect that referred to participants' experiences at work. While defining categories, I also created new ones to suit specific excerpts of the data. For instance, I separately categorised participants' responses about experiences in employment and while unemployed. This initial coding also helped me understand participants' views on different topics. As I moved between interviews, I started to see initial differences. The next step was to prioritise the themes by looking at what was common across the data set but also what best captured the women's professional experiences, accounts of their (self-)positioning and identification processes. During this initial stage, I familiarised myself with the data, which helped me pinpoint topics and statements that needed further investigation during later interviews. It was also a good exercise in mapping the data for a more detailed analysis. When a participant kept re-iterating an issue, whether initially linked to my question or not, I pulled together all relevant extracts and examined how the participant talked about it.

In practice, steps 3 to 5 as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) overlapped as I kept re-defining the themes and creating sub-themes to fit subsequent interview extracts. I also kept creating new categories, as well as deleting some. This was partly triggered by 'disconfirming data',

as suggested by Hartley (2004, p330), that is to say data that would not fit into any already-existing categories and demanded the creation of a new category; and at the same time pulling in extracts already assigned to other categories. After all first interviews were coded, I came up with five main themes:

- Work-related experiences
- Importance of educational choices
- Claims and/or rejection of ethnic/national identity
- Perceived place of Muslim women in France/UK
- Importance of the media in portraying Muslims in the West

In practice, I went through these stages searching for themes, reviewing themes and defining and naming themes, over and over again, until the final transcript from the second interviews was completely coded. Reflections during the coding process were central to the refinement stage. Indeed, once all interviews (first and second) were coded, these themes were then reviewed and re-defined to form the final themes that are reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6:

- Belonging/non-belonging and identity issues in society (Chapter 4)
- Education as a gateway to professional jobs (Chapter 5)
- Inclusion/exclusion and the labour market (Chapter 6)

These three themes were the most dominant across the data. This also means that some other themes which initially seemed very important, such as the role of the media which emerged during the pilot study became 'secondary' as the analysis went on, simply because it merged with other data to form one main theme (i.e. identity issues in society). Moreover, I also had to make decisions bearing in mind the comparative element. So for example, some French participants strongly emphasised the existence of a racist school career advisory system, a situation British

participants did not report experiencing to the same extent. This difference is very important in comparing school experiences across groups *within* France, but is of very limited use in comparing experiences across countries. Therefore, despite being analytically dense, this theme of institutional racism became a secondary theme.

3.4.2 Representativeness, validity and reliability

Representativeness, validity and reliability are terms predominantly associated with quantitative research (Bryman, 2011). In their discussion of the relevance of these terms for qualitative research, Ritchie and Lewis (2003) indicate that while some researchers reject these terms (arguing that qualitative research is not concerned with measurement issues); others suggest that these terms are applicable but need to be redefined. Thus, for example, many qualitative researchers are concerned with issues of trustworthiness, rather than issues of reliability and validity for evaluating the rigour of their research (Brannen and Nilsen, 2011; Krefting, 1991).

The present study is a qualitative investigation that focused on the professional experiences of twenty-four women, a relatively small sample. The aim was to understand the women's situation through their own accounts, from their own perspective on issues important to them. My study did not aim to achieve external validity, that is to say, the aim was not to generalise findings as in quantitative research. In qualitative research, generalisability is not so much so about the generalisability of findings but about theoretical generalisability (Brannen and Nilsen, 2011). This type of generalisability is concerned with theory-building which is 'deemed to be of wider, or even universal, application' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003, p264). Informed by Pakistani and Algerian women's experiences, I aimed to offer a conceptual understanding of the position of second generation minority ethnic graduates in France and Britain.

Internal validity, which refers to the correspondence between the theoretical framework and research observations in quantitative studies, is also the subject of discussions in qualitative research. In this comparative case study, the objective was to build a possible explanation for each country and then offer comparative insights into the similarities and/or differences observed across groups and countries. The aim was to offer an explanation from the point of view of those at the heart of the issue (i.e. the women themselves, by using a bottom-up strategy). It is worth noting that causal explanations were often given by participants themselves in understanding their own situation. These differed from one participant to another within a group and across groups.

A final concern is linked to the reliability of the data collected. Given the qualitative nature of this study, it is possible that participants did not tell their stories truthfully or left out some aspects (discussed further in the Conclusions of the thesis). However, the aim was to explore how the women understood and perceived their experiences rather than how truthful they were in their accounts. The issue of reliability can be addressed by offering a guide to conducting the research for other investigators, so that they could understand how I used my methods and how my own position in this research process shaped the research procedure and its findings (Yin, 2009).

3.5 Challenges of the study

3.5.1 Challenges associated with cross-national research

There were two challenges I faced while conducting my research: (1) the comparability of groups across countries and (2) the translation of interview guides and extracts.

To ensure comparability across groups, I needed to take into account the specificities of both countries' educational systems when recruiting participants with high levels of qualifications. The 2010 OECD report on

the socio-economic situation of second generations in OECD countries defines women with high levels of qualification as those who had 'a first or second stage of tertiary education' and obtained at least an NVQ level 4 that is an Associate degree or above (e.g. Bachelor's, Master's) (p52). In France, students have the possibility to pursue higher education qualifications either by doing a 'classic' Bachelor's degree or a vocational degree such as the Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) or the Diplôme Universitaire Technique (DUT), which are two-year qualifying degrees. The British equivalents are the Higher National Diploma and the Higher National Certificate respectively. Although the BTS and the DUT are obtained after two years of study, both qualifications are officially recognised as a two-year Associate University Degree. Since the European university reforms were passed through the Bologna Accords at the turn of the millennium, students have been encouraged to pursue a third year of study which, for those pursuing a BTS or DUT, leads to the equivalent of a technical Bachelor's degree in Britain. In order to explore the social phenomenon mentioned above, I recruited graduate women only: these are women holding at least a Bachelor's degree in Britain and in France, at least a BTS or DUT degree.

Similarly, it was important to be aware of differences and/or commonalities regarding country specific institutions such as work-related support agencies for young people. Brannen and Nilsen (2011) indicate that knowledge about institutional differences and/or commonalities allows researchers 'to capture contextual levels' in 'individual case analysis' (pp614-615). Thus, for example, in my study, the majority of French working mothers returned to full-time work after childbirth/maternity leave while their British peers took career breaks and/or return to work on a part-time basis. Knowledge of the 'better' availability of childcare provision in France compared to Britain helped me contextualise participants' accounts (especially since many participants did not even mention this topic).

Another important feature in this cross-national research was the understanding of social class and the categorisation of my participants according to that factor. Although in both countries, the notion of social class is grounded in economic understandings, perceptions of social class among the French and the British differ. Based on the analysis of national and European surveys and case studies on perceptions of social class inequalities among the working classes, Gallie (1983) found that French and British working class people's attitudes to economic inequalities differ, partly explained by their own sense of identification in society. In Britain, he suggests that people show 'indifference to the persistence of inequalities between the rich and the poor' because of a rejection of social class membership (seen as objective and external to their personal/daily lives); while French people show great resentment because of their employment experiences, 'a sense of dissatisfaction' and 'political discontent' (p85). More importantly, Gallie argues that British people believe in possibilities for upward social mobility (which makes social class inequalities flexible and therefore reinforces the idea of an individualised and meritocratic society); while French workers view class divisions as rigid (which reinforces a sense of collective social class identity and resentment towards unequal social structures). This difference in feelings of social class awareness and belonging will be discussed in the next three chapters. In order to obtain a comparable group across countries, I used a European classification model which adopts a Weberian approach to social class, focusing on participants' market position; I attributed social class categories to participants according to their parents' professional occupation (i.e. family background), as reported by participants (see Appendix 6).

Translation is another challenge that can occur in multilingual research projects. No interpreter was required during the data collection, as having grown-up in France and since my Bachelor's and Master's degrees were in English, I speak and write French and English fluently. Understanding nuances in English was a potential problem but in practice, even this was

not an issue. My understanding of participants' responses whether in French or English was not compromised in any way. However, translation in this cross-cultural research brought about two issues: (1) how well translated was the end 'product' and (2) the impact of my own position in the translation process. I had to take into account my own background and experiences of living in France and Britain while undertaking this research; something that proved to be of great advantage (to a certain extent) during the translation procedure. Indeed, the translation process was not a mere linguistic exercise; understanding cultural aspects of participants' environment was also an important factor in providing as accurate a translation as possible (Spivak, 1992). Having grown up in a similar social and cultural environment to my French participants, I understood relatively easily the meanings associated with certain words or topics. For example, in common usage, the word 'French' is used to refer to white French individuals as an ethnicity marker as well as a nationality (although this is also the case in Britain – 'white' being equated with Britishness/Englishness – but I was not aware of this usage at first). Understanding this specific use was crucial in translating certain statements using the word 'French' which could, depending on the context, refer to French nationality or French cultural identity.

Shared ethnic, gendered and religious identities facilitated communication (to a certain extent) since I easily picked up on words/sentences spoken in Urdu (my first language), even some in Arabic (thanks to personal knowledge) and also words commonly used to refer to religious aspects such as names of prayers. However, my insider position had its own limitation. It was very important not to impose my own understanding on participants' accounts, but rather to seek further clarification in order to avoid any pitfalls (Temple and Young, 2004). Therefore, asking for additional explanations was crucial. Some of the translation tasks were not challenging, for example, translating interview questions from English to French and vice versa. Importance was given to the semantic 'transfer of meaning' rather than the grammatical content

(Temple and Young, 2004, p172). Conveying the meaning of the question prevailed over reproducing the grammatical structure of the question asked. However, in some cases, the limitation of my own understanding of the English language and commonly used phrases made the translation process more difficult. For example, the question '*comment as-tu trouvé ce poste?*' which aimed to find out how participants got their jobs could not be translated literally into 'how did you find your job?'. Indeed, when I initially asked this question to English-speaking participants, I realised that they would always respond by describing the likes and/or dislikes about their professional role rather than the means by which they got their job. Once I understood the difference in the use of the verb *to find* as opposed to *to get*, I changed that question to 'how did you get your job?'. Moreover, some French words have different connotations in English and so a direct translation was not possible. Another example is the use of the French word '*natif*' which literally means 'native' in English but, 'white French/British' was preferred over 'native' as it raises questions of belonging and exclusion in British society. Ensuring 'conceptual equivalence' was therefore very important and for that matter cultural specificities needed also to be taken into account while reporting data from the semi-structured interviews carried out in France (Birbili, 2000). Similarly, I needed to pay attention to culturally marked linguistic features. For instance, the emphatic subject '*moi, je*', which is very common in oral French, was very difficult to translate in writing; 'me/myself, I' did not seem 'natural' in oral English and there was not a very satisfactory option. I opted for 'I' and underlined it, so that the reader knows it is being stressed. All in all, my main concern was to remain as close as I could to my data and not lose the original substance during the translation.

The above mentioned difficulties were the only ones I encountered during the interview process and/or the translation phase.

3.5.2 Sampling methods and issues

In this study, the aim was to gather data that would enable comparisons within groups, across groups within one country and between groups across countries. The main focus was on the two minority ethnic groups namely Pakistani and Algerian women who were selected, bearing in mind the issue of the labour market participation of second generations. Thus, all Pakistani participants were children of immigrant parents, who settled in Britain in the 1960s and in France in the late 1970s. Similarly, Algerian women's parents immigrated to France in the 1960s and to Britain in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It is important to underline that I was not looking for a particular age group; yet the participants recruited fitted in two age groups: 23-28 (14 women) and 32-45 (10 women).

In addition to participants' status as citizens of their country of residence by birth, there were two other selection criteria: educational qualification and employment status. As explained earlier, I recruited university graduate women only. This enabled me to look at the labour market from a social class perspective. University graduates belong to the middle classes by virtue of education. Several studies have demonstrated that through educational success, minority ethnic students (but also white students) from the working classes can experience upward social mobility and therefore be part of the middle class cohort (as discussed in Chapter 1).

I decided to look only for women who were in employment rather than unemployed at least at the time of recruitment. In doing so, I was certain to gather data on their experiences while in employment and to question participants about times they might have been unemployed in the past.

Having discussed my research design and methods, in this final section of this chapter, I will first present the aims and findings of the pilot study

which involved Moroccan participants and then, I will discuss the lessons learnt for the main study.

3.5.3 Reflexive thoughts on the researcher's positionality

Before I began the data collection, I reflected upon my own position as a researcher and how my 'emotional responses' to participants would influence the interpretations of their accounts (Mauthner and Doucet, 2003, p418). The main aspect I focused on was my ethnic and gender identities. In their discussion on reflexive accounts, Mauthner and Doucet (2003) wrote:

'the benefit of hindsight can deepen [the] understanding of *what* is influencing knowledge production and *how* this is occurring' (p419, emphasis in original).

This statement fits well in this study since the realisation of my own position as a researcher who was part of the research population shaped my reading of the data. As a result, I changed the way I reported my findings from how I did so in earlier writings and how I presented the findings in this thesis. Despite my initial reluctance to accept it, I am indeed a 'researcher researched', since I belong to the groups this study examined. As a second generation minority ethnic graduate⁶, who has lived in France and Britain, I have experienced the educational systems and the labour markets in both countries. Yet, I resisted viewing myself as an insider and using my insider knowledge in the initial analysis. For example, Mahy, a French Pakistani participant, stated repeatedly that there is gender equality in her family, which I framed initially as a positive feature, yet I disregarded the fact that she was married at age 18 before her elder brother (which she explained as 'the right time for [her] to get

⁶ Depending on how one defines the category 'second generation' (see the introductory chapter), it could be argued that I am actually a (European) immigrant in Britain, the 1.5 generation in France but a second generation in The Netherlands.

married'). Knowing that daughters are married off at a young age in order to 'protect' the family's honour is indeed a question of gender, but not one of equality as Mahy stated. I did not use my own knowledge of cultural and religious practices to contextualise Mahy and other participants' accounts, often taking these at face value (although this could also be due to my lack of experience as a researcher and analyst). Mahy's 'early' marriage impacted on her future life decisions, since she dropped out of medical studies (stating that 'it was too long'). Yet, I knew that being in full-time education prevents women (and, indeed men) from applying for their partner's visa in France. Mahy's decision to drop out of medical studies was not only linked to the length of study but also to her marital situation; a particularity which I did not recognise at first. My initial identity 'denial' prevented me from going beyond the descriptive to the analytical. This was partly due to my resistance to acknowledge my own identities, not simply as Muslim and Dutch but also Pakistani, French and British (and Algerian as some of my participants described me).

Some participants attributed a particular understanding of my ethnic origin (regardless of whether I agreed or not) and/or religion, positioning me as similar to themselves. This influenced the way I presented myself. For example, I did not forcefully emphasise my Dutch identity and even in the few cases where I did, many French participants replied 'but you're still like us' since for them, our religion and parents' migratory history 'overshadowed' our citizenship differences. In Britain, either religious similarity 'overshadowed' ethnic and national differences (i.e. with Algerian participants); or ethnic and religious similarities 'overshadowed' citizenship differences (i.e. with Pakistani participants). Put simply, all French and British participants perceived 'our' similarities to be more important than 'our' differences which further facilitated my attributed position as a 'friend' and/or 'sister'.

This perception of a similar identity also influenced the ways in which the women presented themselves in the interview setting, the information

they shared and how they shared it. As my understanding of the issues involved in the construction of second generation graduate women's experiences grew, I found that I started to identify strongly with both French and British participants' accounts. The discovery of my own, what Parker and Song (1995) termed, 'cultural identities' (as a second generation minority ethnic individual), the re-discovery of some previously assessed positions (as a Muslim woman) and reflections on my sense of (non-)belonging helped me pinpoint assumed shared knowledge infused in the data of Pakistani participants and, to my surprise, (since I am not from an Algerian background), among Algerians too. Reinharz and Chase (2003, pp221-234) suggest that sharing similar social positions facilitates access to perceptions and eases rapport building. This seems to have led some participants to share their views and speak up very openly (including statements such as 'white women are not respectable'; 'Maghrebi women deserve to be discriminated against'). Nevertheless, expectations and assumptions about behaviours and ways of thinking created challenging situations at times. On two occasions, I had to face a situation where my views were opposed to those of the women I was interviewing. For example, Ruksana and Reema, two French Pakistani participants, presented strong views about other Muslim women and both required my agreement and used expressions such as 'you probably agree' or 'you know how we think/are'. I personally disagreed on all occasions. Their views raised strong emotions and I could not believe what they said. However, I remained composed and listened carefully. I made sure not to show any sign of agreement or disagreement and it is maybe this non-response that led them to seek my opinion and approval. It was also very important for interviewees not to feel being judged in order for them to respond and share their views freely. Reinharz and Chase (2003) describe such an attitude as a 'tight-lipped' approach, seen as necessary in gaining trust when there is a conflict in perspectives (p228). It may also have been the case that if the women regarded me as a 'friend'/'sister', they might have expected me to agree with them and since I did not show any such sign, they explicitly asked me if I agreed.

The above encounters were based on the participants' assumption of commonalities based on my attributed identity as a Muslim Pakistani as opposed to Muslim Algerian woman. At other times, accounts were produced based on assumed national differences. Ruksana, a French Pakistani participant, fully narrated the 2012 'terrorist' attacks in France⁷ claiming that I am 'British now' and so therefore, no longer aware of current affairs in France. While I am not suggesting that I feel French, the point here is that while sometimes I was perceived as a member of a similar group, during the interview process, my attributed identity shifted so that I became the 'outsider', the one that belongs to another group (in this case, British). This was a recurrent process among both French Algerian and Pakistani participants who became aware of my personal situation (i.e. living in England). I often shared this information at the beginning of the interview when participants read the information leaflet and asked about my British university. The contextual allocation of my identities – ethnic and national – further strengthened my belief in being a 'researcher researched', who was attributed several positions during the interview; the same positions I investigated for my participants.

However, it should also be remembered that participants might not have disclosed all the details of their lives in their accounts. 'Racial Matching', as Twine (2000, p7) suggests, or in my case, sharing ethnic/gendered/religious characteristics with some of participants, did not necessarily help to produce full disclosure of information. Seeing me as a member of their group and assuming that I endorse ideas similar to the larger religious and/or ethnic groups might have prevented some participants from revealing information not seen as acceptable by the larger ethnic and/or religious groups or for fear of being judged. For example, when I interviewed Mahy (one of the French Pakistani participants described above), she 'revealed' that at one point in time she was not very religious (i.e. would not pray or wear the headscarf). This

⁷ This refers to the Mohammad Mérah affair explained in Chapter 4 (p156).

seemed an 'accidental' disclosure (despite the fact that I did not wear the headscarf) as she quickly and repeatedly mentioned thereafter, that now, she is no longer like that and how important religion is for her and how it has changed her life and affected her life choices. Her quick change of statement, led me to believe that this was information not initially intended to be shared, and that she perhaps felt that I would judge her on this or assume common worldviews.

All in all, the social constructionist approach taken in this study proved to be very useful in allowing me to re-think my role within the interview setting, but also within the research itself which ultimately impacted on the production of knowledge, which evolved, shifted and changed between the data collection and presentation of findings stages.

3.6 The pilot study and the professional experiences of Moroccan women

3.6.1 The aim

The pilot study was designed to provide initial insights into the women's professional experiences in relation to various factors such as gender, ethnicity, social class and religion. My strategy at that time was first to develop my understanding of the women's educational background, and then, in subsequent interviews, to talk about their work experiences and perceptions of being a Muslim woman, a strategy very different to what I actually did after the pilot study (discussed below). The purpose was then to get a broad understanding of the women's educational background and its impact on their early professional lives, to shape the research design and learn interviewing techniques.

3.6.2 The sample

Pilot interviews were conducted in February and March 2012 and involved three participants: two British Pakistani and one French

Moroccan⁸ women. British participants were recruited through university staff lists available online; a friend put me in contact with the French participant. Initially, I started my investigation looking at Pakistani and Moroccan women as my research population. However, the aim was to select women belonging to the largest Muslim minority ethnic group in each country; these are Pakistanis in Britain but Algerians in France (followed by Moroccans and then Tunisians) (Azoulay, 2009). As soon as I became aware of this population ratio in France, I changed my sample. Unfortunately this did not happen until after the pilot study and until I had started collecting data for the main study. By then I had interviewed eight women, including two more Moroccans (in addition to the one interviewed during the pilot). Here, I report findings on the three Moroccan women only⁹. The transcription conventions I used are presented in Appendix 5.

3.6.3 The experiences of Moroccan women in French and British labour markets

Table 4 summarises key characteristics of the three Moroccan women interviewed between January and April 2012.

⁸ Initially, I planned to interview two French Moroccans. However, due to health problems, one of the French participants dropped out.

⁹ There were two British Pakistani participants in the pilot study. The first participant was not re-interviewed as the education criterion was not met.; she was just completing her Bachelor's degree. However, this interviewee's participation helped me to get an initial insight into Pakistani women's experiences in Britain. The second participant (pseudonym, Raheela) was included in the main study. Her findings are reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4: Key characteristics of Moroccan participants in the pilot study

Pseudonyms ¹⁰	Country of birth	Highest degree	Employment
Aicha	France	BTS ¹¹	Administrator
Nesrine	France	Bachelor	District supervisor of education
Hafsa	UK	Masters	Research officer

Although I interviewed only three Moroccan women, there were similarities in their accounts that became particularly apparent when compared to the Algerian women I interviewed later. Indeed, notable similarities in both groups' accounts were apparent in relation to their experiences in the labour market. One theme which became central to the thesis is examined here: the contextualised nature of professional experiences constructed along religious, educational and national lines.

In a discussion of the headscarf ban in schools and hijab ban in public places in France, Hafsa commented that '[ban against Islamic dress] is not an issue in Britain yet'. When I asked her to explain what she meant, she compared her experiences to those of women who wear headscarves:

'If you look at me...I blend in very well...you know...to...sort of...non-descriptive...you know...a Muslim lady. You know I don't wear the hijab, I don't wear the niqab' (British Moroccan, no headscarf)

Despite this feeling of 'blend[ing] in', Hafsa later pointed out how her work colleagues read her as *not* white: 'they know [she] has something that is

¹⁰ Only Aicha was interviewed during the pilot. Nesrine and Hafsa were interviewed before I changed the sample from Moroccans to Algerians.

¹¹ Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (BTS) is a vocational degree. The British equivalent is the Higher National Diploma.

not [white] English within [her]' but they cannot tell that she is Muslim. Hafsa described many times how difficult it is for people to categorise her because of her physical appearance. Categorisations informed by visual identity markers position young Moroccan women in a society in which their racialised identification is used to differentiate them from their white peers. This binary identification process helps to sustain 'inequalities, exclusions and oppression', especially in the labour market (Weedon, 2004, p154). Nevertheless, Hafsa did not believe she has ever faced labour market inequalities based on her ethnicity and/or religion. Her reported experience was very different from that of her French counterparts.

Aicha and Nesrine believed they have been victims of discrimination and racism in the French labour market. For example, the main reason that pushed Aicha to leave France for Britain was a two-year period of unemployment after completion of her degree. She believed that she could not find work because she wore the headscarf. She moved to Britain to improve her employment opportunities. Nesrine experienced similar issues but in a different context. In a discussion of her current role, I asked Nesrine about her relationships with other work colleagues. She explained how, since she started wearing the headscarf at work, her line manager's attitude has changed:

'I saw that she didn't like me wearing the headscarf. She became very cold. And then, she became very racist towards me.' (French Moroccan, wears headscarf)

Initially, Nesrine did not wear the headscarf at all but since she started wearing it, she felt some tension at work, because of which she was thinking of leaving her job. However, she was well aware of the potential difficulties she faced in the labour market as a result of being a visible Muslim woman. When asked how she would deal with this new situation she explained:

'If I have to remove [the headscarf] I will, during interviews. I will, that's it. Against my own will. But I will have to do it. I need to work. I do not wish the headscarf to cut me off from life.'

Nesrine understood the 'risk' of economic exclusion she would be exposed to if she continued wearing the headscarf, which highlights the existence of an oppressive atmosphere in the French labour market regarding the display of religious identities. Removing the headscarf, although temporarily, was a way she intended to counter this oppression. Widdicombe (1998) suggests that identity is 'available for use'; it is a tool used to benefit all individuals (p191). Nesrine intended to use her identity as a resource to counter any possible discrimination in finding work. In doing so, she intends to change her social position by removing her headscarf (i.e. from an 'overly-visible' Muslim woman to a, hopefully, 'invisible' Muslim¹²). Unlike Nesrine, Aicha refused to concede to this oppression and as a result, felt that she had to leave the country to find work.

Loury and his colleagues (2005) argue that '[the] labour market is an important setting for processes of inclusion and exclusion' (p2); but inclusion in the labour market does not necessarily mean social inclusion within the workplace. Indeed, as seen in Nesrine's case, she experienced professional inclusion, because of being in employment; yet, she was socially excluded at work because of wearing the headscarf. Moreover, Anthias (2001b) argues that 'a marketable skill [depends] on who possesses the skill' (p847). In that respect, Aicha, who possessed a university qualification, was unable to secure a job in France because of her physical appearance (i.e. headscarf). Both Nesrine and Aicha's accounts reveal the importance of visual identification in the construction of their labour market experiences. The negative attributed identity,

¹² As I shall argue in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, not wearing headscarf does not offer any protection against racist and discriminatory practices; yet these inequalities operate in a particular manner compared to women who wear headscarves.

grounded in religious markers (i.e. headscarf), constructs second generation children of immigrants as the 'other' in France; this has led to forms of exclusion and oppression for both Nesrine and Aicha (Parekh, 2000). Both women acknowledged the existence of racist practices. This feeling was not, however, shared in Britain by Hafsa; and even Aicha never talked about exclusion in Britain, as compared to her experiences in France. This difference in my French and British participants' experiences suggests the contextualised construction of professional experiences. Put differently, my participants' experiences were constructed contextually and intersectionally (including physical appearance, education and nation).

3.6.4 Lessons learnt for the main study

In general, the pilot study helped me to become a better interviewer and to develop my research techniques in relation to collecting data and to refining my questions. It also helped me focus on the *contextualised* experiences of my participants (i.e. within the educational sector, the labour market and society as a whole).

Indeed, one of my main concerns was a lack of experience in carrying out interviews and so, I had to work on my interviewing techniques. Despite being aware of the necessity of letting participants 'proceed at their own rate of thinking and speaking' (Kvale, 1996, p.148), I did not see the negative impact of my interruptions until the first transcription of the pilot study. At some points it was really frustrating as I felt I was missing out on important information. I then practised, when talking to family and friends, just to listen without interrupting and making a mental note of any questions I wanted to ask. I became a better listener in order to conduct interviews efficiently for the main study. Note taking became central during the main study. I wrote down all the questions arising in my mind during participants' responses. Subsequent interviews were thus very different from the pilot work during which most of my notes were blank or

used for spelling words such as names of schools. I also decided to have a gradual progression into the topic, allowing the women to start with descriptive accounts followed by more reflective subjects. The pilot work also helped in shaping the data collection methods and in finding a new strategy for later interviews. The use of semi-structured interviews helped to establish 'a conversational style' without losing the focus of the subject at hand (Patton, 2002, p343). These new strategies improved the quality of the data collected for the main study which started in April 2012. The dynamic of interaction changed; participants' responses were unbroken and note taking became essential in terms of probing and follow-up questions (sample extracts are available in Appendix 7).

Informed by the experience of the pilot, I also revised my interview guide. Instead of gathering data topically on two or three occasions, I decided to discuss all topics in the first interview. This helped me to address key societal issues, identity perceptions and debates related to education and employment affecting the women throughout a *single* interview. It also allowed new themes to surface. For instance, some women were concerned about the image of Muslims in the West as portrayed by the media; something that I did not think of while setting the interview agenda for the pilot study. This led me to new questions for later interviews.

Moreover, the insights, however limited, gained from interviewing Moroccan women (in both countries) pointed towards societal issues that are not necessarily ethnically driven but rather a consequence of historical and political contexts in which social divisions work intersectionally to produce the women's experiences. The intersection between the visual (i.e. physical appearance including physiognomic features and clothing) and religion, and the contextual (i.e. the nation) seem to have a marked impact on women's labour market positioning. For the main study, I decided to pay particular attention to these intersectional and contextual aspects.

In the next three chapters, I will draw on extracts from the interviews to discuss key themes that emerged in the data: the notion of the ‘other’, (non-)belonging and everyday racism. Chapter 4 offers a contextualisation for Chapters 5 and 6, in the sense that it deals with the women’s sense of belonging in society at large (including all social settings except education- and work-related) and provides an understanding of how the women’s relationships are constructed in relation to other social actors. The next two chapters provide a micro-level analysis of the women’s experiences in society by looking at specific experiences in the educational sector (Chapter 5) and then, experiences in the labour market (Chapter 6). Throughout the chapters, in each section, I will first present a detailed account of findings on French participants followed by those for British participants before pulling out key differences and/or similarities across countries. The transcription conventions I used in all three chapters are presented in Appendix 5.

In the Conclusions, I will bring together the thesis’s findings to illustrate how processes of identification shape participants’ professional trajectories (including job opportunities, workplace relations and professional development) and how these contribute to graduate women’s exclusion in the labour market despite professional inclusion.

Chapter 4: Everyday racism and (non-)belonging among second generations in France and Britain

This chapter deals with Pakistani and Algerian women's experiences within society at large (excluding education and work-related experiences). The chapter contributes to the understanding of how the women negotiate and make sense of their positions in society. It provides insights into how relationships are constructed and negotiated in everyday social interactions. Recurrent themes in the women's reports of their everyday social interactions were the social construction of themselves as the 'other', and feelings of (non-)belonging and everyday racism. By exploring the constructions of multiple 'others', I show how a fixation on ethnic and religious signifiers produce social and emotional exclusions in society, 'materialised' through experiences of everyday racism. In particular, I investigate how a conflict in identity positions (between attributed and claimed identities) creates a sense of non-belonging among French participants; and how, despite a correspondence between their attributed and claimed identities, British participants experience a contingent sense of belonging. I argue that political ideologies (republicanism in France and multiculturalism in Britain) produce differences in how the women articulate their feelings of belonging and particular identity tensions. These identity tensions are analysed using an intersectional lens; Anthias's (2001a) concept of translocational positionality will be employed to help contextualise the women's negotiations of their identities by paying particular attention to the national and social contexts in which the women find themselves.

The chapter is organised into four sections. Section One indicates how the concepts of intersectionality and translocational positionality have been applied in the analysis of the data. Section Two explores how participants responded to the collective process of othering articulated in the media. Section Three shows how everyday racism is experienced at the individual level in the process of being subjected to religious,

gendered and class-based constructions as 'others', including the 'colonised ethnic other', the 'ethnic other', and the 'Muslim other'. Section Four discusses the women's strategies to counter and escape essentialised forms of identity.

4.1. Intersectionality and translocational positionality as analytical frameworks

In this study, the concept of intersectionality is used to examine the relationships between various social categories and to analyse how they influenced my participants' life experiences. The concept of translocational positionality, however, is used to discuss how the identity of my participants was constructed by themselves and the social actors they interacted with. For this, I focused on the contextual nature of these identities constructions by paying particular attention to contradictions (if any) and to the prevalence of certain social categories over others.

Before moving on to the discussions of my participants' experiences in society, in this section, I draw on these two theoretical frames to indicate how aspects of the data were analysed in two case studies. The first shares the story of Ruksana, a French Pakistani woman to indicate how I applied the concept of intersectionality to explore the interconnectedness of various social markers and their influence on participants' experiences. The second shares the story of Latifa, a British Algerian woman, to specify how I used the concept of translocational positionality, notably to consider contextualised identity constructions.

4.1.1 Intersectionality: the interconnectedness of social divisions

Ruksana was the first French Pakistani participant I interviewed in France. She was aged 25 years at the time of the interview. Ruksana grew up in a working class family in a Parisian suburb with several other relatives living nearby. Her parents moved to France in 1985 from the

Punjab region in Pakistan. Her father has now retired; her mother has never been employed. Ruksana is the eldest of two sisters and one brother. Her brother, the youngest, is still studying for his GCSEs. Her sisters are at university, completing their degrees. Ruksana is employed as an airport station agent. She is unmarried, but during her interview, she constantly brought up the topic of marriage and talked about how her life would change with her future husband's decisions (notably in relation to her employment). Although being unmarried did not seem to be an issue for her, she mentioned her mother's disappointment. She told me that her mother had hoped that she would settle down by 22. However, Ruksana did not have similar aspirations. She wants to become professionally successful and be an independent woman and for that, she has made educational and work decisions not particularly welcomed by her parents.

Ruksana explained that she has always been a bright student but never put in all the effort required; only 'the minimum to pass'. Despite what she described as a non-studious attitude, she graduated with a Higher National Diploma in Transport and Logistics¹ in 2009. These subjects have always been her preferred ones. She decided to study transport and logistics at college against the will of her parents, who wanted her to study more traditional subjects, especially science subjects. She also described the opposition she faced from school regarding her decision. Once, she told me, her high school maths teacher came home to talk her out of studying transport and logistics and to encourage her to study mathematics instead. She did not compromise and pursued her educational aspirations. She maintained that she never regretted her choice but then she had to prove that her choice was worthwhile. She went on to study similar subjects at university and graduated with distinction.

¹ This is a two-year associate university degree.

The reason behind Ruksana's educational decisions was her professional aspiration. She always wanted to be an air hostess. However, because of her height, she told me, she was not eligible (because she did not meet the minimum height requirement). So becoming an airport station agent was a way for her to stay within her preferred employment sector. Ruksana showed a lot of passion for her job. She was very proud of working in a field that was dominated by men and enjoyed the non-traditional working hours. But what was more important to her, as she explained, was the fact that she has 'open[ed] doors' to university education and to a sector not previously well regarded as women's work by her family (because of working non-traditional hours and in a male dominated area). After three years, she felt that she had finally gained her parents', especially her father's, approval and two of her cousins have followed in her footsteps and have also become airport station agents.

Ruksana showed a lot of pride when telling me that she is also the eldest amongst all her cousins and, therefore, responsible for being a role model for not only her siblings but the extended family. She told me stories of her uncles and aunts who turned to her in order to make decisions regarding their children's education. To her regret, however, she explained that *she* could not turn to anybody for support and advice. She always had to struggle. She has never been able to rely on her parents for support. This was particularly true during her education. She suggested that lack of language proficiency and knowledge of the French system prevented them from supporting her in her decisions. Yet, her experiences of not being supported in the educational system by her family were not simply the result of her parents' migration. Her parents' low educational levels and social class background, which meant that her father earned relatively little, were also highly influential. They were, for example, also unable to support Ruksana financially. As a result, she took up several student jobs throughout her A-levels and university years. Thus, the interplay between migration, education and social class was

important in producing Ruksana's educational experiences. At the same time, her own choices (motivated by desire not to conform to traditional gender roles) also contributed to the direction she took in her academic life.

Ruksana's example illustrates how the concept of intersectionality is used in this study to analyse how different social divisions relate to each other (i.e. what interest and how) in my participants' everyday experiences, notably educational and professional. For example, Ruksana did not pursue additional university qualifications because, according to Ruksana, her mother insisted that extended university studies would not be useful for her. As a result, she only completed a two-year degree and went into employment straight afterwards. Ruksana understood well her mother's reasons for feeling this; her reasons were driven by strong values regarding women and their role in the family and society.

Migration, social class, education and gender combined together affect Ruksana's student life. However, while gender did not seem to be prominent in her early educational stages, once at university it became an important factor. Expectations set by her mother to conform to traditional gender roles (i.e. get married and be a housewife) prevented her from pursuing a postgraduate degree. The expectation that South Asian women, but not men, will get married at an early age has been documented extensively in the UK, but not in France, as discussed in Chapter 1 (see for example, Dale and Ahmed, 2011). This was also apparent in Ruksana's story as she expressed her mother's dissatisfaction to see her unmarried at 25 ('my mother now keeps saying 'you're 25 now! Stop working!'). However, Ruksana suggested during the interview that she never intended to conform to traditional gender roles ('I cannot simply sit at home and do nothing, just looking after my husband'). Her decision to pursue a university qualification (even a short one) was, for her, an opportunity to become independent and to pave the way for her younger sisters and cousins in France to be equally independent

(‘There are two of my sisters and a few of my male and female cousins [who went to university and are working]. It was only a matter of opening the door for them, which I did’).

Thus, the dynamics of ethnicity and gender played different roles in Ruksana’s life. It was used by her mother to maintain pressure on her, on the one hand, regarding the incommensurability of marriage and longer studies and, on the other hand, regarding marriage and work. Using an intersectional lens brought to light the interconnected social categories that have influenced Ruksana’s life experiences differently in different societal settings.

Ruksana’ example also indicates how certain social categories ‘prevail’ contextually (i.e. migration, social class and education during compulsory schooling; ethnicity and gender at university; ethnicity and gender during employment)². The next part which highlights my use of the concept of translocational positionality discusses this very aspect of contextualised constructions of identities and life experiences which at times can be contradictory. In order to illustrate this, I share the story of Latifa, a British Algerian woman.

4.1.2 Translocational positionality: the contextualised dimension of social divisions

Latifa is one of the last participants I interviewed thanks to a common friend who put me in contact with her. She was 24 at the time of interview and is the younger of two daughters. Her parents moved to the UK with her elder sister during the 1988 October Riots in Algeria which escalated to the civil war in 1991. Her father returned to Algeria during the civil war and joined his family members left behind. To date, he still lives in

² Religion was also prominent but it appeared only in her interactions with other Muslim women at college/university and non-Muslim white colleagues at work. The latter example will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Algeria. Latifa's elder sister also returned to Algeria after her marriage, five years ago. Her mother brought up her two daughters as a single parent in the UK.

Throughout her interview, Latifa talked about her parents and how they shaped her life. She shared her feelings of responsibility towards her mother 'who gave up so much to raise [them]'. This meant that Latifa started working at a very early age, while still in school, to help to support her family. During her GCSEs, together with a friend, she set up a company and produced short films. This helped her to earn money but she could not pursue this work after her A-levels because of her university workload. Yet, throughout her university years, financial difficulties pushed her into taking on several student jobs. This situation also prevented her from applying to a UK university. She then enrolled for her undergraduate degree in France, where she studied (and worked) for one year before eventually returning to a UK university³. She considered that university-related expenses would be more manageable for her mother in France. While her mother influenced her day-to-day decisions, her father also influenced her life, despite his physical distance from her

When Latifa was preparing her university application, she faced strong opposition from her father. He wished her to become a lawyer and so, to enrol for a law degree. However, this was not what Latifa aspired to do; she was more interested in business-related activities. She shared with me her dream of returning to Algeria, one day, and revolutionising the business of marketing there. This is why she enrolled for a degree in marketing and is now working as a junior marketing researcher. Following this decision her father stopped talking to her for six months. Latifa shared the heartbreak she felt because her father's approval of her university degree was important to her. For that reason, at one point, she decided to study law for her father, but then realised that she would

³ Latifa's particular university path is analysed in Chapter 5.

rather live with his disappointment than be unhappy all her life. She told me that they now speak again but it is 'no longer the same'.

Family is very important to Latifa. Throughout her interview she not only mentioned repeatedly her parents but also what she called 'her Algerian community family', to whom she feels very close. They are, for her, a support network that contributes to her sense of belonging. For example, she mentioned regular social gatherings and Ramadhan dinners where she gets to meet other Algerians. This was very significant for her as she was well aware that there are not many Algerians in the UK compared to France. Having lived, studied and worked in two different countries, she constantly compared her experiences and her relationships with other Algerians (and the majority ethnic group) in both France and England.

Latifa was one of the most vocal participants regarding how she shifted between her multiple identities. Even during the interview, she consistently changed her social positioning as she told me her stories. For example, throughout her interview she insisted on being Algerian, and one who is proud of her ethnic identity ('I can wear a t-shirt written I love Algeria'). However, in a discussion of how she adapts to her social surroundings, she explained that when she is in the presence of other Algerians (in a mosque or other gathering places), religion is more important. She then reflects her religious identity through her body by covering it and 'not [wearing] mini-skirts and boots'.

People she interacts with thus highly influence the way she presents herself and feels about her identifies. When out and about amongst white British people, Latifa does not particularly dress in ways designed to cover her body. She wears clothes associated with western women, including mini-skirts and boots (as she wore on the day of the interview). Yet, when around other Algerians, she dresses *especially* to cover her body. She gives in the pressure put on her by other Algerians to conform to religiously acceptable dress codes. Note that she never identified

Algerians by their religion, only ethnicity. Yet, as explained in the previous section on intersectionality, the boundaries between social divisions can be indistinct. In this example, these blurred boundaries allow religion (Islam here) to function almost implicitly through ethnicity.

Latifa also underwent shifts in her experiences regarding her ethnicity. For example, while being Algerian is associated with positive experiences in Britain, it was associated with negative memories of being in France as a result of her experiences of racism. Thus, although she said that she proudly asserted her ethnic identity in the UK, in France she would rather opt for her citizenship identity and present herself as British *only* (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6).

This complexity of how my participants' positions are constructed (by themselves and other social actors) is analysed using the concept of translocational positionality (as mentioned in Chapter 2). A central aspect of translocational positionality put forward by Anthias (2008) is the understanding of how people position themselves in different social locations. Social locations are 'a set of practices, actions and meanings' (Anthias, 2008, p15) which are related temporally and spatially. The concept maintains that how people perceive themselves within their social world is not uniform but subject to change (shifts and contradictions) both at the individual and the macro-levels. I used the concept to focus on how time and place influenced the identity markers my participants chose to put forward as well as how these constructed their experiences. As shown in the above example, the identities Latifa chose were contextualised locally (in the UK, in the presence of white people and other Algerians) but also more globally, as she moved from London to Paris. Thus it was not only her interlocutors who impacted on her identity claims but also the country she found herself in.

The focus on social locations (i.e. time and context) within which my participants found themselves also allowed me to see what social

categories 'prevailed' in a given setting. So for example, in the above story, Latifa focused on her ethnicity when interacting with white British people and; ethnicity, and implicitly religion too, with Algerians. However, although she does not mention it explicitly, gender is also very significant in the way she experiences a shift from being a proud Algerian woman among white people to being a *Muslim* Algerian woman among Algerians (see for example the references to mini-skirt and boots and the need to cover her body). Religion is almost implicit. This is even more apparent when she meets other Algerians in mosques or for Ramadhan dinners. It is worth noting that in this social setting, culture is also closely connected with ethnicity and religion since Latifa also mentioned that she dresses to cover her body 'out of respect for [her] parents'. In that sense, she demonstrates the pressure put on women as bearers of the family's honour (the question of women's bodies and behaviour and family honour is particularly discussed for South Asian women in the UK) (e.g. Dwyer, 2000).

Therefore, in my analyses, although I acknowledge that there is no hierarchy in social divisions, the concept of translocational positionality allows me to maintain that in given social settings, certain social categories can affect life experiences and identity constructions in a way that other categories do not.

In summary, the concept of intersectionality provides a way of engaging with social categories (i.e. to understand what relates to one another and what the specificities are for each category) while the concept of translocational positionality offers temporal and spatial tools within which these social categories are analysed. Taken together, I use the concepts of intersectionality and translocational positionality to analyse (1) the interconnectedness of social divisions and (2) how they impact(ed) on my participants' everyday experiences and identity constructions.

4.2 The collective process of othering in France and Britain

4.2.1 The media representations of Muslims

All the participants, in both countries, talked about media representations of Muslim minority ethnic groups based on group categorisation (some spontaneously, others in response to questions). They reported that they were categorised as part of Muslim groups on the basis of physical appearance (which in this case was based on their wearing headscarf and/or abaya⁴) on the one hand, and physiognomic differences (i.e. skin pigmentation/facial features) on the other. Collective othering was reported by participants in both countries but with important nuances.

French Algerian participants explained how the existence of negative stereotypes of Muslims, and 'Blacks and 'Arabs'⁵ in the media affected them. Some explicitly reported being subjected to stigmatisation. They expressed their frustration about the portrayal of collective identities in the media, which they found had a one-to-one correspondence between religion (i.e. Islam) and ethnicity (i.e. 'Arab'). French Pakistani participants reported a one-to-one correspondence between Islam and terrorism.

In her interviews, Ruksana constantly and spontaneously compared France and England (regarding the position of Muslims and/or Pakistanis) and the perception of Maghrebis and Pakistanis in France. While explaining how she was asked about her ethnicity in a job interview, Ruksana told me that she was afraid to answer the question because 'Pakistanis equal terrorists'. I asked her to clarify. The following quote is from her response. She explained how the Pakistanis, as a Muslim

⁴ To remind the reader, the abaya is a full-sleeved and full-length dress, sometimes worn together with the headscarf.

⁵ The expression 'Blacks and Arabs'(literally 'les noirs et les arabes') was used by many women, both Algerians and Pakistanis, to report the negative perceptions conveyed in the media about people of African descent in France irrespective of the geographical specificity. Although in English the term 'Arab' often refers to people from the Middle Eastern region, in France, it specifically refers to North African countries, including Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. In this study the term 'Arab' is used when reporting research or participants' use. Inverted commas are used since the term was perceived as derogatory by participants.

minority group, are better 'integrated' (discussed later) in France but since 9/11, the capture of Bin Laden in Pakistan and the Mohammad Mérah affair⁶ in France, perceptions of them have changed:

'You know before [9/11] when I used to say I am Pakistani, people would tell me how beautiful [the country] is, that they have been there or sometimes they didn't even know where it was! But now! Like, just a few days ago, a man, Mohamed Mérah, he was killed. [The media] said he went to Pakistan and Afghanistan and that he stayed for a longer period of time in Pakistan. What do you think is going to happen in people's mind? Pakistan's image is very dirty now. It's always associated with negative things, terrorism, Talibans and even Bin Laden!' (French Pakistani)

Many French Pakistani women had similar concerns to Ruksana's about the mediatisation of national/international incidents and their subsequent impact on how Pakistanis are perceived by others. Ruksana's reference to the representation of Pakistan and its impact on her identification as a Muslim Pakistani woman reflect Bonelli's (2005) finding on the change of attitude towards all Muslims in France since September 2001. His analysis of the missions of secret services in France⁷ revealed an increase in surveillance of French Muslims. He also highlighted the systematic violation of freedom and judiciary rights of Muslims in the name of the 'war on terrorism' (e.g. Muslims can be detained on suspicion that they have terrorist links without the need to present tangible proof to a judge prior to the arrest). His findings highlight the problematised positioning of Muslims in France created politically through the introduction of new laws and increased power for national guards, and the atmosphere of fear surrounding the group. Bonelli argued that these negative perceptions and threats are maintained and fed on by the media.

⁶ Ruksana refers to the killings of Jewish people and French soldiers by Mohammad Mérah, a French Algerian man, in March 2012 in Toulouse.

⁷ Bonelli's research included secret services from France, Britain and Spain. Here, I report findings about France only.

Many French Pakistani and Algerian participants also referred to the blurring of the boundaries between ethnicity and religion which further helps maintain a static image of the 'other'. The next quote taken from Naima's interview illustrates this. Throughout her interviews, Naima shared her frustration about stereotypes based on a lack of knowledge about Islam and Muslims among white French people which lead to social exclusion. When I asked her to give me an example illustrating lack of knowledge, she explained:

'The media makes a mess of it all. They don't understand that you can be a Muslim without being an Arab! You can be [white] French, Pierre, Paul, Jacques and be a Muslim. But they just focus on Islam! Only Islam and all the Muslims! And all these Muslims are obviously Arabs! No!' (French Algerian)

Naima's remark resonates with Deltombe and Rigouste's (2005) findings on the construction of 'Arab' identity in the French media. The authors found that the media refer to several categories: 'the 'immigrant', the 'foreigner', the 'Muslim', the 'islamist', the 'youth' in the banlieues, 'descendant of immigrants' and the 'terrorist' (p191). They argue that regardless of these categories, the achieved aim is the creation of an imaginary 'Arab' 'other' who does not belong to France and who can be identified through faith⁸. The identity of children of minority ethnic immigrants is re-located from that of individual French citizens to that of a collective religious group. The shift from the individual to the collective identity and the subsequent oversimplification of ethnic and religious categories reinforces the 'us' and 'them' dichotomy as argued by Said (1979) in his Orientalism theory. These negative representations position Muslim groups as a threat to French national identity, allowing racism and Islamophobia to be sustained in 21st century (Rigouste, 2009; Deltombe

⁸ The authors examined journal articles and television coverage from 1974 to 2004. They analysed journal articles dealing with any aspect of Islam. The television coverage was limited to two national TV channels and to the prime time news slot at 8pm.

and Rigouste, 2005). Moreover, since the positioning as the 'other' equally affects the more established group (Algerians) as well as the more recently arrived group (Pakistanis), Muslims *have become* the ultimate 'other'. The post-9/11 'domino' effect in Western Europe (i.e. fear of terrorist attacks, involvement in 'war on terror'), the debates on the headscarf and niqab in 2004 and 2006, the search for Bin Laden in 2010 and the Mohamad Merah affair of 2012 are all examples of specific times and contexts which contributed to the radical shift in the social position of French Pakistanis (from people of a 'beautiful country' to 'terrorists') and the new association with French Algerians (from 'Muslims' to 'terrorists'). This highlights Pakistani and Algerian participants' translocational positionalities set in specific timeframes and within the political context of France (Anthias, 2001a). Put differently, these new positionalities not only re-defined French Pakistani and Algerian graduate women's identities but also impact(ed) on their lived experiences *contextually*, according to the above 'peak moments' as suggested by many participants (Anthias, 2009). This re-positioning of Pakistani and Algerian Muslims as *one* and the *same* 'other', regardless of their multiple distinctions, at the centre of attention in France, produces a constructed amalgam between religion and terrorism. The construction of an irreconcilable divide, between 'us' (white French people) and 'them', fixes the attributed identity of these women to that of the eternally different Muslim 'other'.

Similar to the French women, British women also attributed their construction as a negative collective entity to media representations. However, there was a clear distinction in the group's views. Women who do not wear the headscarf – two Algerian and four Pakistanis – did not speak about the media spontaneously; while those who do – four Algerian and two Pakistanis – brought up the topic during the interview. A major factor contributing to this difference in accounts is the particularity of the latter group's lived experiences (Afshar, 2008; Afshar et al., 2005). I will illustrate this by analysing the experiences of Leila who wears the headscarf. Leila's story reflects the awareness of other British Muslim

women who wear headscarves about their collective identification in society as Muslims. Her story highlights the distinctive impact of such positioning on women in daily encounters.

On one occasion, Leila shared spontaneously an experience of racist abuse from a passer-by. When I asked her about the reasons for that abuse, she said that it was because of the 'visibility [...] of the headscarf' and 'the negativity' associated with 'Muslims around the world'. Leila made sense of the particular position of women who wear headscarves compared to Muslim men. Her experience, similar to other participants, highlights how visibility, gender and religion intersect to produce British Muslim women's experiences of othering. These British women experience a particular form of othering, different to men and women who do not wear headscarves. The importance of gender difference in Islam has been discussed extensively by various scholars (Afshar, 2012; Shirazi and Mishra, 2010; vom Bruck, 2008; Afshar et al., 2006; Badr, 2004; Bullock, 2002). Afshar (2008) argues that the climate of Islamophobia impacts on the lived experiences of Muslim women who 'cover' in a distinct way from how it does on Muslim men and those who do not 'cover'. The headscarf, 'an easy target' as Leila put it, became the embodiment of the debate on the increasingly contested place of Muslims in the West. As discussed in Chapter 1, September 11th is a turning point in Muslims' representation in political discourses and the media; this was also acknowledged by all participants (French and British). Other national events such as the '7/7' London bombings further contributed to the negative representation of Muslims in Britain and especially of women who wear headscarves (Afshar, 2008). The visibility of the headscarf, symbol of oppression (discussed in Section Two), works to locate these women in an imaginary Islamic nation to which all Muslims are perceived to belong.

Similar to the French women, Leila also questioned the systematic association of Islam and terrorism, pinpointing the bias in news reporting.

Following on from the abuse incident, in the extract below, I asked Leila to explain what she meant by ‘negativity’ associated with ‘Muslims around the world’:

‘I mean media screws everything. If you have a shooting, a gang related thing then they will mention that it is a gang. But if there is a Muslim involved, it suddenly becomes a Muslim gang shooting. If you have a robbery then it’s a robbery. But if there is a Muslim involved it becomes a Muslim robbery. Any crime if any other part of the society commits it, you know it’s just a crime. But you know if a Muslim is involved it’s terrorism so people are frightened! So, for example the soldier in Woolwich⁹. Straight away they said it was a terrorist attack. But I mean lots of other people have been shot in broad daylight. But the word terrorism is never ever used. But when there is a Muslim involved that’s when the word terrorism comes into account. I mean a crime is a crime. Why does the fact that it is done by a Muslim makes it a terrorist attack?’ (British Algerian)

Leila challenged the racialised news reporting which naturalises the perception of Muslims as terrorists and fuels the sense of fear and threat¹⁰. Leila’s words resonate with Saeed’s (2007) findings on the depiction of Muslims in British press as the ‘other’, similar to the negative representation of Muslims in French media. Saeed (2007) showed that the othering process fuelled the already widespread Islamophobia in Britain. The ‘aura’ of fear surrounding Muslims in Britain was reported by all British women, but this was more explicit in the accounts of women who wear headscarves, since they often narrated personal stories spontaneously (while I had to ask specific questions to women who do not wear headscarves). This is a noteworthy difference between the experiences of British and French women, since all French women reported similar experiences regardless of whether or not they wear headscarves.

⁹ Leila refers here to the murder of Lee Rigby, a British soldier, in London in May 2013.

¹⁰ Similar forms of media representation have been found for black British people (see for example, Gilroy, 1992)

In both countries, the women were aware of the process of racialisation operated in the media which essentialised their identity as a religious group; overshadowing ethnic specificities (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, 1992). However, French and British women responded to these identity constructions in a distinct manner.

All French participants shared feelings that it is necessary to hide their religious beliefs and practices so as to avoid being othered. One possible explanation for this similarity in views among all French women regardless of whether they wore headscarves or not could be that all experienced overt and covert religious racism in their daily lives.

British women also reported similar views to French women, but those who do not wear headscarves did not report any experiences of religious racism, even when I suggested that some of their experiences could be viewed as racist. The reluctance of many British women to recognise experiences of racism could be explained through a combination of two aspects. The first is the women's discourses on multicultural Britain seen as a country free from racism and discrimination. The second is the identity position the women conveyed during the interview as independent and successful women who are socially 'integrated' in and accepted by society. This identity position was in line with many of their repeated statements that they were not the 'right interviewee' for my study. These women considered that issues of unemployment, racism and discrimination (topics I discussed during the interview and presented in the information leaflet) are more relevant to women who do not 'participate' in the society they live in; ultimately putting the blame on the individual, rather than recognising the existence of structural inequalities.

4.2.2 Questioning and/or resisting the notion of 'integration'

While discussing media representations, many participants brought up the topic of the 'integration' of second generations in society. The debate on 'integration' is a contentious issue but the term is often used in policies regarding refugees and immigrants in Europe (Ager and Strang, 2011). Recently, it has also been used with regard to children of immigrants and Muslims in both France and Britain (for France, see for example, Schnapper, 2008; Bonelli, 2009; and for Britain, see for example, Joppke, 2009; Thomson and Crul, 2007). In this study, many participants questioned the 'integration' debate surrounding second generations, but they related differently to the topic across countries.

French participants brought up the topic of 'integration'¹¹ spontaneously, often in discussions of racism and discrimination, which were also brought up by most of the women. A few British participants also spontaneously talked about 'integration'; this was in relation to the media representations of Muslims. To generate comparable data, in the majority of cases, I had to ask British women's views on what 'integration' means for them. French women limited their definition of 'integration' to linguistic skills and participation in society through employment while British women also included free expression of their culture and religion. In both countries, 'integration' was understood in terms of the women's right to express their multiple identities. However, while French women questioned the use of the term 'integration' with regard to second generations, British women did not express any similar negativity.

The majority of French participants compared their situation to that of their immigrant parents. For instance, Anissa compared her situation to that of her parents to underline the inconsistency between theory and practice:

¹¹ *Intégration* in French.

'When my parents came, they had to be invisible. They had to avoid being the centre of attention; they had to be like everybody else. My parents talked to me in French everywhere we went. They had to IN-TE-GRATE. They had to erase all differences, as much as possible. I mean they had to adapt to the language, the cultural practices, understand the French way of life and so on. [...] but why do I need to integrate? I grew up here, I did my studies here. I am like everybody else. It's sad. It's not about adapting, it's about becoming [white] French! You cannot become [white] French!' (French Algerian)

Many women, like Anissa, claimed to have achieved acculturation and viewed assimilation as becoming white French. According to Berry's (1997) definitions, acculturation is about picking up elements of the national culture (e.g. language) whereas assimilation is about dropping one's culture to fit into the national culture (e.g. religious aspects). Assimilation was viewed by all participants as oppressive, requiring one to erase one's cultural identity. This was strongly expressed by Farida when we discussed the existence of discrimination in the labour market and especially the importance (or not) of names:

'[Being compelled to give European names to our children] means that we will never be integrated! We will never be French! I hate this word! Integration! You cannot talk about integration after 3-4 generations! (Anger in her voice). My daughter is 21 today. She is the third generation and they still talk about integration for her. So when she is going to have children in 2016-2020, will they keep saying to her child, the 4th generation, 'you have to integrate?!' (Anger in her voice) the issue is not about integration nonsense; they just want to us to leave!' (French Algerian)

Farida's frustration was apparent through the repetitive stresses, exclamations, questions and palpable anger in her voice. She was revolted by the use of the term 'integration' itself. This negativity has been described by Schnapper (2008) in her essay on 'integration' policies in

Western Europe. Schnapper denounced the inconsistency of the 'integration' debate when it comes to second generations. She distinguished between structural (i.e. economic and social) and cultural (e.g. language, customs, way of life) 'integrations'; the latter being more easily gained than the former. Based on the results of the Efnatis¹² project (2001) which included second generations from France, Germany and Britain, she established that the cultural 'integration' of second generations in France is the strongest and yet, their structural 'integration' is the weakest (illustrated in Chapters 5 and 6). The author blamed French institutions for providing unequal life opportunities for the second generation. It is the gap between structural and cultural 'integrations' which creates a sense of injustice among second generations in France; conveyed in this study through many women's frustration.

Many French Pakistani participants expressed similar frustration to their Algerian counterparts with regard to the 'integration' of second generations. Nevertheless, although they questioned the notion of 'integration', some French Pakistani women consider that they *need* to 'integrate'. For example, Ruksana (French Pakistani) claimed that 'integration' is a sign of gratitude towards a country 'which gives [her] community a lot of things, security, opportunities compared to [her] country of origin, which is Pakistan'. Ruksana and some other French Pakistani women locate themselves in a position in which they accept that they have to make concessions on cultural and religious aspects (such as removing the headscarf at work for Ruksana) in exchange for opportunities available to them seen as favours rather than equal rights ('social security', 'work protection'). Her feelings of gratitude prevented her from acknowledging, in her account, the oppressive practices that were denounced by French Algerian women such as erasing cultural and religious identities. In the government-initiated study of South Asians in France, Moliner (2009) aligns with the official discourse about the need

¹² The Effectiveness of National Integration Strategies project examined the effectiveness of policies and strategies aimed at 'integrating' second generation migrant youth in contemporary European societies.

for migrants to 'integrate'. She claims that the acceptance of the need to 'integrate' positions the more recent minority ethnic group (e.g. Pakistanis) in a positive light compared to the well-established minority ethnic groups (i.e. Maghrebis). By labelling the group as the 'model minority', Moliner helps 'impede other racial minorities' demands for social justice by putting minority groups against each other' (Zhou, 2004, p33).

I argue that French Pakistani women were less defensive about their cultural practices since they feel that these cultural practices are more valued and not challenged in the first place. Ruksana for instance repeatedly stated her feelings about being a member of a 'better' minority ethnic group compared to Maghrebis. In both groups (Algerian and Pakistani), it is the women's intersecting identities (as minority ethnic women, Muslims and French citizens) which position them at the heart of the 'integration' debate (Bassel and Emujulu, 2010).

Unlike French women, many British women did not mention 'integration' spontaneously. To generate comparative data, I shared with British participants that French participants felt they were expected to 'integrate' in society. Only then did British women reflected on the issue. Some compared their experiences to that of their parents (as did French women). Raheela explained:

'Those generations...I spoke to quite a lot of people...they came here and they'd tried kinda like...be like...English people. I think they'd tried to mix...because when you come from somewhere new, you'd try your best to mix in, learn the language, learn the ways, learn the culture. So they spent all these years trying to do that and I think our generation we're spending our time trying to learn everything about our roots, our language, our religion...so what I mean is that we can just be who we want to be. We don't need to be like others.' (British Pakistani)

Raheela and the majority of British participants had a similar definition of 'integration' for the parents' generation but not for the second generation. For the latter, they included in their definition the notion of 'cultural mix', 'the existence of different cultures' and 'allowing one to practise their religion'. Thus, the ability for British women to express cultural and religious identities was perceived as the sign of an inclusive society which accepts diversity. As Karima, a British Algerian woman, put it: 'you don't have to be a different person'. The emphasis is on society which adapts to the individual rather than the other way round (something French Algerian women strongly advocate, but which they consider is not in place in France). British women also stated that their religious and cultural differences are 'better' accepted in Britain compared to in France (knowledge gained through holidays, studying or through relatives' stories). For example, having lived in France for almost a year, Latifa (British Algerian) explained how her claimed identity shifted; she is Algerian in Britain but a 'Londoner or British' in France. The movement from Britain to France transformed her social position from a member of a newly-arrived minority ethnic group (in Britain) to a member of a well-established minority ethnic group (in France) who exists in the social imaginary of the white majority ethnic group. Thus, she had to change her identity claims and deployed it as a resource to avoid potential stigmatisation and racial prejudice which operate against Maghrebis in France. She felt that the ability to express her ethnicity and religion freely in Britain is what distinguishes multicultural Britain from the 'intolerant France'; a view shared by many other British women. Many French women made similar remarks about intolerance in France (knowledge gained after previous experiences in Britain such as holidays and family visits).

The insistence on religious freedom is particularly important in light of the on-going debate over the 'integration' of Muslims in Britain (Abbas and Siddique, 2012; Marranci, 2011). Marranci (2011) argued that British Muslims are required to 'mimic the 'achiever'', that is to hold values of the

majority ethnic group in order to be a 'contender' for the status of an 'integrated' member. Yet, as Abbas and Siddique (2012) argued, the 'integration' debate is closely linked to social, economic and political factors rather than ethnic, national and religious ones. Thus, no British woman acknowledged the existence of a need to 'integrate' for three reasons: firstly, because they discussed their identities as multiple, but holistic, encompassing both their Pakistani/Algerian traditions and British customs; secondly, because they stated that they are active members of society (i.e. through employment and other social interactions); and thirdly, they *believe* they can express their multiple selves freely. This is a very important feature of British women's perception of their position in Britain. Although the participants denounced the collective process of othering based on religious grounds; on an individual level, they strongly believe in their ability to express their religious identity freely. However, I shall argue in the next two sections that the (belief in the) ability to express their religious identity freely is not synonymous with acceptance by others.

The differences between Pakistanis and Algerians found in France were also found among the groups in Britain. Two British Algerian women (Karima and Heena) reported a sense of gratitude towards Britain. They defined 'integration' in terms of being thankful for the life opportunities the country made available for them. Similar to some French Pakistani women, both Karima and Heena perceived the existence of equal opportunities as favours rather than equal rights. They too compared the political and economic environments in Algeria to those in Britain, concluding that '[Britain] has given [them] a lot of opportunities...for work, for education, for everything, that [Algeria] could never give [them]' (Karima).

Discussions of the collective process of othering and the 'integration' debate revealed how French and British participants understand their positions in society as second generations and as members of a Muslim

minority group. In particular, the discussion of the women's attributed identities uncovered how the women relate to their collective identity construction in the media and the shift in identification these women have experienced since 9/11 (from the ethnic to the religious). Discussion of the 'integration' debate revealed a strong sense of equality among British women since they pointed to their ability to express their religion and culture freely. However, a feeling of injustice strongly emerged in France, especially among Algerians participants. This feeling of perpetual inequalities was a very prominent feature in the French interview data.

4.3 Everyday racism and the colonised ethnic, (non-colonised) ethnic and Muslim 'others'

In this section, I analyse processes of othering further by looking at experiences of everyday racism at the individual level and how identity negotiations impact on the women's sense of (non-)belonging.

In the first part of this section, I only refer to women who do not wear the headscarf/abaya. Although many participants had experiences of being made to feel that they did not belong in France and that their belonging is contingent in Britain, 'overly-visible' Muslim women face additional forms of oppression. These are explored in the second part of this section.

4.3.1 Differences in emotional belonging across countries

Discussion of participants' sense of belonging to their country is of particular interest since it illuminates how the women position themselves in society in relation to others and how they feel they are positioned and/or treated by others. A major related theme in the interview data was experiences of everyday racism. As discussed in Chapter 2, everyday racism refers to inequalities which are forms of oppression infused in everyday life through events that are so repetitive that they appear 'natural' and become almost part of 'normal life' (Essed, 1991, p146).

Experiences of everyday racism were apparent across both countries. Nevertheless, while French participants labelled their experiences as racist (with some nuances); British women resisted acknowledging the existence of racism in society (even when I presented research findings of other studies). This difference in perception, as I shall show now, is in line with the women's sense of position in society (unequal in France and equal in Britain).

French participants reported that the process of collective religious identification is used by white people to differentiate between the French and non-French. Although French participants are French by birth and emotionally *feel* French, the systematic challenges they reported to their citizen identity produced feelings of non-belonging across both ethnic groups and regardless of the women's decision to wear or not the headscarf. The entitlement to French citizenship was racialised in the discourses of all participants and the reported discourses of their interlocutors. They explained that being French is equated with being white. This experience, shared by French Algerian and Pakistani participants, is similar to that identified by Hanif (2007) in her qualitative study of second generation Pakistanis in France. Her interview data produced comparable findings since her female interviewees described a continuous struggle between their claimed identity (as French) and their attributed identity (as Pakistani) by white people. In the next extract, Sana summarised comments she often hears in discussions with white French people (during social gatherings). She made this remark after I presented her findings on the labour market participation of children of immigrants in France:

'You know there were people who said to me 'you're not French!' just like that. Or even people who said 'well, no one can actually see that you're French!' Just because I am not blonde, I don't have blue eyes or whatever, white. I don't know. For some people I am not French. Actually for some people hmm I am not a real French. [...] I am a fake French because of my face! (laughs)' (French Pakistani)

While trying to make sense of the findings, Sana suggested first that issues of supply and demand explain employment related difficulties and then quickly moved on, explaining that racism and discrimination also contribute to unequal professional positions. She stated that she personally never experienced any direct racism in the labour market but then she shared spontaneously other experiences of racism in society at large. Sana accounted for her subjection to a process of othering by white French individuals as due to the fact that she is 'not blonde', does not have 'blue eyes' and is not 'white'. These references to phenotypical differences reinforce the racialised identification Sana experiences, which ultimately positions her outside the French citizen identity and works to oppress her emotionally through challenges posed to her self-identification as French. These differentiating factors are in line with French women's experiences of collective othering discussed earlier.

Unlike Sana who experienced blunt racist remarks, other French participants reported more subtle forms of racism. In the next extract, Anissa shared an incident of gender discrimination in her previous job¹³ and told me that 'sometimes you can't see [racism/discrimination]'. She then shared the following story:

¹³ Anissa reported her experience of gender discrimination when she became pregnant. She reported daily harassment, emotional oppression and progressive exclusion in her workplace. She decided to quit her job because of the hostile environment and the pressure she was under.

'You see, it's really silly; it hurt me but without hurting me. So, basically, I am going on an integration seminar, it's for new employees, and so, a friend of mine said to me 'well, that way you'll get your residency permit!' do you see? It's offensive, even a little bit! So not an identity card but a residency permit! I mean it's really silly, it was a joke for her. But I was offended. They do it without realising it, racist jokes. It could be a look or a, just a sentence hmm but she did not see it like that but I, could see it!' (French Algerian)

When probed, Anissa further explained that the 'residency permit' reference positioned her as an immigrant while the 'identity card' reference would have positioned her as a French citizen. According to Essed (1991), in order to be able to recognise subtle racism, individuals need to be able to relate it to other similar experiences and to be able to contextualise them. The 'familiar and repetitive' nature of the sorts of comments Anissa is subjected to allowed her to report these and to recognise these as subtle racism. In both cases (overt and covert experiences), Sana and Anissa recognised the racist aspect of their experiences, which as explained above, is a major difference between how French and British participants made sense of their experiences.

The fact that both Sana and Anissa participants spontaneously reported experiences of racism shows that they are well aware of the existence of inequalities in French society and also reflects the profundity of racialised challenges to women's identities as French citizens in everyday lives. Both women's experiences were common to the other French participants, who all spontaneously discussed experiences of racism and discrimination (see Appendix 8). For the French participants, nationality and ethnicity were integral parts of their identities and, in some cases, the women said they 'feel' more French than Pakistani or Algerian. This identity conflict creates a disjunction between the women's emotional sense of belonging and their attributed identity (as a minority ethnic immigrant) which is part of what Yuval-Davis (2011) identified as a

contested and shifting nature of belonging, contingent on identity construction (as shown in Chapter 2).

As seen earlier, feelings of injustice in society were stronger among French Algerians. This difference can also be attributed to Algeria's colonial history with France (as documented in Chapter 1). Sharing past histories constructed the positioning of Algerians in the French social imaginary (but not of Pakistanis) and contributed to the perpetuation of inequalities across generations experienced, and fought against, by Algerians. In that respect, while both Algerian and Pakistani participants are the French ethnic 'others', Algerian participants as the colonised ethnic 'other' have a stronger sense of entitlement in France and a greater claim on the state than Pakistani participants (as the non-colonised ethnic 'other').

It is important to note that none of the women reported negative othering by other minority ethnic groups; in all the stories participants shared with me, the perpetrator was a white person. This highlights the perpetuation of a fixed binary relationship between the white majority group and other minority ethnic groups, as suggested by Said (1979). Building on Said's understanding of the construction of majority and minority ethnic group relationships, I argue that a difference in these relationships exists which is contingent to the social imaginary of the majority ethnic group. Therefore, the relationship between the white majority group and the *colonised ethnic 'other'* 'differ' from the relationship between the white majority group and the (*non-colonised*) *ethnic 'other'*. This highlights the importance of the intersection between ethnicity and migration history in the construction of the positioning of minority ethnic groups and their subsequent self-positioning. This self-positioning is one of resistance to injustice (Algerian women) and the other of gratitude (Pakistani women).

As discussed earlier, in Britain, participants' accounts were marked by their belief in a multicultural society and the positivity this brings in terms

of freedom of religion and equal opportunities. Accordingly, the women identified themselves along a range of positions including, ethnic, religious, gender and national. The identities they discussed could be described as intersectional: ethnic/national; religious/national; ethnic/gender and (sometimes) ethnic/religious. In the following extract, set in a discussion of the headscarf/niqab ban in France, Raheela mentioned that being British (as compared to being French) allows people to express their religion freely. I asked her what she meant by being British:

'Everyone is British. People make Britain. It's the people, who they are. That's what's important. It's the Pakistani, the Chinese, the African, the English. Everyone. That's what Britain is about. It's multicultural, everyone together.' (British Pakistani)

Like Raheela, many British participants were aware of the debates surrounding Muslim women in France (sometimes because of having relatives in France or firsthand experience of having travelled to France). For Raheela, citizen identity is compatible with ethnic identity. She believed that the ethnic/religious identity needs to be acknowledged first whereas there is no need to state explicitly and assert the citizen identity since in multicultural Britain, 'everyone is British'. British participants did not report experiences of *similar* othering processes in social interactions, as did French participants, because they identified first and foremost according to their ethnic and/or religious identities and were identified by others in a similar way. This is thus a stark difference in how French and British women identified themselves; with a citizenship discourse in France and a multicultural one in Britain. The majority of British Pakistani and Algerian participants, in this study, did not believe in the existence of an association between whiteness and Englishness and/or Britishness, despite evidence of the contrary found among other minority ethnic groups such as black British people (e.g. Phoenix, 1998) and other related studies (e.g. Jackson, 1998; Brah, 1996; Gilroy, 1992; Diawara,

1990). They also did not report any experience of racial inequalities in society despite the evidence I found in their educational and professional experiences (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively).

In both countries, the women's accounts were nuanced across groups. While British Pakistani women strongly believed in a multicultural society where people are equal and differences are respected, British Algerian women questioned whether ability to live in a racism-free environment is associated with 'numerical' visibility. Algerian women reflected upon the potential benefits of their peripheral position in society compared to the more established minority ethnic groups such as the Pakistanis. The following quote, taken from Latifa's interview, exemplifies this. During her studies, she spent one year in France, both studying and working. While sharing her experiences of racial discrimination in France during job recruitment (discussed at length in Chapter 6), Latifa explained to me that she does not 'look Algerian'. Accordingly, in Britain people 'don't know' that she is Algerian but in France, they 'know straight up'. I asked her to clarify:

'If you compare [to France], London doesn't have a very big Algerian community which has the bad reputation. So [British people] don't know what to relate to when you say Algerian. Some people don't even know where it is. 'You know Morocco? It's next to Algeria!'; 'Really!'; 'Where is Algeria!' you know! The Algerians here are much more accepted and that's because people don't know Algeria!'
(British Algerian)

As mentioned above, the construction of the 'other' is contingent on the existence of a repertoire of representations in the social imaginary of the white majority ethnic group. Drawing on British Algerian participants' accounts (similar to Latifa's), I suggest that since the representation of Algerians escapes the British social imaginary (unlike Algerians in France), these women's attributed identity by white individuals is not subject to any specific negative discourse. In the above case, not being

known is not oppressive; on the contrary, Latifa feels that she escapes experiences of racism, not because Britain is multicultural (as British Pakistani women believe) but because Algerians are numerically overshadowed by other well-established minority ethnic groups and no negative representations specific to Algerians exist in mainstream society¹⁴. This is similar to the experiences of my Pakistani participants in France. Latifa's understanding of her shifting and contextual identity construction by others further illustrates the operation of her translocational positionality. By comparing her social representations in France to those in Britain, Latifa pointed to the situated and relational aspect of the othering process; non-existent in Britain and oppressive in France. The uniqueness of Latifa's experience within the sample (since she lived, studied and worked in both countries) gives an exceptional insight into the functioning of the othering process from a macro-level perspective. Her accounts will be analysed throughout the thesis.

Given these assertions, there are strong differences in the way French and British women position themselves and feel they are positioned by white groups. In France, the strong association between being French and whiteness makes Pakistani and Algerian women in this study feel dispossessed of their citizenship entitlement, despite their emotional sense of belonging to the country. The British participants, however, emphasised their intersectional identities (ethnic/religious and ethnic/religious/national).

Having discussed how the ethnic/colonised and religious othering affect my participants' sense of belonging, I now further investigate the process of othering by examining the particular experiences of women who wear headscarves/abaya.

¹⁴ It might also be that Latifa does not recognise racist experiences. This is a possibility since the analysis of British Algerian women's experiences in the workplace revealed instances of subtle racism which were not acknowledged by the participants. This will be fully discussed in Chapter 6. This means that not being known or recognised in British society does not 'protect' Algerians from racism and/or discrimination.

4.3.2 The pressure of the white gaze: the particular experiences of women who wear headscarves

Experiences of everyday racism were reported by all participants in France but only by 'overly-visible' Muslim women in Britain. These experiences were embedded in the women's day-to-day social interactions. As discussed in Chapter 2, one important aspect of Said's Orientalism theory is the positioning of Oriental subjects as uncivilised and thus lacking the 'civilised competencies' of the western subject. Many participants told stories where they were subjected to (un)spoken stereotypes in their social encounters. In France, these *strengthened* French women's sense of injustice and oppression while in Britain, these *created* a sense of non-belonging and exclusions for 'overly-visible' Muslim women only. British women who did not wear headscarves did not report any similar experiences.

In France, 'overly-visible' Muslim women explained how the combination of racial and religious stereotypes produces unsettling and subtle racism. In the following extract, Mahy explained how since she started wearing the headscarf, she noticed a change in people's reaction towards her. In a discussion of racism and discrimination in the labour market, she described how she was socially excluded at work (in her most recent role), but that she did not care since she is 'used to it because of the outside'. When I asked her to clarify what she meant by 'outside', she said:

'You know hmm I mean, when you go out hmm, when you wear the headscarf, it's everywhere, the looks. You can see it because people stare at you, they stare, stare, and sometimes it's up and down and you can almost feel their resentment and how they judge you! It's all in the stare!'

She later added:

'You know I didn't use to wear the headscarf before. So I never noticed this before. It hasn't been that long you know, maybe five or six years since I started wearing it. So at first, I didn't wear it and so since I wear it I can see the difference. It wasn't like that before. I wouldn't pay attention before. Now that I wear the headscarf, I have become the woman in veil; who everybody notices wherever she goes. They give me this dark look! I just hate it! Some people even came to me and said 'have you been forced to wear it?' (Chuckled).'
(French Pakistani)

Mahy described her uneasiness when she unwillingly becomes the centre of negative attention. She explicitly criticised the 'stare' and the 'dark look' or, what I term the white gaze, watching her body. In her discussion of the importance of the visual in the construction of attributed identities, Weedon (2004) used the term 'Eurocentric' and/or 'colonial' gaze to highlight the ways in which white people maintain racist representations of 'non-white' bodies on the basis of how they look. I use the term white gaze to refer to the (reported) fixation of white people on the physical appearance of my Pakistani and Algerian participants. This fixation of the white gaze on the body of 'overly-visible' Muslim women is another form of everyday racism, since according to Essed (2004; 1991), everyday racism also encompasses 'silent' and 'invisible' practices. The women who wear headscarves recognised that they are negatively stereotyped as 'submissive' women, 'oppressed' by men (participants often mentioned fathers, brothers and/or husbands as subjects of these discourses). The question 'have you been forced to wear it?' reflects the widespread image of the Muslim woman unable to translate her own agency vis-à-vis Muslim men, further strengthening the image of the 'uncivilised Muslim 'other'', oppressing women. Other participants also reported similar remarks by strangers on their way to work. Seedra's accounts well illustrate this. In the following quote, she remembered one particular incident when on her morning journey to work a man on the tube approached her:

'Usually it's the typical technique. They start by asking you a random question to initiate the conversation. Like the other day, this man came to me and said 'excuse me do you know what time it is?' and he went 'wow! Your watch is very pretty!', 'thank you'. I had a watch, similar to this one (she showed me her Chanel watch). 'How much did you pay for your watch?', 'I don't think that this has anything to do with you.' 'No, I just asked because I think you are very well dressed!' 'Oh! Thank you!', hmm 'I think it's very rare to see a young woman like you, with the headscarf who knows how to coordinate colours!', 'That's nice of you', 'But is it like this in your religion? Are you allowed to match colours?' (Laughed) (to me) Can you believe that?' (French Algerian)

Seedra's story points to the intersection of inferiorising identifications attributed to women who wear headscarves by white people, who treat belonging to a minority ethnic group as incompatible with high socio-economic and professional statuses. The oppressive environment created by the fixation of the white gaze is reported by all participants (French and British). Both Mahy and Seedra attributed comments such as the above to 'ignorance' and 'lack of awareness' of their culture and religion. They laughed off these seemingly naive questions and remarks, but considered the silent practices more frustrating. The similarity between Pakistani and Algerian participants' experiences yet again highlights how being 'overly-visible', although intersects with other social divisions such as ethnicity and social class, can produce a similar outcome.

In Britain, participants who wore headscarves explained to me that in social interactions, it is important to assert their national identity (e.g. 'I consider myself first and foremost Muslim but I am British. I am British Muslim. British!' Neelum, British Pakistani). These women referred to the well-known stereotypes associated with Muslim women who wear headscarves such as inability to speak the English language, confinement to the domestic sphere and oppression by male figures (e.g.

‘women can’t drive, can’t do this, can’t do that, can’t speak English, men oppress women, all that nonsense!’, Neelum, British Pakistani). These Pakistani and Algerian women reported how they are perceived as ‘outsiders’, the ones who do not belong to Britain. These women’s experiences of religious othering echo the ongoing debates of the supposedly problematic position of Muslims in the West (discussed in Chapter 1), reinforced by negative representations in the media. British Muslim women, who wear headscarves, prefer to emphasise their multiple identities – national and religious – in order to reassert their right of belonging and to counter others’ static attributed identification (i.e. religious). In the next extract, Neelum talked about the inconsistency between how she positions herself (i.e. British) and how she is perceived by others (i.e. non-British minority ethnic woman) because of her religious dress code¹⁵:

‘I was born and brought up here, I don’t think I had any (long pause) any like (long pause) negative or derogative racial or you know towards my religion incident, but you do get the old person you know in the bus who you give your seat and then they go ‘Oh! You speak really good English!’ (big smile) (British Pakistani)

This difference in representation shows the limits to the multicultural framework (initially celebrated by all the British women) and the contingent belonging of women who wear headscarves. I suggest that while ethnic differences are accepted and national and ethnic identities are compatible, it is the intersection of *visibility* and signifiers of religion that constructs ‘problematic’ positioning. The British women’s accounts highlight the existence of a cap to the acceptance of differences in multicultural Britain; one can be Muslim but should not be ‘overly-visible’.

Unlike in France, where all women regardless of their dress code experienced the pressure of the white gaze, in Britain, only women who

¹⁵ Neelum is the only participant who wears the headscarf *and* the abaya.

dress religiously reported similar experiences to Neelum and associated racism with unspoken words and looks. It is people's sometimes explicit reactions to her dress code which are experienced negatively. However, all women also insisted on the contextualised nature of such experiences in which space, social class and implicitly, racialisation intersected. Leila (British Algerian), for instance, suggested that she would experience racism on a daily basis if she lived 'in a different town' to the 'very diverse' London where they would be 'more English middle-class people'. She equated English with white in a similar way to how French women regularly used the term 'French' to identify white individuals. Leila is one of three British participants who made this association (the other two are Neelum (Pakistani) who wears the full Islamic dress and Latifa (Algerian) who does not wear the headscarf). Leila's quote illustrates that the process of identification is a two way process. Many French women and a few British women complained about negative racial prejudice but they too, in reaction to their experiences of othering by the white groups, portrayed them in a very stereotypical way (e.g. 'eat pork', 'drink alcohol', 'go clubbing'). Anthias (2002) argued that both the 'feelings of commonalities and otherness' are significant in individuals' translocational identities (p498). Leila's quote precisely illustrates the importance of the context and the interlocutor in constructing experiences of subtle racism. Thus, for her it is the 'white middle-class' neighbourhood which would be more prone to reproducing unspoken everyday racism. Therefore, although at first all British participants maintained a discourse of religious freedom, tolerance and acceptance, 'overly-visible' Muslim British women's citizenship is, from the women's reports, questioned by white individuals. While 'the Pakistani, the Chinese, the African, the English' (as Raheela said) make up Britain, 'overly-visible' Muslims are excluded; they are the ultimate Muslim 'other'.

Both French and British women are oppressed not only socially, as Essed (1991) suggests, but also emotionally. They are oppressed by the white majority ethnic group as a result of their perceived differences (i.e.

phenotypical and physical). Many women referred to unspoken racism, the staring white gaze which created a sense of rejection and pressure to conform to what is acceptable (especially in France). While all French women's experiences are similar regardless of their dress code, notable differences emerged among British women. Indeed, those who choose to dress religiously are subjected to particular forms of everyday racism and othering. Nevertheless, in both countries, women experienced racism that was limited to 'looks', 'stares', 'shocks' 'surprises' and seemingly naive remarks and/or questions. British women, who did not display any form of religious identity, reported only positive social encounters. This disparity strongly points to the current anti-Muslim climate in western European nations which fuels experiences of racism for those perceived as 'easy targets', as Leila suggested, because they can be identified as Muslims.

4.4 'Getting into the mould' and re-defining racialised identities

Having discussed how the othering process operates and affects my participants, in this section, I discuss how French and British participants used various identity strategies to counter and escape everyday racism. It first explores the use of mistaken identities, including 'whitened' and positive ethnic 'other' identities, in relation to all French participants and British Muslim women who wear headscarves. British women who do not wear headscarves are not concerned with these strategies, since they did not report a conflict between the identities they take up and those they are given. This section then further investigates the experiences of 'overly-visible' Muslim women, since they also *performed* 'white' identities, which in this study, was unique to this group of women. The final part of this section analyses another strategy used by many women regardless of their dress choice (especially British women who do not wear headscarves): the distancing strategy.

4.4.1 Countering and escaping racism: the use of mistaken identities

With the exception of British women who do not wear headscarves, all the other women in this study questioned their essentialised positioning as Algerian/Pakistani and/or Muslim since, according to them, this restrictive, attributed identity damages their image. Many of these participants thus used various strategies to re-define their representation and to achieve a more 'acceptable' social position and in some cases, a position less prone to stigmatisation and/or racial prejudices. One common strategy was to leave unchallenged mistaken identities.

Hanif (2007) demonstrated that many of her French Pakistani interviewees valued being seen as Indian rather than Pakistani since 'being Indian is still perceived positively' in France (p106). This was also true for many Pakistani women in my research. In a discussion of her experiences of subtle racism during social interactions with white people (discussed in Section Two), Sana made the following comment:

'People often think that I am Indian rather than Pakistani. [...] It's fine with me because here, there is this craze about everything that's Indian, like Indian food, the clothes and Bollywood! (laughs). So it's fine. Sometimes I just let them believe I am Indian, I don't say anything (chuckled). They can't tell the difference. (chuckled).'
(French Pakistani)

Sana often encounters such experiences when she wears shalwar kameez. When probed about her decision to 'let them believe', Sana explained that when she does say to people that she is Pakistani, she faces negative reactions. Thus, she gives implicit validation to others' attributions by silencing her 'true' identity; that is to say by not rectifying others' mistake in attributing her identity. Note that in both cases (whether she is identified as Pakistani or Indian) she is positioned as a non-French 'other' but her perception as an Indian woman makes her become a *positive* ethnic 'other' (compared to being seen as a Pakistani woman).

The perception of the body is yet again key in this process since the lack of association between her body and her 'true' ethnic identity allows Sana to become a member of a socially 'better' accepted minority ethnic group and escape racial stigmatisation as a Pakistani woman (Weedon, 2011). In Sana's case, bodily differences were associated with clothing, while for some other French Pakistani women these were associated with their physiognomy. Ruksana remembered many cases during which she silenced her ethnic identity in order to avoid religious prejudice. While telling me an incident of religious discrimination¹⁶, Ruksana made the following comment:

'Well to be honest, my face, I am not very Pakistani. People often think I am Italian or Spanish. So as a result, well, people never suspect that I am Muslim.' (French Pakistani)

The experience of religious discrimination has made Ruksana very conscious of religious prejudice. She has now stopped wearing the headscarf altogether. By changing her appearance, Ruksana allowed a shift in her attributed identity as she removed from her body the 'Muslim' identifier available to the white gaze. She now uses her physiognomic differences to her own advantage by accepting the allocation of a 'whitened' identity ('Italian or Spanish') which made her a member of a socially less 'problematic' minority ethnic group. She covered her religious identity by uncovering her head. While Ruksana only removed her headscarf, Farida (French Algerian) has gone even further in the uncovering strategy. She wears clothes associated with western white women such as mini-skirts. What is important to note is that she does not necessarily seek membership of the white group; yet her dress code externalises features associated with white women in the West which allows her to avoid negative identification as a Muslim Algerian woman

¹⁶ Ruksana explained to me how she used to wear the headscarf but always removed it before reaching her office. She felt that she was the victim of religious discrimination because her employment contract ended shortly after a male colleague saw her with the headscarf outside work. This incident is fully analysed in Chapter 6.

(‘For [white people] I am [white] French because of the way I dress!’). The attribution of a non-Muslim identity is a result of her appearance being perceived as antithetical to that of a covered, imprisoned and oppressed Muslim woman. By uncovering her body, Farida removes visible signifiers of religion and thus adopts signifiers generally associated with the white body. Note that Sana, Ruksana and Farida are all attributed an ethnicised identity (Indian, Italian/Spanish and white respectively) but it is their disassociation with Islam which leads to a socially ‘less-problematic’ identity. This highlights that the intersection of ethnicity and (visibility of) religion (i.e. Islam) remains subjected to negative positioning in France.

In his essay on Asian Americans, Zhou (2004) questioned whether the group is ‘becoming white’. He argued that while some minority ethnic immigrants attempt to become white through educational and economic successes (as white is associated with ‘higher social status’), their children – the second generation – ‘heighten their racial distinctiveness’ to fight back against the exclusive equation between American identity and whiteness (pp35-36). Unlike the stories told in Zhou’s (2004) work, the second generations in my study attempt to escape processes of othering by removing visible identifiers of their ethnic and/or religious identities (e.g. headscarf/clothing). The point is that these women deliberately make their socially ‘problematic’ ethnic and religious identities invisible. Thus, many French women use others’ perceptions to their own advantage; for some, it is about uncovering their bodies in order to fight against negative stereotypes associated with Islam, and for others it is about reconciling religious and/or ethnic and national identities.

Nevertheless, not being able to assert freely their ethnic and religious identities remains a form of oppression as becoming a more acceptable minority ethnic woman does not eradicate racial prejudices. Indeed, as Zhou (2004) suggests, changing appearance or leaving unchallenged a mistaken identity creates new stereotypes. This reinforces the existence of subtle racism based on bodily differences and religion in France,

strengthens the racial divide between groups, and shows that those who 'cannot' become members of an accepted minority ethnic group will remain potential subjects of racism and be eternally othered such as women who wear headscarves (discussed below).

Unlike French women, the British women who do not wear headscarves gave accounts that suggest that their claimed identity is in harmony with their attributed identity. These women are not subject of mistaken identities. On the contrary, similar to Zhou's (2004) findings, one Pakistani woman, Noreen, explicitly described putting forward her ethnic identity ('I am very traditional in my ways and I wear traditional clothes'). For her, adopting a cultural dress code is a way to display her ethnic identity in a way which remains consistent with her self-representation. Noreen's identity strategy (enhancing her ethnic identity) is unique since the majority of British women who do not wear headscarves employed a different strategy to re-define their ethnic identity (see final part of this section).

The use of 'whitened' and positive ethnic 'other' identities to avoid stereotypes were mainly a feature among French women who do not wear headscarves. One British Algerian woman, Latifa, who does not wear the headscarf, also mentioned that it is difficult for others to categorise her and those who come close to recognising her ethnic identity, often perceive her as Moroccan. In such cases, Latifa does not correct these mistaken identities because she is 'not bothered'; unlike French women who silence their 'true' identities to avoid racism. As argued earlier, being identified as Algerian or as Moroccan makes no difference to her, since she is positioned as a positive ethnic 'other' in comparison to the well-established minority ethnic groups who are more readily stigmatised. Unlike in France where the intersection of ethnicity (i.e. Algerian and Pakistani) and Islam produces similar negative othering (whether visible or not), in Britain, it is the intersection of an ethnicity

'well-established' in the British social imaginary and religion which constructs experiences of negative othering.

4.4.2 'Overly-visible' Muslim women performing the 'white' identity

Only two French participants wear headscarves (excluding Ruksana who has stopped): Seedra, (Algerian) and Mahy (Pakistani). Since these women are visibly associated with Islam, they attempt to control their self-image and the way others represent them (Goffman, 1959). Performing the 'white' identity entails enhancing features perceived to be white French. For example, Mahy makes sure that she only speaks French when she is out. This is similar to Zhou's (2004) second generation Asians who attribute certain characteristics to white Americans only (such as having higher educational levels). Yet, both women have very different ways of displaying their religious identity. For example, unlike Mahy, Seedra explained how she purposely dresses 'à la française', wearing high heels, being up-to-date with new fashion styles, wearing make-up and jewellery. All of these features are perceived to be non-existent among Muslim women and associated with white women only. The following extract refers to a discussion of what Seedra described as her 'daily war' as a Muslim woman living in a racist white society:

'I wear make-up; I wear high heels and so for some it's not synonymous with modesty. But modesty can take up different forms. When people think of Muslim women they believe they are sad, erased, non-existent, dull because of the way they look. So some people said to me that I am not fully Muslim! (Chuckled) I am moderate because I dress à la française. What I try to do is, by my dress sense, my behaviour, I try to convey a beautiful image of Islam.' (French Algerian)

Seedra's strategy is to feminise her 'covered' body with 'western' accessories (unlike Farida who 'westernised' her body with clothes). It is important to note that unlike women who do not wear headscarves,

Seedra's visibility as a Muslim woman 'prevents' her from becoming a member of a socially 'less' problematic minority ethnic group or from taking advantage of mistaken identities. Nonetheless, it allows her to disrupt the perceived image of Muslim women. She attempts to become a 'visually pleasant' Muslim woman (not 'sad, erased, non-existent, dull') to the white gaze.

Strong similarities were noticeable between 'overly-visible' French and British Muslim women. Both British Pakistani and Algerian women who wear headscarves (two and four women respectively) cannot 'benefit' from 'whitened' and/or positive 'other' identities in a similar way to their peers who do not wear headscarves. Thus, they too externalise the 'white' identity. When discussing the importance or not of cultural traditions, Leila (British Algerian) explained that she does not have strong ties to 'anything that's Algerian' so she 'dress[es] just to be like everybody else', such as long skirts and dresses. Dressing 'like everybody else' is a way for Leila to combine her religious dress code with supposedly western garments (long skirts and dresses). Normalising their representation (i.e. as similar to everybody else) was a recurrent theme among British Algerian and Pakistani women and was also a similar strategy employed by French women. Only Neelum adopts a unique strategy, different from the other 'overly-visible' Muslim participants. She does not externalise western appearance through her dress since she wears the abaya; instead she makes speaking English a central competence.

'I think half of [the people I meet] have already made up their minds. I think they already think that I won't be able to speak English, I probably don't work, stay at home, all of these preconceived ideas. So when I talk, I make sure to speak good English. I mean I show I can speak proper English, like no accent or anything like that (chuckled). I tell them that I am a teacher and then I often get 'oh!' you know just the 'oh!' as that's unexpected. [...] I think if I didn't wear the hijab and I wasn't wearing the abaya, then I don't think I would get the 'oh!' as in 'you can speak English!'. So it's very important to show that I can.' (British Pakistani)

Externalising and emphasising her ability to speak English is used by Neelum to break through 'preconceived ideas'. Note that she emphasises speaking with 'no accent', ensuring that she is not associated with stereotypes of women in hijabs and abayas who do not speak English or do so with an accent.

Performing 'white' identities therefore takes many forms in this study. 'Overly-visible' Muslim women used ornaments and make-up to stress their femininity, used strategies to normalise their covered bodies and enhanced their language competency. In all cases, women attempt to break through racial stereotyping and establish themselves as French or British. Unlike women who do not wear headscarves, these women's particular experiences show that the intersection between *visibility* and signifiers of Islam continuously position them as the ultimate Muslim 'other'. Put differently, I suggest that multiple identities (ethnic, religious and national) can be compatible as long as the religious remains 'invisible'.

4.4.3 'That's not me': a distancing strategy

A further strategy employed by many women was a distancing strategy to mitigate negativity associated with their racialised identity by positioning themselves in contrast to the stereotyped collective identity of their ethnic

group. Distancing themselves involved demeaning the characteristics of other women and/or other ethnic groups and positioning themselves as 'better' or completely different.

A few French women employed this strategy; some to distance themselves from other stigmatised minority ethnic women and others from 'overly-visible' Muslim women. These participants asserted their multiple identities (ethnicity and gender or religion and gender). In a discussion of her 'daily war' (as discussed above), Seedra made sense of why people are 'intrigued' by her appearance:

'You know it's the image [of the headscarf] which scares people. This is why I wear it the way I do¹⁷. It's for a purpose. So that it is nice to see. People said to me 'I don't have a problem with your veil; it suits you well!'. You know it's because of the women who wear it too simply, very hmm dark and hmm, I don't want to put the blame on them but these women don't smile, they never say hello, (pause), they, you know how they are hmm how to say? (Long pause). They are not very sociable. They never talk to you! And this only reinforces preconceived ideas about women who wear headscarves. It's because of that [the image of the headscarf] is negative. I prove the opposite. I don't hide behind my headscarf. I love to wear nice clothes. I like matching lively colours. So people think 'ah, this girl smiles, she is open-minded, she says 'excuse me' in public transports. I try to remain polite compared to others. (Chuckled) I don't push away people, even though that's the only thing I want to do! (Chuckled)' (French Algerian)

Note how Seedra hesitated before engaging in her argument; she was aware of its judgmental tone. During all interviews, I did not wear the headscarf but many participants, like Seedra, still felt the need to present their argument without appearing to condemn women who wear

¹⁷ Seedra explained to me that she always wears a designer headscarf, but more importantly, she wears a headscarf which matches her outfit, inspired by fashion magazines. She chooses lively and bright colours so that it pleases the eye of the other ('so that it is nice to see').

headscarves differently to them and more importantly without appearing as a 'bad' Muslim who criticises other Muslims¹⁸. By dressing differently to the majority of 'overly-visible' Muslim women, Seedra distances herself from the group. By denying commonality with other women who wear headscarves, Seedra positioned herself as a socially better 'integrated' Muslim woman. Yet, she is also self-policing her behaviour since she is aware that she is being judged not as a person, but as a Muslim woman.

Unlike Seedra, Reema (French Pakistani) and Naima (French Algerian) distance themselves from white French women and other French Maghrebi women respectively. Reema claimed to be different to white French women as she does not 'strip off' her clothes and 'go clubbing'. She opposed herself to white women when discussing the perception of her work colleagues about her. She insisted that differences exist, but these do not prevent her maintaining healthy and friendly work relationships. Unlike Reema, Naima distanced herself from other French Maghrebi women by emphasising social class differences. During her second interview, I asked her to clarify the use of the plural pronoun 'we' when discussing the importance of breaking stereotypes:

¹⁸ My not wearing the headscarf could also explain why Seedra did not make any comment about women who do not wear headscarves, limiting her views to those who do.

'When I say 'we' it refers to [Maghrebi] women who work, who are dynamic, who do activities with their children, who go out. It makes me feel good to see this. Honestly. So 'we' corresponds to these women and not to those stereotypical women who stay at home, wear headscarf, who babysit children, who don't have friends, because that's all true. [...] they are always in social services, you see them all the time queuing in different social services offices. In Social Welfare Family Allowance offices. They are always there. It's a very negative image that is conveyed of these women. Whereas I too receive family allowances because of my son; my son is three so I receive that but I am not associated with this type of behaviour [by others]. So there you go! I take care of myself, I go out, I enjoy life. I mean I don't know. I wear clothes. I mean I like to wear clothes. And it's the same, they never dress up. You know it's really shocking sometimes. There are women who come here to participate to different activities and you should see how they turn up! They don't take care of themselves. [...] you know for some of them going to the social services offices it's like a day out! They spend the whole day there, with their buggies and food boxes! Seriously! I have a life; I don't have the time to waste in these offices. [...] Sometimes I don't even realise I have not been reimbursed for my medical claims. It doesn't matter. But for these women it's their life! How can I explain to you? It's hmm (long pause) they have their own lifestyle (Long silence). I could never ever do this! [...] Do you understand? I think these women have different goals in life. They see life differently.'

(French Algerian)

Note how Naima used discursive tools (i.e. these women, those women; repetition of 'they' and emphasis on 'I') to distance herself from the group of women she described. While Seedra was hesitant to do so, Naima was very straightforward in her views and did not see her description as negative but only as stating the truth ('it's all true'; 'honestly'; 'seriously'; 'always'; 'all the time'). Emphasising the truthfulness of her views could

be related to how Naima perceived me, as a Pakistani woman¹⁹, and assumed that I was unaware of issues related to Maghrebi women. Accordingly, she positioned herself as the insider, sharing knowledge and educating me. It may also be that since I did not show any reaction while she spoke, she might have thought that I did not believe her.

Mackintosh and Mooney (2004) argue that 'social class can provide us with a sense of belonging; it can tell us [...] how to relate to the world around us' (p96). This is well-illustrated in Naima's quote. By criticising Maghrebi women in general, she minimised the effect of her privileged social class position (note her reference to medical claims). She used her middle class status to define her position in society, which she constructed as belonging to the (limited number of) successful Maghrebi people. She ultimately described this position to symbolise the 'good' Maghrebi woman. By denying commonality with less privileged Maghrebi women, Naima blamed them for the perpetuation of cultural prejudice against them and therefore normalised racist practices (Anthias, 2002).

Half of the British women do not wear headscarves and the majority of these are Pakistanis. Many of them attempted to counter stereotypes through adopting behaviours perceived to be atypical of Pakistani women in Britain. In the following quote, Mariam discussed the importance of getting a degree. She explained how many of her family members' and work colleagues' perception of her would change if she got another degree. I asked her to clarify:

¹⁹ On numerous occasions when talking about Pakistanis she repeatedly said 'in your community, you do/think/are'.

'I think in, in the family the women... I mean. I've got one cousin who has done a Master's in English. But they've never...it's not like me. Okay (very firm) I know this is going to sound bad, if a woman has done a Master's okay, and she becomes a housewife and she has like three, four kids! I know this is really, really bad! The woman I aspire to, is a woman that's the mother, who works full-time, who is the main breadwinner as well. You know that is today's British woman. [...] I have a daughter. I work. Okay it's part-time but I work. I don't just sit at home and do nothing. I am educated and I make use of that. I engage with the society I live in. There are so many Pakistani women out there who have done Master's and all those things but what are they doing? They are at home, all they aspire to be is to clean the house and be a housewife. And that (low voice) to me...it just...doesn't...appeal to me at all. That's not me!' (British Pakistani)

Note that, as with Seedra, Mariam showed signs of hesitation. I believe that her perception of me as a Pakistani woman influenced the way she shared her views about other Pakistani women. She did not wish to be judged negatively by another Pakistani woman (me) or appear as the 'bad' woman, not supportive of other (Pakistani) women. Mariam and other British Pakistani women ensured that their definition of 'Pakistani' contrasted with the assumed definition others hold about the group. Thus, by claiming to be educated and in paid work (similar attributes mentioned by Naima), Mariam positioned herself as an exception among Pakistani women in Britain. In doing so, she reinforced the stereotype in operation for the group (i.e. uneducated, stay-at-home mothers, not socially engaged) and distanced herself from that image.

I argue that participants like Mariam perceive their middle class status to warrant their 'uniqueness' amongst Pakistanis, the majority of whom live in poor socio-economic conditions as indicated in Chapter 1. Put simply, being a member of the middle classes is seen as exceptional for many minority ethnic groups but not for the white majority ethnic group.

Therefore, by distancing themselves from their respective ethnic groups these women 'whiten' their ethnic identity. What is important here is the focus on acculturation. These women proudly asserted their ethnic identities (as seen in the first section of this chapter) but nevertheless forcefully presented their cultural and social practices as similar to those of the white majority. Their *situated* identity claims allow these women to navigate their social positions in ways that benefit them. However, this process was specific to the group of British Pakistani women who do not wear headscarves. They use the distancing strategy to 'whiten' their ethnic and social class positionalities, sadly serving to reinforce widespread stereotypes about British Pakistani women and strengthening colour divides.

This section has shown how the intersection of multiple identities form the basis of mistaken identities (including the 'whitened' and positive ethnic 'other' identities) and distancing strategies used by minority ethnic women to de-construct negative positioning and re-locate themselves in a more positive or socially less 'problematic' way in relation to the wider society. Some of these women disassociated themselves with what they saw as the stereotyped group and to get closer to the white group. In all instances, the women attempted to '[get] into the mould' (Zara, French Algerian), that is to conform to what is perceived to be 'normal' and accepted and to counter the effect of potential racism as well as attempting to escape it. All the women navigate their identities translocationaly; they use these as resources to protect themselves in oppressive environments. These strategies enable the women to fight against negative homogenising and collective identities, but only temporarily. In each new social interaction, the women have to repeat their performance (e.g. to make sure to speak with 'no accent'; be overly polite; be 'open-minded'). This reinforces the idea that those who cannot easily become members of an accepted minority ethnic group will have to, as one French participant said, go through 'daily war[s]'.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined a number of key elements involved in the identity negotiations of Pakistani and Algerian women in France and Britain.

Differences across countries were notable in terms of how the women position themselves in society. On the one hand, all French participants asserted their citizen identity in order to claim their right to belong to France, which is constantly challenged by white people on the basis of physical and phenotypical differences. On the other hand, British women who did not wear headscarves favour more mixed identities forged primarily on ethnic, religious and national lines. Since the identities attributed to them and their claimed identities are similar, these women do not experience any identity conflict. However, British women who wear headscarves and/or abaya self-identified mainly in terms of their nationality (similar to French women) and as a result experienced a constant conflict in their claimed and attributed identities.

Some women attempt to re-position themselves by conveying their claimed and/or socially less 'problematic' identities. While some women benefit from 'whitened' and/or positive ethnic 'other' identities; others distance themselves from stigmatised collective identities. In all cases, the participants build on their attributed identities to secure less threatening social interactions and so to avoid experiences of racism and discrimination. There are, however, notable differences between the identity strategies adopted by women who do not wear headscarves and those who do. 'Overly-visible' Muslim women perform 'white' identities; they emphasise elements they identify as signifying whiteness such as ability to speak the language and to show that they are educated, well-informed and in professional jobs. Yet, these women are unable to benefit from positive ethnic 'other' or 'whitened' identities, similar to their peers who do not wear headscarves, since the intersection between

visibility and religious signifiers position them as the ultimate Muslim 'other'.

The spontaneity in many French women's accounts reflects the underlying oppressive presence of racism in their lives. This spontaneity is a notable similarity between French and British women. Only 'overly-visible' Muslim British women shared similar stories to the French women. Although these women strongly asserted Britain's multicultural stance, they too undergo a process of othering on the basis of their dress choice. I argued that there is a cap to the acceptance of differences in multicultural Britain; while ethnic diversity is understood as part of Britishness, visible Islam is not. While the British women shared a sense of contingent belonging as a result of their religion, the French women experienced a sense of non-belonging on the basis of their ethnicity and religion. Therefore, as Bassel and Emujulu (2010) argue, despite the existence of two 'different' ideologies, multiple identities are challenged in both France and Britain. In this study, multiple identities formed along ethnic and religious lines are excluded from the notion of belonging in both France and Britain, which triggered a strong sense of emotional non-belonging among all the French women and 'overly-visible' Muslim British women. The ultimate 'other' is not the ethnic or colonised 'other' but it is the Muslim 'other', especially the visible Muslim 'other' in the UK. Some women experienced this identity shift from the ethnic/colonised 'other' to the Muslim 'other' which points to the perceived 'problematic' position of Muslims in the West.

The accounts analysed in this chapter have shown how global (such as 9/11) and/or national *contexts* impact on the women's identities. For example, issues that have become iconic in the national imaginary in each country such as '7/7' in Britain and Mohammad Mérah affair in France impact on the formation of identity categories, particularly serving to (re)produce categorisations of the Muslim 'other'. Such constructions

produce particular forms of oppression that emanate from religious racism (Anthias, 2009).

One of the contributions of this chapter has been its illumination of the fact that it is not simply the existence of differences that leads to the attributions of 'other' identities. Instead, it is the *visibility* of these differences, which exist in the social imaginary of the majority ethnic group that contributes to the othering experiences of the women. It is for this reason that women who wear headscarves are taken to symbolise Muslim otherness, while Muslim women from the same minority ethnic groups who do not, are frequently not publicly recognised or differentiated. In that respect, while minority ethnic identities are recognised as part of multicultural Britain and republican France, albeit unequally, the intersection of Muslim religious *visibility* with minority ethnicity for Algerian and Pakistani women were experienced by some of the participants in this study as irreconcilable with Frenchness and Britishness. Thus, on the one hand, intersectionality contributes to the understanding of how experiences of everyday racism are constructed. On the other hand, translocational positionality contributes to the understanding of how spatial and contextual dimensions in which the women find themselves (i.e. broader national contexts such as '7/7' and social interaction with a white person) construct *situated* identity claims and attributions, which are at times contradictory. For example, as seen earlier, Naima (French Algerian) claimed commonality with other Maghrebi women in terms of her experiences of racism but identified with white people in terms of her privileged social class position. In a similar way, Latifa (British Algerian) described herself as an Algerian woman in Britain but as a Londoner in France to avoid racism. Taken together, intersectionality and translocational positionality frameworks contribute to the understanding of everyday racism and (non-)belonging among second generations.

In conclusion, this chapter has highlighted how French and British women position themselves in society and how they are positioned by others. It has shown the embedded nature of everyday racism in many women's accounts which enhanced feelings of injustice and a sense of non-belonging. These understandings will be crucial in the analysis of these participants' experiences in the educational and professional settings (Chapters 5 and 6 respectively).

Chapter 5: The educational trajectories and experiences of second generation Pakistani and Algerian women in France and Britain

This chapter provides an insight into French and British participants' educational experiences. The chapter draws on the discussions in Chapters 1 and 4 which provide the background necessary to an understanding of how parents' migratory experiences are related to the women's educational trajectories and the women's attitude towards education. Details of all participants' educational background can be found in Appendix 4.

The chapter explores how initial social class disparities and parents' experiences of inequalities in the context of migration contributed to the construction of the educational pathways of participants, notably during secondary school and higher education. I argue that it did so through a process that included unequal racist treatment in the educational system, parents' lack of profitable social capital and lack of guidance for their daughters about education. Together, this serves to show how the intersection of class-based, ethnic and religious factors operated and influenced the women's education-related decisions (including choices of degree and university) and how the women negotiated these decisions with others (including parents, classmates and teaching staff). In focusing on education, the chapter helps to contextualise the participants' labour market positions, especially during their education-to-work transition which is the subject of Chapter 6.

This chapter is organised in three sections. In Section One, I focus on participants' perceptions of their parents' involvement in, or lack of input to, their education. Section Two discusses how everyday racism impacted on educational trajectories, as well as participants' experiences within the educational system. Section Three explores how participants

now attempt to re-define their life trajectories by countering earlier educational disadvantages.

5.1 Impact of (lack of) parental involvement on their children's education

In this section, I discuss how social class inequalities affected French and British Pakistani and Algerian women's educational trajectories¹. First, I focus on how parental involvement and/or inability to be involved impacted on participants' education-related decisions at secondary school and university. I then consider their university trajectories, showing how they negotiated their degree choices with their parents.

5.1.1 The intersecting disadvantages of social class and migration

The majority of the French participants came from a disadvantaged working class background constituted by unskilled work, often in factories². In some families, only the father worked, the mother never having engaged in paid employment. In most cases, the financial resources available within the household were limited. The few middle class participants had at least one parent entrepreneur. Yet, the educational experiences of middle class participants did not differ substantially from the less privileged French participants. Both middle class and working class participants shared similar experiences of schooling in a new environment, unfamiliar to their parents, which impacted on their educational trajectories. In the following extract, I asked Zara if she received support from her family regarding her education. She

¹ Although there are differences between Pakistani and Algerian participants, the analysis of their educational experiences and trajectories did not reveal any differences by ethnicity. The differences found are notably class-based and specific to each country. Therefore, the findings presented are similar for French Pakistani and Algerian participants on the one hand and British Pakistani and Algerian participants on the other hand.

² Details about parents' occupation and participants' social class background can be found in Appendix 6.

then described the difficult situation she was in during her schooling which she explained as extremely burdensome:

'We never talked about my studies because [my parents] weren't aware of anything. [...] and you have to say what it is. My parents, they came here, they didn't know a word of French. It was a big transition for them. And even I didn't know anything and I couldn't understand differences [between different educational options]. So I had this burden, all that burden...on my shoulders. It was very hard to do it all by myself!' (French Algerian, middle class)

Zara referred to the choices available after the completion of GCSE level: a more traditional route or work-based learning. The difficulty in making post-GCSE educational choices Zara mentioned corroborates the findings of previous studies. For instance, in his research on the educational and professional aspirations of children of immigrants, Caille (2005) found uneasiness among his working class young Maghrebi interviewees about distinguishing between the traditional educational route and work-based learning. In this study, evidence of this was found in both middle class participants' accounts like Zara's and similar to Caille's interviewees, also in working class women's. In addition to their inability to rely on their parents' guidance in making school-related decisions, working class participants also referred to the lack of material support they received during their schooling. In the next extract, Anissa recounted experiences of inequalities at school, compared to her more privileged friends. During my explanation of the information leaflet, Anissa interrupted me to share her experiences of unequal treatment at work (fully discussed in Chapter 6), and then spontaneously mentioned how she also experienced inequalities at school. I then probed her to give me more details about her school experiences:

'First, [availability of] material resources [makes a difference between children of immigrants and children of non-immigrants]. We didn't have any help like tuitions or anything. So financial but also because our parents were illiterate, they came from a different context, different culture. So you have to cope with everything alone. At least you have your siblings.' (French Algerian, working class)

Note how Anissa made sense of her educational experiences. She framed these intersectionally, in terms of economic differences, as well as cultural differences and her parents' experiences of migration. It is the intersection of all three factors which put many women in similar disadvantaged situations to Anissa. Discussing the association between social class and educational attainments, Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) claimed that an uneven distribution of different forms of capital – economic, cultural and linguistic – produces or reproduces inequalities within the educational system. They limited their analysis to socio-economic differences, offering a very static theorisation of the correlation between social class and education. They did not take into account histories of migration which, in my study, impacted on middle class and working class participants similarly in terms of being able to draw on parental guidance as a resource. This similarity highlights the intersection of migration *and* social class disadvantages. Both working class and migrant families lacked profitable social capital; that is to say, in this study, parents had restricted use of their social capital in the country to which they migrated. This similarity was found across both ethnic groups. Indeed, as seen in the above examples, Zara and Anissa were equally unable to draw on their parents' social capital to guide them. Anissa was, in addition, unable to rely on her parents for economic resources. Both social and economic capitals were important during their schooling.

Several British participants also reported a lack of parental guidance and/or financial support regarding their education. Karima (British Algerian, working class) for example said that her parents 'did not know the system and didn't have much idea' about what type of degree would

best suit her professional aspirations. However, one British Pakistani participant, Anya, reported the pressure she experienced from her mother in taking specific subjects during her A-level. Anya comes from a middle class background. She took 'all the sciences at A-levels' because these were 'really being pushed by [her] mother'. She understood her mother's decision in terms of the symbolic status her parents, especially her mother, would achieve within her social network for having a daughter with science A-levels. Anya internalised the importance of prestige reiterated by her mother (see also Loury et al., 2005). The simultaneous effect of social class and ethnicity was central to Anya's experience. Although only Anya reported having experienced parental pressure at secondary level, many other British participants reported similar experiences at the tertiary level (discussed below).

As with the French women, the majority of British participants also reported a lack of practical support from their families. This was a common feature across all groups in both countries. While both working class and middle class participants felt unable to rely on parental guidance, working class participants also mentioned a lack of financial support. This reiterates my above argument about working class participants experiencing the simultaneous impact of social class and migration disadvantages compared to middle class participants. The participants in both countries thus had to be self-reliant. This affected the women in various ways as they moved through the educational system, including their transition from secondary to tertiary education.

5.1.2 Choice of degree: negotiating between personal fulfilment and financially viable solutions

As seen so far, the women's parents did not have detailed knowledge of the educational system. Nevertheless, lack of financial and practical support did not mean that they were not emotionally supported. Many parents had high ambitions for their daughters, strongly encouraging

them to pursue higher education. This could partly be as a result of the parents' own experiences of settlement in France or Britain. Their inability to move up the social ladder, as seen in Chapter 1, could partly explain their perception of higher education as a gateway to social mobility for their children.

Some French participants reported being directed by their parents towards financially viable degrees. For instance, when asked why she did a Master's in accountancy, Zara (French Algerian, middle class) explained that she was 'pushed' into finance studies by her parents, although she was interested in sociology. According to Zara, her parents wanted her to study in order to get a job that will allow her 'to bring money home and feed her family'; something she understood but experienced negatively, since she could not study what she wished. Zara's experience also highlights the general perception of university subjects held by some parents, which favoured those believed to have a practical value in the labour market.

This particular issue of parents' emotional involvement in their children's education, has rarely been explored in French literature (for the few exceptions, see Brinbaum and Kieffer, 2005; Silberman, 2004). Indeed, current French education-related literature is more preoccupied with the academic outcomes and participation of minority ethnic students compared to their white peers, rather than with their experiences and the construction of their educational pathways. In their longitudinal study of generational changes, Brinbaum and Kieffer (2005) found a lack of correlation between parents' high aspirations, for their children and their children's actual educational outcomes, which were often marked by low achievements, delays (i.e. students are held back a year) and drop outs from university. These findings were confirmed in other research (e.g. Silberman, 2004). My participants engaged in higher education, at least partly as a result of their parents' 'push'. Although some participants like Zara experienced their parents' input negatively, the value put on

education and especially tertiary education by working class and middle class parents was a positive motivator in their children's academic achievements in both groups. The similarity found in working class and middle class participants suggests the importance of migration similarities in shaping educational trajectories.

Moreover, in addition to subject choice (which influenced university choice) and limitation of financial resources, some French participants' options were also restricted because of expectations of conformity to gender specific behaviour. As Zara (French Algerian, middle class) explained young women are expected to live with their parents until marriage and hence, they cannot apply to a university that would require living on campus ('you can't just decide to live on your own! It doesn't work like that in our culture!'). No French participant lived on campus while studying. In that respect, many French participants' educational trajectories were constructed by the intersection of university subject choice, social class as well as gender.

Unlike in France, parental involvement in their children's education has been the focus of many studies in Britain (see for example, Shah et al., 2010; Archer and Francis, 2006; Modood, 2004). For instance, Archer and Francis (2006) described how Chinese parents' input in their children's primary to tertiary education serves to produce high levels of achievements among the group in Britain; a finding in line with studies of other minority ethnic groups, such as Pakistanis (see for example, Modood, 2004). Evidence of this was found for both British Pakistani and Algerian participants. In the following example, I asked Heena about her reasons for going to university:

'If it wasn't for my parents then I wouldn't have finished uni, so if it wasn't for my parents I would have (pause) finished college, and started working. But I did go to uni thanks to them.' (British Algerian, working class)

Retrospectively, Heena felt that her parents' persistence in getting her to study for a degree had a positive outcome in terms of her employment prospects. However, similar to many of the French participants, many of the British women felt that the experience of going to university was a burden, forced upon them by their parents. The following extract taken from Mariam's interview was produced when I asked her why she decided to go to university:

'I was in the mindset of doing some work, getting into the employment market [after my A-levels]. My mum was like 'you got to do a Master's' (sad voice). 'At least one of my children has to get a Master's'. My mum...she made me go to uni. She forced us (high pitch) and my brother ended up doing a Master's.' (British Pakistani, middle class)

Mariam 'had to' go to university. She graduated and continued to a Master's degree. Note how Mariam expressed her frustration through strong negative words ('made me'/'forced us'). Note also how the only acceptable route she reported as satisfactory for her mother was getting a Master's degree; an undergraduate qualification was not enough. Unlike some French parents who 'pushed' their daughters for financially viable degrees; in Mariam's story, her mother was concerned about the prestige associated with university qualifications, especially postgraduate qualifications rather than getting a 'useful' education. Mariam feels that her English literature degree 'was a waste of time'. She did not get any practical advice from her mother in deciding on her subject choices but was still 'pushed' to study at least to a Master's level. Loury and her colleagues (2005) argued that for some minority ethnic groups, higher educational achievements convey perceptions of prestige, as they

potentially open doors to social mobility through accessing high income occupations. For Mariam, it was a case of maintaining an already high social status and prestige within her mother's social network, rather than accessing a higher social level. The importance associated with educational and occupational prestige was significant in Mariam's interview. Having decided not to complete her Master's course and getting a postgraduate certificate instead, Mariam explained how disappointed her mother was. Thus, although many British participants were emotionally supported by their parents in going to university; others also experienced a lack of emotional support for pursuing *preferred* degree subjects where these did not coincide with what their parents considered prestigious or potentially lucrative. As a result, many women felt they were pushed by their parents into choosing subjects they were not interested in. In the following extract, I asked Anya why she did a degree in economics:

'So obviously [the best thing for Pakistani parents] is the field of doctor and the next thing would be business, banking is definitely next in line. And I remember when I proposed to be a teacher (long silence), my mother was horrified (long silence) hmm and hmm, a lot of people said 'why are you doing this,' I said 'cause I'm interested in it.' (British Pakistani, middle class)

Anya's experience shows how for some parents, priority is given to the material outcome of education, while their children put a strong emphasis on personal fulfilment, a feature also present in the majority of French women's accounts. As a result, Anya's parents and especially her mother did not support her in doing a teaching qualification. Consequently, in addition to being 'pushed' to do all science subjects at A-level, as seen earlier, Anya did a degree in economics despite a personal preference for geography. Many British participants completed their degrees because of their parents, 'to make them happy' (Heena, British Algerian, working class).

Many scholars discussed the burden young women, especially in Pakistani families, face in the name of the family's reputation. These discussions mostly focus on issues of (forced) marriages for Pakistani women (Dale, 2008) and/or honour killings among women in general (Reddy, 2008). In my study, the notion of family status was discussed in positive ways, in the sense that the women reported that their parents were concerned about their professional independence ('my parents' main concern, especially for us girls, [was that we become] professionals [and were] able to stand on our own two feet', Noreen, British Pakistani, middle class). Some also reported that they were 'pushed' to better themselves through higher education ('for my dad, I think it was just, proud. He is really proud his daughters went to university', Heena, British Algerian, working class) and/or by studying for what their parents view as prestigious educational options. This feature was prominent across both countries and among both minority ethnic groups; yet some participants experienced this negatively since they felt they could not pursue their own aspirations (including studying for a different degree or going into employment and not higher education).

In this section, I discussed how parental involvement or lack of involvement in my participants' education influenced their educational experiences and trajectories. Strong similarities emerged across countries. Many middle class and working class participants reported a lack of support from their families regarding academic decisions, in terms of knowledge of the system and/or their strong convictions about which subjects to do. In addition, working class participants also reported a lack of financial support which created further barriers since they had to work to support their studies (discussed in Section Three). These commonalities show the importance of migration experiences, which restricted minority ethnic parents' social capital (as Bourdieu (1980) defined) – economic, cultural and linguistic – and hence their ability to assist their daughters in their education. Nevertheless, lack of detailed knowledge of the system did not prevent some parents' strong emotional

support. Their high ambitions for their daughters encouraged my participants to achieve academic success.

However, while experiences and decisions about higher education pathways are affected by subject choice and financial resources, these were not the only factors that contributed to French and British participants' university trajectories. For many French participants, expectations of conformity to gender-specific roles further restricted their choice of university, whereas some British participants discussed their family's status (associated with the daughter's image) positively. In that respect, different social divisions worked simultaneously to produce many participants' educational trajectories.

Having discussed how parental involvement or lack of involvement constructed participants' educational trajectories, the next section expands on participants' experiences within the educational system by looking at their reported experiences of everyday racism and discrimination perpetrated by members of school staff and/or classmates.

5.2 Everyday racism in the educational system

5.2.1 Experiences of racial discrimination and violence in secondary school

Many French researchers have documented the existence of racism in the educational system, particularly with regard to choices after the completion of GCSE level (Brinbaum et al., 2010; INED-INSEE, 2008; Van Zanten, 2001, 2006; Brinbaum and Kieffer, 2005; Payet and Van Zanten, 1996). Through her extensive ethnographic work, Van Zanten (2001; 2006) offered an insightful picture of the social experiences of children of immigrants, including educational settings. She suggested that processes of racial identification produce discriminatory and racist practices among some members of school staff, including school career advisers. She found that students of minority ethnic backgrounds,

especially of Maghrebi origin, are subject to racist practices from within the school regarding their educational choices and accordingly are more often than their white peers advised to apply for work-based learning in technical institutions³. Van Zanten's findings were corroborated by two large scale surveys; the first conducted by Brinbaum and Kieffer in 2005 and the second by the INED-INSEE in 2008. Some of my interviewees also shared experiences similar to Van Zanten's participants. When I brought up the topic of school career advisers, many laughed and corrected me saying that I should talk about 'career misleaders' rather than advisers. I asked participants to explain further. Several Pakistani and Algerian women then reported their negative experiences. They mentioned that they had grades which 'qualified' them for the alternative option rather than vocational institutions. For instance, when I asked why she opted for vocational studies when in fact she was interested in becoming a French literature teacher, Sonia explained:

'I didn't know. [My parents] didn't know. They didn't know anything. I am the eldest. They didn't know anything about vocational institutions. They didn't know! [...] It's because my career adviser told me to go to a vocational school that I went there!' (French Pakistani, working class)

Not having access to the necessary knowledge (note the repetition of 'didn't know'), Sonia relied on her school career adviser to guide her. She reportedly told Sonia to do secretarial studies in order to become a French literature teacher. Sonia strongly felt that doing secretarial studies would not lead to becoming a French literature teacher. Sonia's emphasis on her and her parents' lack of knowledge of the French educational system is linked with a sense of injustice which resonates with Caille's (2005) and other researchers' findings about institutional racism in

³ Although regarded as institutions suited for 'weak' students, vocational schools can be better options for some students depending on their professional aspirations. The point is that the systematic allocation of vocational schools to minority ethnic students, regardless of their educational potential and aspirations, is linked to racist practices.

France. While Sonia attributed her experience to the professional incompetence of the career adviser, her experience can also be explained as a result of the racial identification pointed out by Van Zanten. The similarities between Sonia, a Pakistani woman, and Van Zanten's Maghrebi participants' experiences suggest racial discrimination grounded in ethnicity, not simply limited to children of North African descent. Participants, who did mention ethnicity as a decisive marker for career advisers, did not explicitly use the word racism. Seedra's experience is a case in point. I asked her too about her experience with school career advisers:

'School career advisers, when they see your face, they say 'alright. So you will do a BEP [to become] a car mechanic, BEP [to become] a plumber and CAP for I don't know what!' and that's what they said to me. They tried to send me for a BEP in accountancy! Just like that!' (French Algerian, middle class)

In France, Maghrebi students (such as Seedra) are racialised as having low academic capabilities. These stereotypes are not limited to Maghrebi students since Sonia and other French Pakistani participants also shared similar experiences. The French Pakistani participants' accounts in this study contradict Moliner's (2009) findings on South Asian students in France. She claimed that students of South Asian origin⁴ benefit from the racial prejudice experienced by Maghrebi students in schools and so have better outcomes (see Chapter 1). In this study, both the Algerian and Pakistani participants reported experiences of racial prejudice in school regarding career advice. Regardless of their ethnic origin and academic potential/aspirations, they reported similar ethnic and social class identifications (as minority ethnic students and children of working class immigrants) by some members of their school staff. Their experiences of othering, grounded in their racialised identity (based on physiognomic differences), produced inequalities at the school level often

⁴ As mentioned in Chapter 1, the label 'South Asians' includes the following groups: Indians, Sikhs, Gujaratis, Malagasy, Mauritians, Pakistanis and Bengalis.

significantly curtailing some participants' life opportunities. Indeed, this attributed identity had a considerable impact on some of these women's educational pathways who felt that their academic potential was weighed against their ethnic and (perceived) social class identities. Put differently, their attributed identity as minority ethnic students produced the stereotype of low achievers and ultimately, the participants had to bear the consequences of this attribution by being allocated to vocational schools. Sonia, for example, never managed to become a French literature teacher since her A-level in secretarial studies did not give her access to an undergraduate course in French literature.

In the British context, the existence of racist practices in the educational system has been well documented (see for example, Tomlinson, 2009; Starkey and Osler, 2009; Gillborn, 2005a; 2005b; 2006; 2008). Among others, David Gillborn (2005a; 2005b; 2006; 2008) has worked extensively on the issue of racism and education. He focused on black students and examined minority ethnic pupils' attainments at GCSE and A-level examinations and their participation in higher education. He showed that the British educational system continuously reproduces inequalities because racism is deeply rooted in educational policies and practices. In keeping with Van Zanten, he argued that racial stereotypes (such as under-estimation of students' academic ability) strongly impede minority ethnic students' opportunities to succeed and further lead to their exclusion and segregation into low performing institutions.

However, unlike French participants, the British participants' accounts gave no evidence of racist practices or prejudice among school staff. On the contrary, many women described the support they received from members of staff in their education. However, two British Pakistani women, Raheela and Anya, recounted experiences of racist violence and bullying (respectively) among their classmates. For instance, while discussing how wearing the headscarf changed some people's perception towards her, Raheela explained that otherwise she 'never had

[racist] experiences' except when she was in school (note that Raheela started wearing the headscarf only a month prior to the interview). Raheela told me she was verbally and physically assaulted on several occasions on her way from school to home by white classmates.

'When I was about 11, I was actually...beaten up for being...Pakistani. Yeah, I was...(I interrupted⁵)'

I later asked her who the perpetrators were:

'It was two boys and a girl in the street. They were white. So that time...about three, four times actually, I was picked on...verbal abuse. They'd just thrown at me that 'you're paki, paki, paki' (low voice) that type of thing. That was very common then. I mean every Asian friend I had was beaten up like this.' (British Pakistani, working class)

Although Raheela told me her story, her hesitation (marked by short pauses, dropping her tone, repetitions and extreme case formulation of 'every Asian friend') points to the difficulty in recounting painful events. She then quickly changed the subject stating that 'times have changed now', reiterating her belief in the fairness of multicultural Britain (as seen in Chapter 4). No action was taken on any occasion since '[her] parents said [they] had to keep a low profile' living in a predominantly white area. The event Raheela reported took place seventeen years ago at a time when racist violence against Pakistanis (and other Asians), known as 'Paki-bashing', was very common (e.g. Hesse, 1997), especially in white residential areas (see for example, Nayak, 2010), where boys and men were more likely to be subjected to physical violence (Alam and Husband, 2006; Martino and Meyenn, 2001). When I asked about her reaction to the physical assaults, Raheela explained that she was 'only a child' and 'did not understand' what happened at that time. It is only

⁵ Raheela is one of the first participants I interviewed. At that time, I repeatedly interrupted participants as discussed in Chapter 3.

retrospectively that Raheela recognised the racist aspect of her experiences. Raheela's reported experience was a single and extreme case of racist violence in my research.

The aim of the above discussion was to show the various forms of racism experienced across both countries at the school level. It is important to note that in this study, experiences of racism affected many of my participants in both countries, but *differently*. In France, many of the participants' educational trajectories were affected, while in Britain, the two British Pakistani participants reported experiences of racist violence. Indeed, several French participants reported being racially discriminated against in terms of career advice. These French participants felt that their experiences put them at a disadvantage. By contrast, British participants did not report similar experiences. This could be the artefact of my sample, or it might be a case of selective reporting among the other British participants since, as I mentioned above, 'Paki-bashing' was common in an earlier period and racist attacks did not die out. It might also be linked to British participants' narratives of a racism-free society (as argued in Chapter 4).

5.2.2 (Non-)belonging at university: experiences of exclusion and inclusion

In 2013, Quintero conducted comparative doctoral research on the experiences of (mainly second generation) black French and Colombian students in higher education in Paris and Bogotá respectively. Although he examined the experiences of a different French minority ethnic group than in the present study, Quintero's interview findings offer useful insights into processes of racism which highlight key factors involved in the construction of identity and feelings of (non-)belonging in higher education. Quintero interviewed 45 individuals in total: twenty-two were black French (sixteen women and six men) studying in Parisian

universities⁶. Using Essed's (1991) concept of everyday racism, Quintero showed how institutional racism produced negative and unequal treatment of black students in Paris, compared to their peers in Bogotá. Based on their racialised identification by others (including classmates, other students and teaching staff) and negative stereotypes of the 'black' category, French interviewees reported experiencing discourses and practices which generated feelings of inferiority, such as being treated as an immigrant despite their French nationality, being seen as exceptional (compared to the assumed low achiever status of black students), the need to work twice as hard as their white peers and being victims of cultural racism. Quintero's findings about French students need to be contextualised since the majority of his female interviewees (and in fact, all but one of his male interviewees) attended prestigious institutions such as Sorbonne or *Grandes Écoles*⁷. According to Aeberhardt and colleagues (2010), minority ethnic students are most likely to apply to technical institutions rather than prestigious universities or other institutions. Accordingly, the profile of students in elite institutions is ethnically less diverse. Quintero's participants competed in highly segregated institutions in which they represented an outnumbered racialised minority. Anthias (2006) argued that identification as an accepted member of a group is fundamental to the construction of a sense of belonging. Hence, not being accepted as legitimate members within their elite universities (but as exceptions rather than the assumed white 'norm') and similarly not being seen as a member of the nation (but as immigrants) contributed to Quintero's black students' experiences of othering in France, which operated through repetitive racialised discourses and practices.

As discussed above, all of the French women opted for business and administrative studies and, therefore applied to technical institutions,

⁶ The remaining participants were black Colombians studying in Bogotá; I report here Quintero's findings for France only.

⁷ These institutions give access to senior civil service positions.

which are ethnically very diverse. Partly as a result of their academic choices, they 'escaped' experiences of racism at university.

As with the French participants, the majority of my British participants also attended less prestigious universities, which were former polytechnics (also referred to as 'post-92' or 'new' universities), closer to their family home and/or ethnically diverse. My British participants' choice of higher education institution is in keeping with the general pattern found among minority ethnic university students (Modood, 2006; Connor et al., 2004; Read et al., 2003). For instance, Modood (2006) established that minority ethnic students are much more likely than their white majority ethnic peers to go to 'new' universities. He attributed this disparity to the existence of institutional bias in the candidates' selection process. Based on the findings of their 33 focus groups discussions (that included 175 over 21-year-old working class, majority and minority ethnic students), Read and her colleagues (2003) suggested that social class disparities also contribute to minority ethnic students' choice of university. They also argued that 'new' universities are often chosen by students because of their potential to create a sense of belonging. The authors found that perceptions of new universities include friendliness, a cultural mix and sense of inclusion, all of which produce feelings of belonging. However, the authors also found that 'post-92' universities were perceived by their participants as "inauthentic' institutions', whereas elite ones were seen as the "real' universities' (p268). This perception was shared by a few of my participants (regardless of their socio-economic background). In the following extract, I presented Noreen with the OECD data on the low employment levels of second generations. She then tried to make sense of the information I shared:

'You know students that don't go to well reputed universities I don't frown upon them because they do a degree but there is a reason why Oxford, UCL, Cambridge, Kings are at the top of their fields. Your degree will influence the way you are perceived and this would have a huge impact on your professional life.' (British Pakistani, middle class)

Noreen explained the findings I presented by putting the blame on students. A few participants, like Noreen, attended elite universities because they perceived there was a greater marketable value attached to degrees from high-status universities. Yet, in some cases, despite sharing this view, financial constraints restricted participants' choice of university. For instance, Latifa wished to attend an elite university for similar reasons to Noreen, but could not afford to pay the related expenses. Instead, she decided to get a degree at 'a top high' Parisian university because it was cheaper. In that sense, Latifa's experience allowed me to get a unique insight into higher education experiences at an elite French university since none of my French participants had applied to any. However, after two semesters she returned to a UK university. Retrospectively, she compared both academic environments.

'I started my first semester...I was really shocked [to see] the way we were treated compared to England. And I have that comparison between England and France. So yeah it was the first things like 'what's your name?'; 'My name is Latifa'; 'where are you from?' And it's like they look at you, it's like you're Algerian! They have that bit of 'oh! She's Algerian!' thing. Unless you are very French, they don't really hmm (silence) not friendly, they don't exactly love you up if that makes sense, they are not full on. 'Oh! She is Algerian'. I used to say I'm from England but I thought 'you know what I am sick and tired of this', I thought I'd say I am from London. You know how French, they don't really, (stop) I wanted to change my name to Jennifer. I didn't! Eventually I met Algerian friends, and some French friends. But I was more with my Algerian friends, I didn't feel the need to adapt to the French. Because they were just horrible. They stay in their own groups, stay with same people!' (British Algerian, working class)

Latifa's account reveals the importance of being accepted in order to feel a sense of inclusion (Anthias, 2006). She felt isolated until 'she found Algerian friends' which further emphasises the importance of identification with a group. She decided to stay with people she perceived as the 'same people' as herself because she felt excluded by white students. Note Latifa's attempts to 'escape' negative reactions to her ethnicity ('I used to say I'm from England'; 'I thought I'd say I am from London'; 'I wanted to change my name to Jennifer'). It is the constant reminder of and/or negative reactions to her ethnicity by white students and their 'look' that created an oppressive environment ('I am sick and tired of this') which contributed to Latifa's othering experiences. Note also the importance of visual identification in the construction of attributed identities (as Weedon (2011) discussed); changing her name to a European sounding name – Jennifer – was perceived by Latifa as a way to make her less subjected to racialised identification and thus prevent her from being positioned as the 'other'. Unlike Quintero's (2013b) black students who were racialised because of their skin pigmentation, Latifa

felt unwelcomed when her ethnicity became known to others through her name, an ethnic signifier (note the reported exclamation 'oh!').

In their analysis of working class students' access to prestigious institutions, Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) highlighted the ultimate inability of these students to succeed. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1970, pp91-128), despite a 'strong acculturation' that is possessing the 'minimum requirement to complete university studies', working class students will ultimately 'give up' as they fail to position themselves socially and culturally within the only 'legitimised culture' that rules tertiary education (i.e. the culture of the upper class)⁸. Crozier and her colleagues (2008) also reinforced this conclusion in their mixed-method research on the experiences of working and middle class students in 'pre- and post-92' UK universities. They argued that middle class students have better opportunities (available through their personal, familial and social experiences) to learn the cultural and social practices which will enable them to fit in the university environment compared to working class students. This also appears to be relevant for Latifa since she too gave up her studies in her elite French university, due to feelings of non-belonging. In Latifa's case, it was her racialised identification (constructed by her white peers on the basis of her ethnic origin) that led to her rejection by her fellow white French students. She ultimately refused to engage with them and 'to adapt' to their culture. She found refuge in an ethnic group she could identify with ('I was more with my Algerian friends'). Latifa also explained to me that she gave up her studies in France due to a lack of motivation to study in a hostile and unfriendly environment and her overall experience of exclusion and racism in French society (as discussed in Chapter 4). Latifa's experience in France was influenced by her lack of familiarity with French university culture, a negative experience of her identity as Algerian (in comparison with Britain, where she is not 'judged because [she is] Algerian') and an

⁸ My translations.

overall sense of exclusion and non-belonging ('it didn't feel like I was, I belong in there').

Some British participants also mentioned experiences of informed ethnicised segregation in 'new' UK universities. The importance of social support and understanding has also been explored in other studies (e.g. Christie et al., 2007; Wilcox et al., 2005). For example, Wilcox and her colleagues (2005) conducted research with 34 first-year students at a UK university. They argued that a lack of social support (described as inability to make compatible friends) influences students' decision to drop out of university. In my study, participants described experiences of informal segregation related to friendship choice, which were socially motivated. In the following example, I asked Neelum about her relationships with others while at university:

'My friends were mostly like me you know. Muslims. But not necessarily Pakistani. Like my best friend is Chinese but she is Muslim. I think it's good to have friends like you. So you don't have to explain everything, because they go through the same thing and all.'

(British Pakistani, working class)

Despite an ethnically diverse environment, Neelum decided to engage only with students she could identify with and with whom she could share religious, social and cultural understandings. This example shows that having friends from the same ethnic and/or religious groups contributes to a sense of inclusion. In that respect, Neelum's account echoes the view of the participants in Read and her colleagues' (2003) study who reported that going to an ethnically diverse institution does not guarantee 'inter-ethnic relations' (p267). The decision to remain in religiously comfortable surroundings influenced some British Muslim women's experiences at university, regardless of the type of university they attended. The next extract is taken from Leila's interview. I also asked her about her relationships with others at university:

'I didn't have the same experience as all the other students, where part of the experience is to go out on Friday night. (chuckled) so hmm obviously I didn't have that. I didn't get involved.' (British Algerian, middle class)

Leila did not mention any negative experiences, and adherence to religious practices was an important feature in her university life. Choosing their own groups and socialising with them contributed to the positive relationships many women reported that they built while at university and which contributed to the construction of their sense of inclusion. It was the sense of exclusion and rejection while trying to engage with white students which contributed to the negative experiences of some women like Latifa, who unsuccessfully tried to engage with groups who were ethnically, socially and culturally different groups. This discussion highlights how experiences of (non-)belonging in higher education were constructed as a result of participants' negative encounters with fellow white students, their negative attributed identity and the religious and/or ethnic constitution of the student body.

Feelings of inclusion were important to many British women when making university choices. Nevertheless, some British participants mentioned experiences of exclusion based on their ethnicity, something French participants did not report. This experience of othering, as seen in Latifa's case, produced a drastic outcome since she dropped out of her French university. Attending an elite university in France or Britain had similar effects. Indeed, whether British participants felt excluded in an elite UK or French university, they reported similar experiences of being othered by white classmates as a result of a common ideology of an assumed white superiority (Rattansi, 2011). Some British participants adopted a strategy of making friends with other Muslims, but not necessarily of the same gender, ethnicity and/or social class. In that respect, lack of religious commonality was the main feature in some of the British participants' experiences of non-belonging at university. However, as seen with

Latifa's experience at the elite French university, it was lack of religious, ethnic and social class similarities with white French classmates, which produced a sense of exclusion. This suggests the importance of analysing social positions both contextually and relationally.

5.3 Pursuing higher education and countering initial inequalities

So far, I have discussed how educational trajectories were influenced on the one hand, by (lack of) parental involvement; and on the other hand, by the existence of racial discrimination (especially in France). Experiences of othering, grounded predominantly in ethnic differences, produced unequal treatment; and so experiences of exclusion and non-belonging for many participants. Thus, the intersection of social class, ethnicity, religion and (although rarely mentioned) gender constructed my participants' academic trajectories and experiences, putting many of them at a disadvantage. This section highlights the ways in which some of these participants attempt to limit the impact of earlier inequalities in order to improve their future life opportunities. The first part looks at the particular experience of working students, while the second focuses on participants who wish to return to university to get another degree.

5.3.1 Combining work and studies: the experiences of working students

All French participants reported being employed during their university studies at one point or another, regardless of the support they received from their parents. For example, while the majority worked during their undergraduate degree, some only worked during their Master's studies. Between them, these women held more than 37 different jobs⁹. Although the majority of the women reported working to support their studies, others also mentioned working in order to become financially

⁹ These are jobs the participants specifically referred to when asked about past employment. Some replies were difficult to account for since participants responded saying 'I did many other temp roles here and there' (Zara, French Algerian, middle class). Thus, 37 is the minimum number of jobs clearly identified in the interview data.

independent from their parents or to contribute towards their expenses. In the latter case, parents supported the participants by paying for food, rent and other household related bills. Two French Algerian participants also engaged in voluntary work in order to build up their work experience. Many jobs were part-time, some temporary and some permanent contracts and mostly not relevant to participants' degrees. Only one participant, Seedra (French Algerian, middle class), secured a job relevant to her Master's in accountancy.

Working, while studying at university, is not particular to minority ethnic groups. Many studies, largely quantitative, reported a similar situation for white students (Beffy et al., 2009; Pinto, 2007; Béduwé and Giret, 2004; Pinto et al., 2000). For example, based on analysis of the longitudinal study carried out by CEREQ (French Centre for Research on Qualifications), Béduwé and Giret (2004) found that 80 per cent of students who left university in 1998 were engaged in paid work during their studies¹⁰. Few qualitative studies have looked at the experiences of working students. For example, based on three-month observations of three Parisian fast-food restaurants and interviews with their student employees, Pinto and her colleagues (2000) found that their participants' studies suffered. For example, they experienced delays in studies and non-linear trajectories as a result of working long and unconventional hours especially during exams. The authors concluded that working in fast-food restaurants contributes to making students' academic positions more fragile than it would otherwise be. None of my participants reported working in fast-food restaurants; they were engaged in administrative jobs and only one worked in a café. None of them described being disadvantaged as a result of being in employment and no such evidence was found analytically. No particular differences were found between Pakistani and Algerian participants or by social class background.

¹⁰ In 2001, CEREQ (Centre d'études et de recherche sur les qualifications) started a longitudinal study, surveying students who left university in 1998. Data collection was repeated in 2003, 2005 and 2008. The first round (2001) included 55, 000 students. The study looked at students' professional outcomes after they left university and also established their professional trajectories pre-graduation.

In Britain, the majority of participants came from poorer backgrounds and only these women were engaged in paid work during their studies. Many worked throughout their university studies while some only occasionally. Some had temporary summer jobs and others had part-time weekend jobs. One worked full-time. Between them, these women held more than 25 different jobs¹¹. Three British Algerian participants also worked as volunteers. Compared to French participants, the impact of social class background marked British participants' experiences more at university level than during pre-university pathways. For instance, British participants from middle class backgrounds pointed to their comfortable situation in relation to higher education, since their parents paid for their tuition fees and some women were also able to attend prestigious universities. Their peers from working class backgrounds reported having financial difficulties in coping with university-related expenses, which pushed them to take on paid work. Only a few working class students reported being employed in order to become financially independent from their parents. This was a striking disparity between how class backgrounds impacted on participants' student life across countries. All French participants, regardless of their class backgrounds, were engaged in paid work while at university, whereas middle class British students were never employed. From that perspective, the experiences of minority ethnic working class students are not dissimilar from white working class students in higher education. In their qualitative work on British white and minority ethnic working class students in higher education, Reay and her colleagues (2009a) also found that working class students worked during their studies. This suggests that social class may have a primordial role in forging working class students' experiences in higher education regardless of ethnicity. It is also worth mentioning that three British women were also engaged in voluntary work (in addition to their part-time paid roles). Unlike French participants, they did not necessary aim to build

¹¹ I could not account for all the jobs for similar reasons to French participants.

their CVs but rather had religious motivations, working in local Muslim charities to tutor young pupils and distribute food.

There are notable similarities across France and Britain. In both countries, working class participants were engaged in paid work to help pay for their university-related expenses. Although working part-time enabled these participants to limit the impact of class inequalities and to pursue higher education, many told me about the difficulties they faced in terms of juggling between employment and academic responsibilities. Some also compared their experiences to that of their more privileged friends who, as Sehrish (British Pakistani, working class) said, 'had to worry about studying only'. Social class was a more important factor in shaping my participants' experiences than was ethnicity. Middle class participants' professional trajectories during university did, however, differ across countries. While French participants regardless of class backgrounds were employed, British participants from middle class backgrounds were not. This is a further way in which social class seemed important in shaping participants' university experiences.

5.3.2 Re-entering tertiary education

In total, only six participants (three British and three French) told me that they do not wish to complete another degree. Three women (Anya, British Pakistani, Sonia, French Pakistani and Farida, French Algerian) have already completed their additional degrees. The other French and British women shared their intention to return to university. However, these participants' motivations differed according to their life stage, including, age, family responsibilities and career establishment. Many mature participants – who I define as women over 30 – shared with me their intention to study for additional qualifications for personal interest; while many younger participants – who I define as women under 30 – want to gain further qualifications in order to find jobs relevant to their

degrees or to improve their future employment opportunities¹². Here, I discuss both mature and younger participants' motivations to pursue additional postgraduate degrees.

The first extract is taken from an interview with Fatima, who works as an adviser for an online bank. She has been with her company for over 4 years. She initially completed a technical Bachelor's in Banking. When I asked if she intends to study further, Fatima explained:

'I did my BTS¹³ and then followed up with an additional year. I found a permanent role at the end of my third year and I accepted it. [...] [now] I am constantly refused opportunities [for higher roles in my current company]. So I am going to do a Master's. Among other things, it will allow me to lead teams at the agency. I'll be a manager, with responsibilities similar to a director.' (French Algerian, 27, working class)

Fatima's trajectory indicates the paradox between children of immigrants' expectations of technical qualifications and the reality of the labour market. She completed a short-term technical course and then went into employment, but now is considering returning to university. As discussed previously, technical qualifications are perceived as better options by minority ethnic children for entering the labour market successfully than studying for traditional university degrees (Aeberhardt et al., 2010; Brinbaum and Kieffer, 2005). Although she found a job after she finished her course, she is now struggling since, despite several years of experience, she reported that she still cannot climb up the professional ladder. This feeling was shared by many other French participants who, similar to Fatima, opted for technical studies. By intending to return to university, these participants hope to counter the perceived negative

¹² There are two exceptions: Noreen (British Pakistani, 35, middle class) and Anissa (French Algerian, 35, working class). Although I categorised them as 'mature participants', they too want to study further to become eligible for senior roles. Noreen's example is discussed later.

¹³ To remind the reader, the British equivalent is the Higher National Diploma.

outcome (i.e. inability to move out of 'new graduate' jobs) associated with their earlier educational decisions (i.e. short-term and technical degrees). Many participants attributed their failure to secure promotions to fierce competition (notably due to other candidates having postgraduate degrees). It is important to note that doing technical degrees is not particular to minority ethnic students. Various studies showed that white French students from working class backgrounds, similar to their minority ethnic peers, are also more likely to do technical degrees (Caille and Lemaire, 2009; Brinbaum and Kieffer, 2005). These studies attribute this commonality in university trajectories to both groups' similarity in social class backgrounds and their perception of professional qualifications seen as a better route for the education-to-work transition. However, although types of educational qualification do play a role during recruitment, children of immigrants in France, especially of Maghrebi origin, face persistent racial discrimination in the hiring process (Brinbaum et al., 2010; Brinbaum and Kieffer, 2005; Silberman and Fournier, 1999). This partly contributes to minority ethnic graduates' unequal experiences of the labour market compared to their white peers with similar qualifications (discussed in detail in Chapter 6). Many of my younger participants, thus, shared their views that they could overcome their 'failure' to secure senior roles by gaining additional educational qualifications. This reflects their belief in the French meritocratic discourse, as suggested by Brinbaum and Kieffer (2005). The internalisation of this founding value of the French educational system encourages them to study further; a belief, which according to Brinbaum and Kieffer, also leads many children of Maghrebi immigrants to pursue higher education in the first place.

Unlike the other younger participants, Sonia (French Pakistani, 28, working class) returned to university in order to overcome earlier experiences of racial discrimination. Indeed, as mentioned in Section Two, she went to a vocational institution as a result of what she perceived as unfair guidance from her school career adviser. As discussed above,

her studies led her onto an administrative academic route, although she was interested in becoming a French literature teacher. Unsatisfied with the professional path her studies opened for her, she enrolled onto a law course in order to be able to open her future online business.

Mature participants (aged over 30) were also contemplating returning to university. To my knowledge, no study in France has ever looked at the *experiences and motivations* of mature students in higher education. As discussed previously, some women made their academic choices for reasons of personal interest or in relation to their future employment opportunities, but many followed their parents' decisions that they should do financially viable degrees. Some of the women in the latter group have decided to pursue their initial academic ambitions since their earlier studies were determined by their parents. For example, Zara (French Algerian, 32, middle class) who did a Master's in accountancy now wants to study her preferred subject (sociology). However, she faces a number of constraints, primarily familial and financial in pursuing postgraduate higher education. Zara is married and has two children. In addition to her family responsibilities, she is running her own patisserie and has 'to pay her employees at the end of each month'. She also has to repay two business loans. For these reasons, she feels that she cannot spend time away and has postponed her academic ambitions. Family and financial responsibilities are the two main factors in many mature women's decisions to delay starting further study. Put differently, participants' life stages were decisive in the realisation of their initial educational choices. For instance, Farida (French Algerian, 42, working class) no longer has family responsibilities similar to Zara since her children are young adults. Farida returned to university a year ago to study for a Master's in Literature. However, unlike Zara who met resistance from her parents regarding her initial degree choice, Farida could not carry on studying because her husband disapproved. It was only after her divorce that she went back to university to complete a research Master's, with a view to doing a PhD later on, 'not to make a career out of it [...] but because it's a

dream'. In that respect, Farida's new university experience has empowered her, unlike her previous position as subordinate to her husband. Pursuing higher education has allowed Farida to gain control of her life and free herself from gender oppression.

Similar findings were found among both the French and British participants with regard to their educational trajectories. In that respect, British minority ethnic graduates' future educational ambitions are also influenced by their earlier degree-related decisions, their future employment prospects and/or gender-specific constraints. For example, some younger British participants are also motivated by the prospect of better employment opportunities and so, they too want to pursue additional postgraduate degrees. This resonates with Brown and his colleagues' (2003, p111) analysis of the growth in the knowledge economy; individuals perceive university qualifications as providing them with 'a better paid, more interesting and high-status job'. However, as with the French women, some British women postponed their decisions to pursue additional degrees because of gendered-specific obstacles, or put differently, the life stages the women were in. For instance, when asked if she intended to study further, Raheela (who has a Bachelor's in Psychology) explained that she has put her Master's degree 'on hold' because of her current family situation:

'I'm hoping to study [for a] Master's in International Development. That's something I really need to do. [I] just [want to] work for a humanitarian organisation, like a support officer...you know doing kind of work on the field. That's what I would love to do. Not in an office. This is what I would actually like to do. This is something I have always kind of known. But I just didn't kinda go there but this is why I did psychology. I wanted to do work with people. But obviously you can't carry on studying and things can change. Isn't it?' (British Pakistani, 28, working class)

The 'things' that changed in Raheela's life after the completion of her Bachelor's were her marriage and then soon after that, the birth of her first child. Raheela had a 'love marriage' with a Pakistani-born man. Although she never mentioned it to me directly, I knew about the pressure she must have been under to formalise her relationship because of the 'honour' of her family since as she said, she had known her husband for 'a very long time' and both of them 'are from a small village where everybody knows each other'. Raheela got engaged after her degree and then 'worked towards the whole wedding thing'. As a result of these life changes, she postponed her postgraduate studies. Raheela's dilemma resonates with Dale's (2008) findings about South Asian women's professional experiences. The author concluded that it is not uncommon for British South Asian women to manage their academic and family lives at the same time which undeniably affects priorities. Raheela, for instance, delayed undertaking a Master's degree. Knowing that spouse visas are granted in Britain (partly) on proof of adequate income to support the immigrant partner, it was not a surprise for me to learn that Raheela worked straight after her wedding in order to 'brin[g] him here'.

Support from spouses is an important factor in facilitating married women's transition back to university, which would require committing to their studies, job and family life at the same time. The following extract is taken from Noreen's interview. Unlike the majority of mature participants who intend to return to university for personal interest, Noreen intends to study further in order to improve her employment opportunities, which is similar to the younger participants' motivations. She wants to apply for a lectureship; accordingly, she has applied for a doctoral position. When I asked her why she decided to enrol for a PhD, she described the importance of having a supportive partner:

'It's all down to (stopped) I tell you one thing Jawiria. It's all down to a good partner. If your partner is shit then forget it! (laughed) if there is someone who understands you and sings the same songs as you then he will support you no matter what you do.'

She further explained:

'To be honest, I did all this thanks to my husband, you know for women, especially for Asian women who run a household and look after their kids, be a wife, be a mother, with all these things you can't have a progressive career unless you have a supportive husband. It's very challenging. I can't thank my husband enough for being always there for me.' (British Pakistani, 35, middle class)

Noreen's experience highlights the issue of work-life balance, the importance of negotiating between cultural expectations ('run a household and look after their kids') and personal career aspirations ('have a progressive career'). These women have to juggle between their social positions as women, wives, mothers, professionals and/or students.

The above discussion showed how motivations of mature students are constructed; influenced by the intersection of age, personal aspirations and, family and work positions. Younger French and British participants are confronted with a variety of situations which triggered their decisions to study further, including initial degree 'mistakes', improving their employment positions and unfair treatment at work (discussed in detail in Chapter 6). Yet, the majority of French and British women have delayed undertaking new degrees because of caring and financial responsibilities. Mature women are motivated by personal fulfilment and/or improving work conditions (the latter is true for two participants only). The three women who successfully made the leap and completed their additional degrees have managed to change the course of their lives by freeing

themselves from parental and/or marital constraints (as seen with Farida).

The comparison of the experiences of mature and younger participants in this study shows the importance of examining women's experiences over their life course as some contextual elements influence life trajectories only temporarily (e.g. marriage/childbirth), enabling these women to redefine their social positions at a later stage in life.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has contributed to the overarching aim of the thesis to understand how second generation minority ethnic women negotiate their labour market positioning as graduates in France and Britain. By focusing on the women's educational trajectories, it has illuminated a central theme in the thesis, that is the influence of intersecting and contextual factors in producing individuals' experiences; including social class, educational choices, parents' migration histories, ethnicity, gender, religion and life stage.

In particular, the data showed that my participants' educational experiences are influenced by their parents' migratory experiences. Through focusing on the participants' engagement with formal education, I demonstrated commonalities and differences in how the intersection of gender, social class, and migration disadvantages affected participants in both countries. Social class inequalities, for example, also 'pushed' all working class participants into taking paid work during their university studies. Some also reported experiencing higher education negatively (including a burden to succeed academically and pressure to enter university).

Discussions about participants' personal circumstances revealed that while some women experience a smooth educational pathway (from

education to work), for others critical moments/experiences in their lives (e.g. marriage, childbirth) are of central importance. In some instances, gendered responsibilities (e.g. caring for children) produced similar experiences across groups (regardless of age) and nationality; while in other cases, participants' life stages shaped their decisions. Gendered power relations within the family played an important role in preventing some of these women from achieving their personal goals. While many younger French and British participants (aged under 30) have decided to re-enter higher education in order to improve their employment positions; mature women (aged over 30) are considering undertaking additional qualifications for personal interest. Returning to university illustrates the active engagement of my participants in the construction of their life trajectories.

Discussions of participants' accounts within the educational system revealed how everyday racism influenced their experiences. In France, the racialised discourse about Maghrebis (association of under-achievement with ethnicity) has produced feelings of injustice among many Algerian participants. These feelings were shared by French Pakistani participants which illuminates the continuous shadow of the white supremacy ideology. In contrast to the French participants, several British Pakistani and Algerian women reported having received support from members of school staff; an experience, French participants did not share. However, Raheela's account of racial violence in secondary school and other British participants' experiences of exclusion and feelings of non-belonging in prestigious higher education institutions reinforce the notion that racism in both countries remains pervasive. In many instances, British participants reported that their friends were only other Muslims and/or from other minority ethnic backgrounds.

Having focused on my participants' experiences of and within the educational system, the next chapter discusses the immediate and long-term impact of these academic pathways and societal power relations by

closely considering the women's experiences in the labour market. I explore how attributed social class, ethnic and religious identities position my French and British participants unequally, regardless of their social and academic achievements.

Chapter 6: Negotiating the labour market: inclusion, exclusion or contingent inclusion?

This last findings chapter deals with Pakistani and Algerian participants' experiences in the French and British labour markets as Muslim graduates. It will provide insights into how participants negotiate their labour market positioning at different stages (including transition to the labour market, unemployment, (precarious) employment and promotion). The chapter builds on the discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 to illustrate how the women relate to other professionals (in government-led agencies and work colleagues) and to help understand the participants' employment trajectories after graduation.

The chapter explores how initial educational trajectories influence participants' work opportunities once they leave university. I argue that unequal treatment in educational institutions and lack of guidance from families adversely affect many participants' professional positioning. This, together with experiences of racial discrimination in the recruitment process, contributes to the women's precarious positions after graduation. Moving on from discussions of the education-to-work transition, the chapter then examines social encounters within the labour market. Drawing on the notions of the 'other', (non-)belonging and everyday racism, the chapter uses an intersectional lens to identify how ethnic and religious identification processes operate contextually, independently and at times are overlapping.

The chapter is organised into three sections. In the first, I focus on the women's education-to-work transition to highlight how, as new graduates, the women attempted to secure their first jobs. I then look at participants' experiences in the workplace (past and current) and explore their accounts of their interactions with work colleagues. Finally, I discuss key identity strategies the women use to counter experiences of racism and discrimination in the labour market.

In all three sections, I compare the experiences of women who wear headscarves and those who do not. Since France and Britain have different policies regarding Islamic dress, the headscarf differentiates women's experiences of the labour market in important ways.

The selection criteria for my sample were that participants should be Muslim women who are children of Pakistani or Algerian immigrants, graduates and in employment. Whether or not they displayed their religion through their dress choice was not relevant to sample recruitment. In France, wearing headscarves (i.e. covering the hair) has been banned from educational institutions (except universities) in the name of *laïcité* (secularism) since 2004 and, since 2010, wearing niqabs (i.e. face veils) in public places, including in public sector buildings, is also forbidden. A private bill to extend these bans to the private sector has been under review since June 2013¹.

In the UK, unlike the situation in France, there are no bans on wearing Islamic dress. However, Britain is not free from debates about whether there should be such bans. For instance, in 2007, a school teacher was sacked for wearing a niqab while teaching; the decision was upheld in the court case that followed the dismissal². More recently, several hospitals have adopted similar policies which indicate that the face should not be covered while in contact with and/or treating patients³. Although there is no legislation restricting the face veil, in 2013, the former Home Office Minister Jeremy Browne called for a 'national debate' over wearing niqabs in public places, such as schools⁴. It is important to note that there are no public and/or political debates regarding the *headscarf* in Britain.

¹http://www.huffingtonpost.fr/2013/08/06/universites-ecoles-entreprises-lieux-interdit-porter-voile_n_3713228.html [accessed on 14th December 2014]

²http://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKCAT/2007/0009_07_3003.html

³<http://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/plan/building-a-diverse-workforce/need-to-know/wearing-face-veils-in-the-workplace>

⁴<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13038095> [accessed on 14th December 2014]

In my study, none of my participants wears the niqab. In total, eight women wear headscarves: six British (four Algerians and two Pakistanis, one of whom, Neelum, also wears the abaya⁵) and two French (one Algerian and one Pakistani). Another French Pakistani woman, Ruksana, has now stopped wearing the headscarf (see Section Two for discussions of this). In France, only one of my participants currently works in the public sector (Naima, Algerian, who is as an adviser to the mayor); while in Britain, women were employed in both the private and public sectors. This difference is not random since I used snowballing to recruit my participants (see Chapter 3). In order to contextualise the discussion where it is relevant to the analysis in this chapter, I indicate whether or not the participants wear headscarves, especially when reporting their interactions with white social actors since, as I have shown in Chapter 4, the participants considered that visible religious identifiers were used by their interlocutors to position them as the 'other'.

6.1 The education-to-work transition

In this section, I focus on participants' education-to-work transition. Attention to this life stage is highly important since it shows how initial socio-economic and academic disadvantages together with the existence of racial prejudice continue to adversely affect my participants' social positions once they leave university. Put differently, this section highlights how the intersection of social class, migration history, academic choices, ethnicity and (visibility of) religion contributes to the construction of the women's fragile employment positions as new graduates despite their high qualifications.

The first section of this chapter examines the job search process, submission of applications and interactions with staff at local support agencies. The second section deals with the interview stage while the

⁵ To remind the reader, the abaya is a full sleeve and long length dress.

last section looks at participants' experiences of first recruitment as graduates.

6.1.1 Job hunt and application submission: deploying useful social capital

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 5, Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) argued that children from working class background are less likely to succeed in tertiary education since their cultural and linguistic capitals do not hold any profitable value in academic learning. This affects labour market outcomes since low academic qualifications are likely to place them in low levels of employment. In this study, many participants' social networks did not provide them with the resources they needed in order to step onto the employment ladder. Many French participants described having limited social connections which curtailed the scope of their employment opportunities, especially in comparison to their white peers. They talked about their 'limited circle' that they could not mobilise during, for example, their job search. The existence of a 'limited circle' or 'long-lasting social networks'⁶ (Bourdieu, 1980, p1) depends, at least partly, on parents' migration history and their class backgrounds. For instance, Reema, a French Pakistani woman, comes from a comfortable socio-economic background. Yet, her parents' economic capital did not help her in her transition into employment. She wanted to work in human resources, but her parents' networks derived from their family-run restaurant. As a result, she experienced a lack of *useful* social capital in finding a degree-relevant job after graduation, as well as in terms of getting support from her parents in making applications.

Moreover, parents' choice to migrate to either France or Britain is also significant. As explained in the introductory chapter, the majority of Pakistani migrants settled in Britain, whereas the majority of Algerian migrants settled in France. In comparison, the numbers of Pakistanis in

⁶ My translation.

France and Algerians in Britain are still very small. This difference makes the groups studied in each country different from each other as the long-term settled groups (British Pakistanis and French Algerians) are numerically larger and socio-economically more diverse than the newly established ones (British Algerians and French Pakistanis) and so, potentially, have larger social networks. For instance, as opposed to Reema, Fatima (French Algerian, working class) secured a bank adviser role thanks to her aunt (who initially recommended her for her final year placement at the same company). However, in some cases, it was not the number of connections that mattered, but their potential profitability. For example, Sana (French Pakistani, working class) secured her first graduate job thanks to a friend who worked in a similar field to her (technical engineering).

These examples show how different sets of capital have been used by participants in specific contexts; while Reema could rely on her parents' economic resources throughout her education, Fatima and Sana, unlike Reema, were able to rely on their social network in finding jobs. In other words, although Fatima and Sana's social networks were not profitable during their education, they were once they entered the labour market. In that respect, the ability of my participants to use their capital and the value attached to it are not only class-based as Bourdieu (1980) argued, but also context specific which suggests the importance of context and place as presented in Anthias's (2002) translocational framework.

In cases where interconnections entailed few employment resources, many French participants had to be self-reliant in their job search. This process includes finding vacancies, preparing and submitting written applications and if shortlisted, preparing for the interview. The majority of first graduate jobs were found through the participants' own efforts, looking for opportunities through online/paper adverts and/or making spontaneous applications. Some French participants turned to recruitment agencies and/or government-led organisations for assistance

in finding suitable graduate jobs. While talking about graduates' difficulties in finding jobs in the current economic crisis, Fatima mentioned the negative image of Maghrebis conveyed in the media. I then asked her why she is concerned by this negative coverage and she explained how on a daily basis, these images affect her, recounting one interaction with an employee at Pôle Emploi⁷:

'So I had an appointment at the centre. So there was this former director of Crédit Mutuel Bank or Crédit Agricole Bank or something like that. And I went in for a meeting for an hour and, and he read my CV and the first thing he said to me was 'So! Your name is Fatima Abdelaziz?' I said 'yes that's right.' And then he goes 'well all this sounds like a Maghrebi name to me!'. And I just stopped. I started laughing and I said 'yes and so what? Does it change anything?' he said 'no, absolutely not'. And then I said 'to be honest, I am here, in front of you, and you didn't think that I was of Maghrebi origin because of how I look and if you hadn't read my name you would have never thought so!'. [...] and he said 'but you know, I said that because nowadays, it's very common, it only takes [employers] to see your full name and that's it! Done! Your CV in the bin'. I said to him 'well we are going to carry on with the appointment and you are going to give me, you are going to tell me, we are going to carry on with the appointment as it should be!' But what he said about the name, that it just takes the name and so it made me think; maybe that's why I couldn't find a job!' (French Algerian, bank adviser, no headscarf)

The adviser's reported remarks resonate with recent findings on the existence of racial discrimination in the hiring process in France (see for example, Beauchemin et al., 2010). Beauchemin and his colleagues (2010) surveyed 22,000 respondents (aged between 18 and 50) and who had at least one parent born abroad. The authors found that participants with both parents born abroad were more likely to report instances of

⁷ Equivalent of Jobcentre Plus.

discrimination or experiences of unfair treatment compared to any other group, even compared to immigrants. Algerian respondents had the third highest response (after people from the Overseas Departments and Sub-Saharan Africans). The report also established that participants with non-Latin sounding names were 3 to 5 times less likely to be called for an interview compared to EU applicants and that second generation Algerians reported instances of racism/discrimination in several government offices (including primarily housing services, employment agencies and education).

Fatima's example illustrates the intersection between visual and 'written' identity markers. While her physical appearance did not give away her ethnic background; her name on the curriculum vitae (CV) did. The association between her ethnic background and subsequent racial discrimination is apparent through the adviser's remark ('it only takes [employers] to see your full name and that's it! Done! Your CV in the bin'). Note also how she is taken by surprise by the adviser's remark ('I just stopped'). There is a conflict between her expectations ('he was supposed to give me advice and tips') and the adviser's actual response regarding her non-European name. Fatima is subjected to everyday racism (discussed in Chapter 2). In this instance, it is the adviser's remark that creates uncertainty for Fatima about how to react ('I started laughing'). In an attempt to take control of the situation, she reversed the roles by responding to the adviser's focus on her ethnic origin and physical appearance. Although not confident (note the restarts and repetition), she 'dictated' how the appointment should proceed ('[...] we are going to carry on with the appointment as it should be!'). By de-emphasising her ethnic identity (from a Maghrebi candidate to a candidate), Fatima challenged the adviser's fatalist and racist assumption. Yet, although Fatima took charge of the situation, this episode made her feel insecure since she questioned whether her unsuccessful attempts to secure a job (after she graduated) were due to fierce competition or racial discrimination.

During the initial job search process, the experiences of many British participants were similar to those of the French women. Pakistani women were more likely to draw on their family's capitals than were Algerian women (who are the newly settled migrant group). For example, Anya, a British Pakistani participant, worked as a manager in her father's restaurant soon after graduating. Useful connections (i.e. with people in professional jobs) proved to be profitable for Anya in finding a first job. In that respect, some British Pakistani participants' experiences were similar to French Algerian participants' (as seen in Fatima's case) since these women from the well-established migrant groups were more likely to have family members or acquaintances in professional jobs than British Algerians and French Pakistanis. Nevertheless, it is also important to contextualise the women's experiences within their choice of career. Anya completed a degree in economics which facilitated joining her father's fast-food business as a manager; whereas Reema (French Pakistani) could not enter her father's restaurant because she wanted to work in a human resource department (which did not exist in her father's restaurant). Thus the potential of social capital to be profitable not only depends on its value in a given context, as I mentioned earlier, but also on the women's professional career choice. This further highlights the complex construction of participants' employment opportunities dependent on various context-specific and intersecting factors. This finding contradicts Heath and his colleagues' (2008) review on the educational and professional attainment of second generations in Western Europe which established that the group suffer from 'the ethnic composition' of their social connections (p223); that is to say they suffer because their social connections are made up of people from similar socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds.

No British participants approached government-led agencies such as Jobcentre Plus after leaving university. However, a few did during their studies and reported positive experiences and receiving helpful support. Although no British participant recounted any experience of racism and/or

discrimination during their encounter with an adviser, this does not mean that such services are immune from providing unequal treatment (see for example, Hudson et al., 2006). In Hudson and her colleagues' (2006) study of minority ethnic people's experiences and perceptions of Jobcentre Plus, some participants reported perceptions of racism among staff often associated with ethnic differences. Yet, participants in this study gave no such reports.

Despite repeated and long-term job rejections, no British participant speculated about the existence of racism in the hiring process ('I have never thought anything like that: 'your [last] name is Muhammad, it makes a difference [in job applications]'", Raheela, British Pakistani, wears headscarf). This is an important differentiating feature between the ways French and British women understood their career trajectories. Only one participant, Leila, questioned whether she had been a victim of racism. Leila wears the headscarf. Being an 'overly-visible' Muslim woman Leila is aware of the negative stereotypes of her held by some white people. However, unlike French women who only speculated, Leila took 'extreme' measures to find answers. In the extract below, I presented Leila with the OECD (2010) findings on the low employment rates among the second generation in Britain. I asked for her views on that situation. She started by explaining that some sectors are hard to get into but then quickly mentioned the existence of racial discrimination based on names and assumption of ethnic background ('Your name doesn't sound English then you don't have any chance'). When I asked her if she had experienced anything like that Leila explained how after over six months unemployment following graduation, she decided to send two identical applications to one employer changing the names only to see what response she would get:

'I did a social experiment where I sent my CV to a job hmm and just changed the name. And hmm I was Sarah Adam (chuckled) who doesn't exist but got a call back for an interview. But the same CV with the same experience on it but with Leila Ibadi, the neutral sounding name got a call back for interview and the Muslim sounding name got rejected. [...] I send first with my name and got a rejection letter. And then send the Sarah Adam's one and got a call to come in for an interview. [...] And that kinda really depressed me for a really, really long time. [...] I was applying for jobs and kept being rejected. So I thought I'd try with a different name. I got the call back for the interview but I didn't go to the interview. Because a) the person doesn't exist and b) I was really, really angry that I got a call back in, just a case of changing a name.' (British Algerian, database analyst, wears headscarf)

Note the similarity of her experience with Fatima's. It is Leila's 'written' identity marker which gave away her ethnic background, leading to racial discrimination. Yet, Leila understood her experience as a case of religious and not racial discrimination ('Muslim sounding name'). Ethnic and religious identity markers intersect to produce participants' experiences but the way participants made sense of these differ. Leila's experiences of everyday religious racism, produced by her visibility as a Muslim woman, strongly influence the way she makes sense of her interaction with others (as shown in Chapter 4, Leila is the participant who was verbally abused by a by-passer soon after 9/11). However, Fatima, who does not wear the headscarf, identified ethnicity as the basis for the adviser's racist remarks. It is, however, difficult to disassociate ethnicity from religion since names can be read both as non-Latin/European names *and* as Muslim names. This shows that religion and ethnicity are strongly intertwined.

What Leila called 'a social experiment' is scholarly known as 'correspondence testing' or a 'field experiment'. This field experiment technique specific to the labour market was devised by Jowell and

Prescott-Clarke in 1970. Their study involved sending several identical letters in response to a job advert from supposedly different candidates (one from a white British and one from, a West Indian, an Asian, an Australian or a Cypriot). Since Jowell and Prescott-Clarke's study, many other researchers have revealed the extent of racial discrimination in the hiring process not only in Britain (Wood et al., 2009) but also in other European countries and North America (for a review see, Riach and Rich, 2002). Based on 155 sets of matched applications sent to UK companies, Wood and his colleagues (2009) found that minority ethnic 'candidates' were 29 per cent less likely to be called for an interview compared to white 'candidates'. Their results were significant across different ethnic groups (including Pakistanis) and across gender. The authors concluded that racial discrimination still remains a major ethnic penalty in Britain labour market. Heath and Cheung (2006) termed ethnic penalties the differences in employment between the white majority and minority ethnic groups in respect to 'unemployment, earnings and occupational attainment' (p2). However, ethnic penalties can have a broader understanding since in this study, these correspond to participants' experiences of unfair treatment in the hiring process, as well as unfair treatment in the workplace (see Section Two below) because of racial and religious racism and discrimination.

So far, I argued that the profitability of social capital intersects with individuals' own career-related decisions, which are shaped by earlier academic trajectories. The comparison between Algerian and Pakistani participants also showed how participants from the well-established groups (Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France) were more likely to have family members or acquaintances in professional jobs, and so, were more likely to use their 'extended' social network strategically during job search, than their recently-settled peers (Algerians in Britain and Pakistanis in France). There were also notable differences across countries in how the women perceived the help they received from professional institutions. The French women's accounts showed the ways

in which racialised identities led to experiences of racism (overt and covert) in government-led organisations such as Pôle Emploi. Although no British woman reported that they faced racism in receiving help, institutional racism exists in both countries (see for example Sala Pala, 2005; Wieviorka, 1998, for France and, Gillborn, 2006; Anthias, 1996, for Britain), and so does racial discrimination in the early stages of the hiring process (job search and application submission) as well as the later stage – the interview (see for example Cediey and Foroni, 2007, for France and Wood et al., 2009, for Britain).

6.1.2 Job interview stage: experiences of racial and religious discriminations

In addition to experiences of racism and/or discrimination during the hiring process, some French Pakistani and Algerian women also reported similar experiences at the interview stage. Latifa, the British Algerian participant who studied in France for a year, also described similar racist experiences to those reported by French graduate women when looking for employment in Paris. Although Latifa experienced racial discrimination while still studying, her experience shows the intersection of ethnic and national identities, something I have not previously discussed. While talking about her experiences of exclusion at her Parisian university (see Chapter 5), Latifa mentioned that she thought about changing her names: from an Arabic sounding name to a Latin one. When I asked her why she wanted to change names, Latifa recounted the following encounter with an employer:

'That's how you feel, that's how they look at you [when they] put the CV down; I am there just trying to impress and everything, they are like (she holds a sheet in her hand to imitate the employer with her CV) 'so you speak English, very well, hmm you come from London okay, and oh! Your name is LA-TI-FA!'. They never said it to me because of course you could sue them. But you feel it; you feel it a lot in her voice! You know what she means! Because obviously I was trying to apply for jobs that were relevant to my level of education and experience and I was thinking okay, go for retail. But what's the point! It's a relevant job but still, every time it was (again imitating the employer) 'oh! Okay, okay, we'll get back to you'. They never do!' (Anger in her voice) (British Algerian, junior marketing researcher, no headscarf)

Note the female employer's reported remarks. First, she seemed impressed ('you speak English, very well, hmm you come from London okay') and then, she seemed disappointed to find out about Latifa's name (and oh! Your name is LA-TI-FA! Note here, the way she reportedly pronounced Latifa's name, stressing one syllable at a time). Latifa's experience illustrates how ethnicity, more than nationality, produces racist experiences in France. Her words resonate with Wieviorka's (2010) findings on the persistence of racism at various levels of French society. Wieviorka suggests that racism operates in 'real' and subtle manners. Latifa experienced subtle racism, conveyed during the interview through physical gestures and tone of voice ('they never said that to me because of course you could sue them') with 'real' material effects since she was never called back⁸. Examples such as Latifa's illustrate ways in which racism operates in many forms as Essed (1991) suggests; overt and covert, and across various social divisions (e.g. ethnic, religious, national). Similar to Fatima's experience with the Pôle Emploi adviser, it was her name and not her physical appearance that changed Latifa's interlocutor's attitude towards her. Fatima and Latifa do not wear

⁸ Although Latifa understood her experience in racist terms, it could also be said that not being called for a job might be the outcome of competition for the job. This is one way in which subtle, covert racism is hard to identify and to challenge.

headscarves. Both participants claimed that association between their physical appearance, their ethnic origin and religion is less obvious, which allows them to take advantage of mistaken identities since they are often assumed to be non-Muslim. The use of mistaken identities to counter racism/discrimination in the labour market is discussed in Section Three.

While many French women experienced racism as a result of their racialised identity, a few women experienced religious discrimination, especially as a result of wearing headscarves⁹. While discussing her employment trajectory post-graduation, Seedra mentioned that it was difficult for her to find a suitable job matching her qualifications. I asked her if she refused any job offer because of her expectations and she corrected me saying that it was not *she* who refused jobs but *employers* who refused to give them to her:

'You know Jawiria, there have been so many times, I have lost count now! I was accepted on paper application but got refused after the interview. [The employers] never gave me an honest feedback but some of them were quite blunt and clearly told me that it's my headscarf that was bothering them!' (French Algerian, accountant, wears headscarf)

Seedra is a highly-qualified woman; she has two Master's in Accountancy and accumulated over two years of work experience while *still* at university. However, she believes that it is her explicit identity as a Muslim woman which contributed to over six months of unemployment after leaving university. According to her, she was called in for an interview after each application she sent. Employers' assessment of her ability to fulfil work-related duties successfully was, therefore, weighed against her physical appearance and neither her credentials during the

⁹ To remind the reader, there are only two French women who wear headscarves (Seedra, Algerian) and Mahy (Pakistani). Ruksana (Pakistani) stopped wearing the headscarf. Her example is discussed in Section Two.

interview stage nor the application process¹⁰. While Latifa (British Algerian, no headscarf) was discriminated against because of her ethnic/Muslim sounding name during job interviews in France, it is Seedra's explicit religious identity which led to religious discrimination at the interview stage ('some of them were quite blunt and clearly told me that it's my headscarf that was bothering them'). Yet, Seedra's name (i.e. her ethnic identity) did not lead to racial discrimination during the application process. This example illustrates that while in some cases, ethnicity and religion operate simultaneously, in specific contexts (e.g. at the interview stage) *visible* religious identity has a specific tangible impact, regardless of ethnic identity since the two French Pakistani participants also reported similar experiences to Seedra (Mahy, who wears the headscarf and Ruksana, who stopped wearing it). Anthias (2001b) wrote that 'a marketable skill depends on who possesses the skill' (p847). For these graduate women, their skills were not appreciated because of their ethnic/religious identification. Their employability, or as Brown and Hesketh (2004, p24) wrote, their ability 'to fulfil the requirement of specific jobs', is weighed against their perceived identity and stereotypes associated with it (assumption made on the basis of the name such as in Latifa's experience) and/or their physical appearance during direct contact (such as in Seedra's case). These stories illustrate the complexity of the processes of identification of my minority ethnic participants: the intersection of their ethnic identity and professional identity is challenged since, as Weedon (2004) argues, certain characteristics, such as working as professionals, are attributed to the white groups only. In other words, these women are refused jobs because they are seen as 'illegitimate' members who cannot claim their right to graduate-level professional jobs.

¹⁰ It could also be argued that Seedra did not do well in some of the interviews she talked about. Yet, since some employers clearly mentioned her headscarf as a deterrent for them, she now makes sense of all her job rejections in terms of her explicit religious identification.

In many aspects, French and British participants' reported experiences in the job interview setting were different. For example, no British participant reported any case of racial/religious discrimination during interviews. Some participants said that they secured each job they applied for ('every job I applied for, I got it!' Mariam, British Pakistani, no headscarf) and hence were reluctant even to acknowledge the existence of racial/religious discrimination altogether during the job interview stage. Other participants, who had applied for many jobs and failed, attributed their inability to succeed in interviews to lack of relevant work experience. The following example, taken from Heena's interview, illustrates the view shared by all the British participants about why some candidates are likely to fail at the interview stage. Heena referred to her previous interview experiences which she failed to pass.

'I've seen it (that relevant experience makes a difference)! When, when you go for job interviews they don't really, of course they, you need to have a degree and a (stopped). You need to have the education but when you go for job interviews they mainly ask about your experience and your experience will determine whether you get the job or not. You can have a first class degree with hmm A-levels all As and A GCSE but if you don't have the experience then someone with the experience is more likely to get the job.'* (British Algerian, special need educational adviser, no headscarf)

Similar to Heena, all the other British Pakistani and Algerian women framed their failure at the interview stage as due to a lack of added-value (in terms of experiences on their CVs). In view of the increasing pool of graduates, there are certain difficulties in the job search process that are relevant to all graduates. For instance, Brown and Hesketh (2004) studied graduates' employability through interviews with graduates and survey data with employers. They found that for graduates, 'adding value' to their CV is deemed indispensable as degrees alone are not sufficient in an increasingly competitive market (p130). However, in their study, 'adding value' was not defined as relevant work experience, but

something more tangible such as extra skills gained through voluntary work that would make a CV stand out. Although these labour market expectations are relevant for all graduates, disparities persist between graduates' chances of being employed, since the ability to add value to one's CV is highly affected by factors of social class, ethnicity, religion and nationality. Yet, as with Brown and Hesketh's interviewees, British Pakistani and Algerian participants in this study believed that adding value to their CV would improve their employability. They strongly believed that work experience is a warrant for their ability to perform in their given occupation and therefore it is indispensable in securing a role after completing university. Many women also pointed out that the economic recession made competition stiffer. They did not, however, consider that their ethnic/religious identities would impact on their chances to succeed in the labour market. Yet, the findings of quantitative studies show that there is an association between ethnicity and labour market opportunities (see for example, Martin et al., 2010). The reluctance of many British women (except those who faced overt/covert racism in their daily lives) to recognise the existence of racism in the hiring process (and the labour market generally) is due to their belief in the discourse of equal opportunity in British society (as discussed in Chapter 4). Furthermore, the notion of racism does not fit into their individualistic narratives; since *they* have not (or believe they have not) experienced racism and consider that the issue is not at the structural level (since laws are in place to prosecute those who perpetrate racist acts). Some women indeed explicitly referred to equal opportunity policies, arguing that these facilitate fair access to employment for all especially in the public sector ('local authority [is] high on diversity policies', Mariam, British Pakistani, no headscarf). This view was predominant among British women who did not wear headscarves; while those who did were more willing to frame experiences of inequalities in terms of religious discrimination (as seen in Leila's social experiment).

So far, I have shown how Pakistani and Algerian women's interview experiences as graduates are located within the construction of differences around ethnicity and religion in France and Britain. Although in some cases it has been possible to foreground participants' experiences according to either ethnicity or religion, in many other cases, both factors intersected, operating simultaneously. However, in both countries, differences emerged between women who wear headscarves and those who do not in terms of how they made sense of their experiences of racism/discrimination. In France, the former associated their experiences with religious discrimination, while the latter made sense of their experiences in terms of racial discrimination. In comparison, except for Leila, the Algerian participant who did the 'social experiment', all the other British women, regardless of whether or not they wear headscarves, argued that their difficulties as new graduates were due to stiff competition in Britain labour market.

Moreover, comparisons of experiences of racism (because of their non-European and Muslim sounding names) between French participants and the British Algerian participant Latifa (who spent a year in Paris) showed that inequalities in France are racialised. I argue that the issue of racism and discrimination in France affects not only second generation Algerians (as has been established in the literature on Maghrebis in France) but also Pakistanis (and other Muslim minority ethnic people regardless of nationality)¹¹.

Given participants' initial difficulties in securing employment after leaving university, I now discuss their experiences of first recruitment as graduates.

¹¹ I could not make similar comparisons for Britain since none of my French participants ever worked in Britain.

6.1.3 Experiences of first recruitment as graduate: a precarious start

Initial failure to secure suitable roles after graduation pushed many women to make choices they considered would enhance their future employability. These patterns uncover precarious first recruitment as graduates for the majority of my participants.

Only two French participants – one Pakistani (Meena, dental assistant) and one Algerian (Seedra, accountant) – found a degree-level permanent job after leaving university without taking on other jobs first¹². The majority of the participants experienced a more vulnerable start and less linear professional trajectory post-university, moving from one job to another before finding paid and permanent positions commensurate with their academic qualifications. When I asked Reema about her employment after leaving university, she made the following comment:

'As I was telling you, it was all just temp work, two-three months, five months and so on. But I didn't have big breaks in between. There might have been a week or so, you can say holiday breaks! It just gave me time to get away for a week or weekend, just to enjoy and straight afterwards I had work lined up for me. And I liked that you know. You chose where you want to go and how long you want to stay there for.' (French Pakistani, HR administrator, no headscarf)

All positions Reema held before her current permanent role were degree-level posts¹³. Although perceived as signs of unstable professional jobs (Silberman and Fournier, 2006), Reema and other French participants perceived the independence and freedom offered by temporary work as positive ('I liked that'). She further compared the job 'benefits' available to permanent and temporary staff (personal and nominative 'badge'; 'access

¹² However, both women were unemployed for three and six months respectively before securing their first graduate job.

¹³ Current work always refers to the women's employment at the time of the first interview.

to canteen') and concluded that apart from her status, she enjoyed similar rights to all other members of staff. It is also important to note that Reema graduated during the economic recession. As a result, she expected to be unemployed for long periods of time ('I was very surprised [to find a job as soon as I graduated]'). Thus, finding a degree-level job within her field, although fixed-term, was an alternative to unemployment that she welcomed especially since her classmates 'were still struggling to find *any* job' (my emphasis). Moreover, considering many women's earlier failure to secure a role because of a lack of work experience, Reema and other French participants also viewed temporary roles as a way of accumulating extensive work experience in a very short period of time in order to be more competitive for future employment opportunities. Thus, placed within a long-term career goal, fixed term roles were considered suitable alternative options for many new graduates, a first step onto the employment ladder.

The situation of many of my participants is consistent with the trajectories of graduates in France in general (Beffy et al., 2008; Couppié et al., 2007; Giret et al., 2006; Givord, 2005). Based on the analysis of a longitudinal survey which followed new graduates over the course of seven years post-qualification, Couppié and his colleagues (2007) found that the first job after graduation is likely to be a short-term contract. Those with postgraduate qualifications are more likely to find jobs matched to their qualification. Some studies also found that new graduates with vocational qualifications are more likely to find permanent positions (Givord, 2005). However, those of my participants who graduated from vocational institutions found only short-term contracts and faced several periods of unemployment after graduation.

Only one British participant (Noreen, Pakistani), similar to the two French women (Meena and Seedra), secured a degree-level permanent position straight after she left university. The majority of British women graduates, who could not find a degree-level job, considered unpaid roles to gain

work experience. This is different to the majority of their French peers who, instead of unpaid roles, considered paid but temporary roles. In the following extract, I asked Malika why she worked in retail after completing her degree:

'After my Master's, I was within retail and it allowed me to... be able to do my hmm my work experience because the times were flexible. So I was doing voluntary work as assistant psychologist researcher while working in retail.' (British Algerian, assistant psychologist researcher, wears headscarf)

Unsuccessful in their initial attempts to find suitable jobs, some women like Malika decided to take on non-relevant paid jobs and at the same time, pursued unpaid relevant roles they could put on their CVs. Strengthening their employment history was a common feature across all groups in both countries, whatever the route the participants chose, even for those who took on unpaid positions. These women believe that their applications were consistently rejected because of a lack of work experience within their respective fields. Note that Malika wears the headscarf; as discussed earlier, many participants told me that their employment opportunities were affected by religious discrimination. Yet, again, the way Malika understood her employment-related difficulties shows British participants' beliefs that Britain operates equal opportunities. To improve their chances of being employed (as they believed), these participants took on unpaid positions as an alternative strategy.

As in the French case, the employment trajectories of British minority ethnic graduates are in many respects similar to those of any graduate regardless of ethnicity. For example, Schomburg and Teichler (2006) compared graduate surveys in twelve European countries including Britain and France. They found that new graduates are likely to work on a part-time basis and/or on temporary contracts. Country-specific qualitative studies also found similar results and shed further light on the

particularity of women's employment. Moreau and Leathwood (2006), for example, found that their white, Asian and black female interviewees were more likely to be on temporary contracts and less likely to be in degree-level roles than their male counterparts, pointing at gender discrimination in the hiring process.

While some British participants took on relevant unpaid or fixed-term roles, other women applied for positions for which they were overqualified, as articulated in the following example. I asked Leila if the responsibilities she held in her first graduate job were relevant to her degree:

'The business side yes [was relevant to my degree]. The initial job was probably lower of my degree level. But I already had the business strategy and management experience at uni, they made me manager within a few months. The promotion opportunities at that college were really, really great. They recognised when someone was working hard. I started as support assistant. Within a month they made me admin officer (chuckled) and in another month I became operational manager. So, what I mean is that you have to start somewhere and that could be lower to your actual degree level. But it's the experience. Then, you just have to wait for the next opportunity.' (British Algerian, data analyst, wears headscarf)

Overqualification is also a phenomenon noticeable across all graduates (Chevalier and Lindley, 2009). Applying for positions, that required lower qualifications than they had, offered many participants the opportunity to step onto the employment ladder in their chosen sector after graduation. Thus in many cases, being overqualified was a temporary situation.

In this section, I showed how all British and French participants' professional decisions were strongly driven by three factors: their social class, precarious employment offers and experiences of racism/discrimination.

Social class influenced participants' decision to take on a given job. For instance, many working class women did not have the 'luxury to wait' (Sehrish, British Pakistani, senior civil servant, no headscarf) for the right opportunity, to be in unpaid roles or to remain unemployed for long periods of time. Thus, participants from less advantaged socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to take any job, regardless of its status or the conditions of work compared to their more privileged peers.

Precarious employment offers compelled many participants to take on degree relevant jobs but which required lower qualifications, were unpaid roles and/or fixed-term positions. In both countries and ethnic groups, some perceived their temporary and/or unpaid situations as strategic positions which would enable them to reach a long-term goal. Others, who willingly opted for insecure conditions of work, saw their professional situation as unconstrained, allowing them to remain independent. Thus, employability translated into finding relevant jobs but not necessarily keeping the jobs.

Nevertheless, the employment trajectories of professionally well-established participants (who have accumulated at least ten years of work experience) showed that once a first position was secured within their relevant field, better and more reliable opportunities followed. Many of these participants initially on a fixed-term contract saw their status changed to a permanent position; new internal opportunities after the end of their initial fixed-term role became available and internal applications allowed participants to move from one department to another. For example, Naima (French Algerian, 32), who initially joined her current youth and community organisation on a temporary contract, was offered a permanent position within six months. Ten years on, she is now the head of that organisation¹⁴. Moreover, social connections formed during the first role increased possibilities for referrals by increasing the

¹⁴ In-between, she held different roles such as the one of assistant head.

women's social capital. For example Sehrish (British Pakistani, 42) was recommended by a previous work colleague for her current role as an executive director of a charity. These similarities across ethnic groups and across countries suggest that in many respects, my participants' social position as new graduates are subject to shift and change with time and context.

However, my participants' ethnic and/or religious identities further constrained their professional opportunities, since these produced experiences of racism and/or discrimination. Many women's ability to perform in professional jobs was not judged by employers against their credentials, but on criteria that were, in effect, racist.

6.2 Everyday racism and (non-)belonging in the workplace

Having discussed how participants negotiated their education-to-work transition, this section focuses on participants' experiences in the workplace. Although many women shared similar experiences of racism and discrimination, specific intersecting factors were involved in that process. Accordingly, this section is divided into two parts. Part One deals with the experiences of women who do not wear headscarves, focusing on the intersection of ethnicity, religion and nationality with gender. Part Two deals with women who wear headscarves and examines their experiences of the simultaneous effect of visibility of religion and gender.

6.2.1 Two countries – one outcome: experiencing subtle racism and discrimination

The majority of the French participants in this study described their current work relationships as positive. Shared understanding with work colleagues and pleasant working environments enhanced their feelings of job satisfaction. Nevertheless, many participants recounted negative

experiences in previous jobs, while some did so about their current jobs. The first quote below is not an answer to a question I asked. It is a remark Anissa made after I mentioned the issue of racism and discrimination in the labour market, as I was going through the information leaflet to explain the aims of the research. Two minutes into my explanation, Anissa made the following remark:

'Oh yes! I totally agree [there is racism and discrimination in the labour market]. To be honest I did not experience a lot of racism or discrimination but there is one thing that makes a huge difference between a Maghrebi or someone who is not a French national. They have to work twice as hard as a [white] French person with similar qualifications, they have to demonstrate twice as much that they can perform compared to a [white] French co-worker doing the same job. And that's it! It's always twice more than the [white] French person.'
(French Algerian, senior HR administrator, no headscarf)

Note how Anissa introduced her point; she first quantified her own racist and discriminatory experiences ('not a lot') and then offered a nuanced statement ('but there is one thing'). She insisted on the need, almost compulsory requirement for Maghrebis to get co-workers' approval, despite successfully passing the interview stage and securing the job (see repetition and emphasis). As seen earlier, racist assumptions that only white employees are able to perform given roles put pressure on many participants to over achieve in order to gain a legitimate place amongst their white colleagues and to legitimise their social position as *professional* minority ethnic women. Note also how the use of the third person pronoun works to deflect the problem away from her (i.e. she did not experience it, but noticed it). This became clearer to me as the interview progressed when she compared her workload to those of her colleagues and then stated that 'her one mistake is the equivalent of ten mistakes done by a white colleague'. The strategy of deflection therefore allowed Anissa verbally to express her actual feelings that she needs to

over achieve since cases of subtle racism are less tangible and often create conflict and uncertainty (Essed, 1991)¹⁵.

In addition to feelings that they need to work harder than their white colleagues, many Pakistani and Algerian participants also shared experiences where they faced seemingly naive comments and jokes. Consider the following two quotes: the first one is taken from Naima's interview in which she clarified what she meant by 'sometimes the line is crossed [in terms of racist remarks]'; the second quote is from Sonia's interview. She spontaneously spoke about her experiences of racism. I then probed her to give me an example. Both women described their current work relationships.

'How to explain? You...when you are with all these [white] French posh people (at council meetings) and when you don't eat pork they make sure to point it out to you. [...] 'you don't eat pork, are you Muslim?' and I have to lie 'no, no not at all I am vegetarian!' or 'you don't drink alcohol, are you Muslim?' there is no link! It's not because I don't drink that I am Muslim! Many non-Muslims don't drink! And sometimes they go 'well we can't have fun around you then!', 'really, you Muslims, you don't enjoy yourselves! You don't drink'. Do you see? It's like that.'

(Naima, French Algeria, head of a community and youth organisation and adviser to the mayor, no headscarf)

¹⁵ Although some French studies investigated second generation young people's experiences of the labour market (see for example, Merckling, 2013), to my knowledge, no French study has looked at this group's relationships with their co-workers or experiences at work in general qualitatively.

'He (a work colleague) asked me my origin and I said 'Pakistani' and then he said 'oh! Right! So it was you who were hiding Bin Laden at home!' [...] it was a joke but it didn't make me laugh. Bin Laden, he is not my friend or someone of the family but he gave me a bad reputation!'

(Sonia, French Pakistani, airport station agent, no headscarf)

Both quotes well illustrate how mundane overt racism is, and how it operates in both the private and public sectors through ethnic and religious questioning and remarks (Naima) and religious and national jokes (Sonia). Despite five years of employment with her local council, Naima still experiences a lack of care in council meetings and repetitive taunts of white colleagues. The sensitivity and offensive nature of the 'Bin Laden' joke is also easily overlooked in Sonia's case. In both examples, the women are socially excluded. Since she cannot share the meal during council meetings, Naima 'watch[es] [her colleagues] eat' and 'everybody has their eyes on [her]'. In Sonia's case, she is positioned as the ethnic 'other', associated with Pakistan which excluded her from belonging to France. The process of collective identification (discussed in Chapter 4) is used here to differentiate between white French nationals and the Muslim 'other'; yet religion works in conjunction with ethnicity for Naima and nationality for Sonia. Although all the French participants are French by birth and more importantly *feel* an emotional sense of belonging to France, this 'familiar and repetitive' racism produces a feeling of non-belonging among both Pakistani and Algerian women (Essed, 1991, p52).

The use of seemingly naive comments and jokes and feelings that the women need to over achieve serve to normalise the perception of enduringly different 'worlds'. It reinforces power relationships between these minority ethnic women seen as 'illegitimate' members and the white group seen as 'legitimate' members of the professional work environment. In that respect, I argue that many French participants need(ed) to prove their legitimacy – right to be in the workplace – since

securing employment is/was not in essence a warrant for their professional capabilities. They are/were underestimated because of their perception as minority ethnic women and as not French. They are/were, therefore, re-located to a position of inferiority and ultimately othered on the basis of their religious and/or ethnic identity. This relationship contributed to creating an environment of distrust between many participants and their colleagues. For example, in a discussion of how religion should be kept secret in the workplace, Ruksana (French Pakistani, airport station agent, no headscarf) explained how during Ramadhan, she avoids co-workers during lunchtime so not to 'raise any suspicions' and to 'hide to break her fast'. I found in many of my French participants' interviews the use of a very strong lexical field associated with crime, as if these women are guilty of being Muslim. In discussions of how their religious identity needs to be kept secret in the workplace, many French women used the following verbs repetitively: 'hide', 'escape', 'suspect', 'remain invisible', 'keep secret', 'catch' and 'find out'. This particular way of expressing their feelings further strengthened the oppressive work environment French women experience(d) as a result of their religious identification. Note that Naima, Sonia and Ruksana do not wear headscarves; yet they are othered on the basis of their religion. This shows how religion and ethnicity are intertwined; in some cases, it is not the *visible* religious identity signifier (i.e. headscarf) that works to exclude these women, the knowledge of their religion is sufficient for their white interlocutors to perpetrate acts of racism. Note also that it is within the specific context of interaction with *non-Muslim white* co-workers that the women felt the need to 'hide' their religious identity. No women reported similar experiences while interacting with other minority ethnic colleagues (regardless of religion).

Unlike French participants, no British participant reported racist comments/jokes. Previous research has shown the existence of racial harassment in the workplace (see for example, Shields and Price, 2002). Yet, as seen in Chapter 4, all the British women in this study insisted that

the British multicultural framework guarantees every single individual their right to be treated as equal and to practise their religion freely. Many participants, especially Pakistanis, acknowledged the existence of racism and discrimination in the 1960s and 1970s but ‘things have changed’ since their parents migrated (Raheela, British Pakistani, university programme administrator, wears headscarf). Many British participants recounted positive relationships with their work colleagues especially with regard to their ethnic and religious identities, which is in complete contrast to French women’s work-related relationships. Many talked about their freedom to discuss religious and cultural practices with non-Muslim white colleagues, a taboo for French participants. Yet, on numerous occasions, British participants’ experiences can be read as social exclusion in the workplace. These stories were shared only when I explicitly introduced the topic of racism/discrimination. The following extract is taken from Mariam’s interview. She initially was ‘quite shocked’ to find out about the existence of racism in the labour market. She tried to make sense of it by distinguishing between the private and public sectors and then hesitantly recounted a past experience by adopting a new lens (i.e. assessing whether indeed she has been victim of racism or not):

'When I worked for [renowned TV channel] I did feel that there was mainly a white workforce. Maybe (pause) I did feel a little bit left out then. (I probed) hmm...well because...I don't know the way they were treated. Maybe they were treated better or maybe I was just a bit sensitive or a bit naive, I don't know. I just felt that (long pause). You know I'm not really sure (pause). It's like when I was around they behaved differently. It's the way they wouldn't include me in conversations or you know the way you chitchat at work. There wasn't that. It's like they had their own clique and I felt left out. I mean I was part of the team don't get me wrong but there wasn't anyone (stopped); the majority were white (stopped)...I mean work-wise yes I was included but not like, I mean relational-wise. And I think it was the culture, the going outs after work, to pubs after work, that kind of things so I kind of felt left out, that kind of thing.' (British Pakistani, unqualified social worker, no headscarf)

Note how Mariam found it difficult to put words on her feeling ('I am not really sure'; broken response signalled with three periods; pauses), which well illustrates the challenges associated with recognising instances of subtle racism (Essed, 1991). Minimising the extent of the actual impact ('maybe I was just a bit sensitive or a bit naive') allowed Mariam to normalise the situation and to not even recognise it as a racist practice. She then shifted the 'blame' and identified her own behaviour of not joining in, 'the going outs after work, to pubs after work' as the explanation for her social exclusion at work. She, therefore, provided a causal effect between the events (i.e. she was left out because she did not participate in after work social life). It became easier for Mariam to deal with this situation knowing that *she* was in control (i.e. *she* did not socialise) rather than being subjected to it (i.e. *they* left her out). She foregrounded her experience in ethnic differentiation (note the repetition of white workforce); yet, she described how she did not engage in practices that were in conflict with her faith (going to pubs and drinking). Religion in this instance is a cause of indirect discrimination (she doesn't drink, so she is excluded). Because British women are exposed to, and

strongly imbued with discourses of tolerance and equality, they did not view the ordinary and negative attitudes of certain colleagues as manifestation of racism, especially since no physical act occurred and no racist words were spoken (Essed, 1991). This partly explains the difficulty Mariam faced in assessing the events and responding to them. She ultimately decided to leave, claiming 'the job was boring'. Denying that hers was an experience of racism enabled Mariam (and many other British women) to sustain a coherent identity during the interview as a *strong, independent and professional* woman and to dis-identify with minority ethnic women who are *victims* of racism/discrimination (Anthias, 2002).

Having experienced social mobility through their academic achievements, many women (nine French and five British) also experienced a shift in their class position from working class to middle class, which ultimately gave them legitimacy in claiming their rights to professional jobs (Archer, 2011). Yet, in both countries, racism operated intersectionally for both Pakistani and Algerian women and their right to belong to the group of white professionals was challenged by non-Muslim white people. The women understood their experiences differently in France and Britain which suggests the importance of the multicultural and republican discourses. While French women systematically questioned the attitude of their white work colleagues describing experiences of subtle racism (pressure to over achieve, repetitive racist jokes and comments), British women struggled verbally to qualify similar instances as racist because of an overwhelming commitment to a discourse of, and a belief in, equal opportunities in multicultural Britain and because of their own perceived social position in society. The paradox, compared to French women's experiences, is that British women felt that their right to be different is respected, yet it seems that these differences are not understood. For example Heena (British Algerian, special needs educational adviser, no headscarf) explained that her colleagues, with whom she has been working with for the past two years, ask her the same questions each

time she goes to pray at work such as ‘why do you have to do it five times a day?’ and ‘why do you have to cover yourself?’. Thus, while Heena is socially included at work and her religious practices are respected (she is ‘allowed’ to pray at work), she is emotionally excluded through experiences that are, in effect, racist. Therefore, to further elaborate Essed’s (1991) definition, everyday racism not only takes the form of ‘physical’ social oppression but also emotional oppression (despite social inclusion).

6.2.2 ‘You’re frozen out straight away’: the experiences of women who wear headscarves

Earlier in the chapter, I described the experiences of Seedra who has two Master’s in Accountancy, but could not secure a job because of wearing the headscarf. Discrimination, in this case, occurred at the interview stage. However, since securing her first job after graduation, which is her current job, Seedra is still facing religious discrimination. She believes that she will not be promoted because of her headscarf and, therefore, she will have to stay in her current role for which she is overqualified. When I asked her why she thinks so, she replied:

‘My boss clearly told me; he is scared for the image of his accountancy agency. He is scared and he told me so; ‘we have proved that Muslim women can work but it stops here’. He is scared to show me to his clientele. Especially Jewish. He is scared (laughed) that a war would break or something. He really thinks he is in Palestine! He said that he doesn’t have any problem [with my headscarf] but he is afraid of his clientele’s reaction. If he gives me a higher level job, the one I really should have, I will be in direct contact with these people. And he doesn’t want that. He said that as simple as this!’ (French Algerian, accountant, wears headscarf)

Once in employment, Seedra reported that she proved her ability to perform her work-related duties well. Note her employer’s reported

comment about the ability of 'Muslim women' to work. In this case, the 'problem' is the Muslim woman who wears a headscarf. This association further highlights the particular position of 'overly-visible' Muslim women in French society, since their headscarf has become the epitome of Islam, making them the ultimate Muslim 'other'. Accordingly, Seedra believes that her employer does not want to be associated with Islam by having Seedra as a representative of his agency. Seedra believes to be working at the level of a new graduate without experience¹⁶. Unfortunately, her situation is not unique in this study. A third of the French participants have had to compromise between being in employment and occupying a degree-level job. As discussed earlier, many women opted for jobs for which they were overqualified in order to maximise future employment opportunities by gaining experience in their fields. However, in the case of these French Muslim women, they told me they are overqualified as a result of religious discrimination. While Seedra faced discrimination as a result of wearing the headscarf at work, Ruksana faced religious discrimination despite *not* wearing the headscarf at work. Her story is of particular interest since she has stopped wearing the headscarf following her experience of religious discrimination (which led to the termination of her contract). She explained how she used to remove her headscarf before arriving at her office and would put it back on at the end of the day, after leaving the office. One day, a white male colleague saw her in the morning with her headscarf on, just before she arrived at work. She regretfully described the change in atmosphere in her office that particular morning:

'There is no need for words; one look is enough to convey the message. The atmosphere, that morning, it was no longer the same. It had completely changed. [...] It was more like 'you, you stay aside and we, we stay here'. You're frozen out straight away.' (French Pakistani, airport station agent, no headscarf)

¹⁶ To remind the reader, Seedra is the only participant who accumulated a two-year work experience as an accountant while still at university.

Note how Ruksana perceived the boundaries that were redrawn ('you'/'we') since before that particular morning, she was part of the 'we'. As Yuval-Davis (2011) suggests, boundaries of belonging are subject to shift and change. It is the knowledge of her religious identity that worked to shift her perceived identity from non-Muslim (and hence initially part of the 'we') to Muslim (and hence the 'you'). Unspoken words operated to socially exclude Ruksana, creating a sense of otherness, once again, because her religious identity was seen as incompatible with being a 'legitimate' member of the professional work environment. It is this particular intersection between the female body and the image of the headscarf which worked to create a hostile work environment for both Seedra and Ruksana, crossing boundaries of ethnicity.

While wearing headscarves meets strong opposition in numerous French employment sectors, the prominence of Britain's multicultural discourse rendered it almost impossible for British participants to fight cases of religious discrimination and racism at work because they are unspoken and invisible. Yet, through the interview process, some British participants realised that they work twice as hard as white colleagues and are discriminated against. The following extract is a comment Malika made when reflecting on several instances of rejection for a funded PhD position by her employer:

'I know that in order to get a job I need to be perfect, there are [employers who] might be more lenient to people, who are, who are not from ethnic background. So they might accept someone for a job that doesn't meet all the criteria but is not from an ethnic background. I think you have to prove yourself a lot more than other people, you have a lot more to prove.' (British Algerian, assistant psychologist researcher, wears headscarf)

This is a finding that fits with Parker-Jenkins and her colleagues' (1997) findings about young British Muslim women who reported experiences of discrimination in favour of their white peers. Malika realised that she had

been discriminated against in favour of white colleagues less competent and less experienced than her ('I had more experience than him'/'I was here longer than them'). Although she did not use the term 'discrimination', Malika questioned whether the perception that she was 'less able to kind of fit in' influenced the outcome of her applications. Note that Malika, who wears the headscarf, understood her experience of rejection in terms of ethnic and not religious differences. The way Malika framed her experience is consistent with her overall story (i.e. freedom of religion in the UK) discussed throughout the thesis. In that respect, many Muslim British participants, who wear headscarves, maintained a similar line of argument throughout the interview to sustain a unity in their self-image and beliefs. These findings highlight the similarity in the experiences of many participants crossing ethnic, national and 'physical' (i.e. wearing headscarves or not) boundaries (since many French women who do not wear headscarves gave similar accounts to Malika).

Feelings of exclusion were also experienced similarly across both countries. Shortly after leaving university, Neelum worked as a research laboratory assistant. She described how she felt unwelcomed by her team members because of her physical appearance:

'Just the looks; all the way up and then all the way down! Or the way they spoke to you or the way they actually didn't talk to you or included in the conversations when you were around. You know someone new comes in, you're open and welcoming. There was nothing like that the whole time I was there! [...] I was totally excluded. I didn't enjoy. I was just doing my job but the environment wasn't that of best friends. They were not welcoming. They didn't make me feel comfortable. That's the feeling I got!' (British Pakistani, physics teacher, wears headscarf and abaya)

The particularity of 'overly-visible' British Muslim women's accounts is that they were more sensitive in recognising instances of everyday racism; compared to their peers who do not wear headscarves. Afshar

and her colleagues' (2006) argued that the 'image of the covered' is threatening, reinforced by a process of 'demonization' of Muslim women (p169). In the above case, the threat was 'neutralised' by making Neelum redundant. She attributed her unfair dismissal to her request for a place to pray at work which she believed was not welcomed. Note also that being on probation, she did not have any employee rights and thus could not challenge her dismissal, especially since her employers, as she reported, 'never said no' to her request. Yet, at the same time, they never accommodated her religious practice. Neelum's experience indicates how differences are accepted, but within boundaries in Britain. She secured a job 'despite' her Islamic clothing choices but her needs as a Muslim woman were not accommodated. Note also that she was recruited by a temping agency and not the research laboratory directly. She was professionally included but excluded socially and emotionally. While Neelum (and other British women) were able to request a place to pray, French participants know they cannot, as one participant put, 'cross that line with [their] boss' (and hence hide to pray at work). Thus, in France, women are aware of the impossibility of celebrating their religious practices and beliefs at work; but in Britain, the existence of discourses on acceptance overshadows subtle religious discrimination since in most cases, employers 'never said no'.

Both French and British participants faced particular forms of everyday racism creating a sense of emotional oppression and non-belonging. For these women, ethnic identity remains unspoken; it is overshadowed by their attributed religious identity (informed by gender differences). In both countries, these women, regardless of their own sense of identity, are perceived as Muslims. Despite these similarities in religious oppression, many French participants shared British women's beliefs in the existence of religious tolerance and acceptance in Britain (as discussed in Chapter 4). Accordingly, a few French participants said that they contemplate leaving France and settling in Britain in order to conciliate their religious practices and career ambition 'free' from religious racism. Yet, in both

countries dominant discourses position Muslims as problematic and unwelcomed

6.3 Countering experiences of racism and discrimination in the labour market

In Chapter 4, I discussed how many of my participants use mistaken identities (including the positive ethnic 'other' and 'whitened' identities) and the distancing strategy and/or perform the 'white' identity to avoid potential experiences of racism and the pressure of the white gaze in society at large. Building primarily on accounts introduced in Section Two of this chapter, this section focuses on the ways in which the women deploy(ed) the above strategies in their workplaces in order to counter or attempt to escape negative experiences. Since there are stark differences in the ways women who wear headscarves are (reportedly) positioned by their work colleagues, accounts of their experiences will be separated from the other group of women and discussed in the second part of this section.

6.3.1 Deploying identity strategies

Many French participants used the positive ethnic 'other' identity to avoid experiences of racism at work. I focus here on Naima's experiences since her example shows how multiple identities are challenged within the context of employment. During the discussion of her current work relationships, Naima explained how she has to hide her religious practices to avoid stigmatisation during council meeting lunches or dinners ('I have to lie 'no, no not at all I am vegetarian [and so I don't eat pork]!'). Anthias (2009) and other theorists suggest that identity negotiations are context specific. In social interactions outside her workplace, Naima decides not to challenge mistaken identities, but within the particular context of her council work environment, she has adopted another strategy ('I have to lie'). By positioning herself as a vegetarian

rather than as a Muslim, she explicitly covers her religious practices in order to avoid racist jokes/comments and the pressure of the white gaze. The following extract follows her discussion of social exclusion in council meetings:

‘So you don’t eat [the main pork dish]. And when you don’t eat, what do you do? You watch them eating! Everybody will have their eyes on you ‘oh! We forgot Naima! She doesn’t eat pork! She is Muslim!’

(French Algerian, head of a community and youth organisation and adviser to the mayor, no headscarf)

Note how, despite Naima’s attempts to protect herself (by lying) her work colleagues are well-aware that ‘She doesn’t eat pork! She is Muslim’. As a result of such episodes, Naima has stopped going to those council meetings. The conflict between her claimed identity (professional Maghrebi Muslim woman, as seen in Chapter 5) and attributed identity (Muslim woman who does not join in) makes it impossible for her to sustain a coherent identity. Her work colleagues’ fixation on her religious identity and practices and experiences of inferiorisation (grounded in her ethnic identity) has now led Naima into thinking about quitting her job. Thus, for Naima, retreating from her workplace where she is subjected to racism is the only way she can escape racialisation. Naima explained that there are only two other minority ethnic advisers, both non-Muslim and male, in the council team. She spontaneously took an intersectional view comparing her experiences. She told me that both men have different experiences since ‘they are men’, ‘they have a physical presence, they can shout and have their voices heard’. This highlights the intersection of ethnicity, religion with gender in the construction of Naima’s identity in the context of a highly racist and patriarchal white work environment. These three social divisions serve to make Naima’s position at the council uncomfortable, yet religion is the ultimate differentiating factor used by her white co-workers to stigmatise and exclude her.

No comparable data emerged among British women who do not wear headscarves. Indeed, since these British women did not recognise everyday racist practices, they did not attempt to counter/escape these. In cases where such experiences were reported, the participants had left their jobs because the working environment was hostile (see for example Mariam's account in Section Two). Half of the British participants wear headscarves and therefore data was richer for this category of women than for those who do not wear headscarves, since they more readily saw lack of equality in their treatment compared to their colleagues.

6.3.2 Identity strategies of women who wear headscarves

As discussed in Chapter 4, women who wear headscarves perform the 'white' identity to counter negative stereotypes in society at large. I defined performing the 'white' identity as enhancing features perceived to be white such as speaking the French or English language. Within the specific context of their work environment, 'overly-visible' Muslim women continued to deploy this strategy. While discussing her current work relationships, Seedra explained that as a Muslim woman it is necessary for her to perform as 'the overly open-minded Muslim' woman in order to avoid stigmatisation. By controlling her image, Seedra tries to influence the way 'others define and treat' her (Goffman, 1959, p255). Despite this attempt, she reported that she is subjected to scrutiny in relation to her views on political/religious issues. In the following extract Seedra responded to how being 'overly-visible' as a Muslim woman affects her at work:

'It's like I always have to justify, all the time! Men would never be asked the question I am asked because I am visible 'why do you wear it?', 'why do you pray?', 'why this religion?' and there is always the big question, always the same one 'what do you think of the stoning of women?' and this other one hmm 'what do you think of homosexuality?' (to me) Has anyone ever asked you such a question? No! But they will if it's a woman with a headscarf!' (French Algerian, accountant, wears headscarf)

She understands her experience in terms of gender by comparing it to Muslim men ('men would never be asked the question I am asked') and to mine, a Muslim woman who does not wear the headscarf ('Has anyone ever asked you such a question? No!'). Although she undermined the experiences of other Muslim women, who do not wear headscarves, and, men, who also wear Islamic dresses, the particularity of her experience (i.e. being 'overly-visible') has indeed positioned her as the ultimate Muslim 'other', since her headscarf has come to symbolise the assumed negativity associated with Islam (e.g. Afshar, 2008; see also Chapters 2 and 4). When I asked her how she responds to these questions, she said that she lies 'about [her] beliefs'. Just as French women who do not wear headscarves, Seedra lies about her religious beliefs and hides her religious practices (e.g. she hides to do her daily prayers at work). By asking questions about her views on specific topics, Seedra believes her work colleagues test her 'true Frenchness'; and use this as the basis of assessing her right to belong to France or not. Anthias (2002) suggests that the processes of identification and dis-identification are both essential in the construction of an individual's translocational positionalities, especially in workplace social interactions. In that respect, by distancing herself from the image of the stereotypical Muslim woman – the attributed identity – and by presenting herself as the 'white-friendly' Muslim woman or the 'white-minded' Muslim woman – her claimed identity within the social context of her workplace – Seedra attempts to negotiate her othering, from negative to positive. By continuously hiding her real opinions and practices, she creates a new and contextual subject

position; her dis-identification is used to regain control of her representation and to convey the image she feels will potentially help her escape 'routine interrogations'. Unfortunately, since this strategy is contextual it is also short-lived; in each new and similar situation, Seedra has to re-position herself (as the 'white-friendly' Muslim woman) in order to avoid oppression.

Although there are more women who wear headscarves in the British sample, few accounts of everyday religious racism emerged from the data. It is worth reminding the reader that British participants reported issues of racism and discrimination only in cases of overt racism. When evidence of everyday religious racism was found analytically, a common strategy was noticeable. The participants ignored racist behaviours. In the following extract, I asked Malika about her past work relations. As she responded, I asked her what she meant by 'you always have some people who are not nice'. She then shared her current work relationships:

'Hmm I mean, they, there is this one colleague of mine, who says things about Muslims, their representations; he always makes a comment about terrorism when I am around, and it's only for me. I mean they, he always waits for me to say something. I spotted that so I, what I do now I just go. And I do believe it is influenced by my headscarf, (long pause) I guess from that point of view, there had been other people who had made comments about my religion, not directly, but they just say things.' (British Algerian, assistant psychologist researcher, wears headscarf)

Malika makes sense of her white colleague's behaviour by pointing to her 'headscarf'. Yet again, it is the visibility associated with Islam that becomes the basis of oppression. While the French women (like Seedra) tackled similar challenges from co-workers by becoming a 'white-friendly' Muslim, Malika has decided to 'just go', leaving situations where there might be confrontations. By refusing to engage in a conversational exchange, Malika protects herself from negative scrutiny. It is noteworthy

that no British woman who wears a headscarf could recall any questioning as direct as the questions put to Seedra such as the stoning of women. Instead they experienced more subtle questioning, operating through an initial inclusion in conversation with the end result of isolation. For example, before she decided simply to avoid verbal confrontations, Malika used to be part of the conversation (since her co-worker used to 'wait[t] for [her] to be around' in order to 'comment about terrorism') and once the questioning started, she was isolated (since he 'wait[ed] for her to say something' and 'only [her]'). While discussing this particular instance, Malika remembered previously forgotten/unremarked past experiences ('there had been other people'). By reflecting on this one occurrence, she was able to contextualise similar experiences and to recognise the repetitive behaviour of some of her white colleagues. Yet, despite this reflection she did not frame her experiences as racist. As Answer (2008) rightly argued, Muslims are not a homogenous group; Muslim immigrants in Europe came from different countries and from different ethnic groups; they follow different schools of thought and have different views on global issues. Yet, the collective identification process makes Malika accountable for (and so subject to questioning about) issues involving Muslims and happening around the world regardless of her own stance vis-à-vis those issues or her own sense of identity, an experience shared by Seedra. Thus, although all the British women maintained that their ethnic and religious differences are accepted and respected, the experiences of oppression of women who wear headscarves (i.e. collective justification/social and emotional exclusions) show that there is 'cap' to the acceptance of differences; one can be Muslim but must not be 'overly-visible' in the UK.

'France is openly racist' but is 'Britain tolerant or hypocrite'? These are Latifa's words (British Algerian, junior marketing researcher, no headscarf) as she reflected on her professional experiences in both France and Britain. Unlike the French secular approach which views all individuals as equal citizens before the law, Britain focuses on differences

and plurality through a multicultural strategy. Although these ideologies have often been contrasted, Bassel and Emujulu (2010) argued that in essence, in both countries, individuals' multiple identities are questioned. This study shows that the questioning takes different forms. On the one hand, equal status as French citizen is undermined; Pakistani and Algerian women experience oppressions through different forms of everyday racism that entail rejection as 'legitimate' members among white professionals and social and emotional exclusions. On the other hand, despite their trust in Britain's multicultural approach, many British women share similar experiences to French women, but differences emerge in how they made sense of these. They believe that their ethnic and religious differences are respected and accepted by the white group *but*, as I showed, these differences are not understood. Being in professional jobs, these women have achieved a modicum of economic inclusion. Yet, the constant need to justify religious practices at work, the experiences of exclusion from white colleagues' 'cliques', the constant lack of attention to religious requirements, to pray and to have halal food by employers and colleagues, the feeling of working harder than white colleagues, experiences of being the target of racist jokes, questions and comments contribute to many of my Pakistani and Algerian participants' sense of social and emotional exclusion at work in both France and Britain. Put simply, their professional inclusion does not warrant their social and emotional inclusion in the workplace; accordingly, they experience a contingent inclusion.

6.4 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have explored the labour market experiences of Pakistani and Algerian women graduates by focusing on key contexts: education-to-work transition and work environment.

Mapping my participants' experiences over the course of their early professional lives (education-to-work transition and first recruitment as

graduates) showed similarities across ethnic groups and nationalities driven by commonalities in social class background and status as new minority ethnic Muslim graduates. It also showed how initial disadvantages (e.g. precarious roles) can change into advantages (e.g. such as managing to secure better roles within the department). This further illustrates how many of my participants were able to redefine their positionalities from earlier precarious positions (e.g. temporary roles) to more secure positions as their identity resources increased (e.g. new contacts and social networks and work experience). This showed that my participants' professional positions were multidimensional, affected by social class, gender, ethnic and religious divisions, which changed over time (Anthias, 2002).

Discussions of my participants' experiences during the hiring process and their relationships with co-workers revealed the persistence of racial and religious inequalities in the workplace. The intersection of ethnic and religious identifications triggered negative social interactions in terms of a fixation on religion for both the women who wear headscarves and, those who do not. Thus, the commonality of experiences of everyday religious racism among Pakistani and Algerian women in both countries highlight the continuous negativity associated with Islam; yet in Britain, it was the visibility of religion which became the ultimate excluding factor.

I also showed how the correlation between academic achievement and employment is not limited to the process of gaining access to professional positions, but extends to the approval of the white gaze. This chapter has demonstrated that a marketable skill not only depends on who you are, as argued by Anthias (2008), but also on *who* you deal with. The lack of ethnic mix in some women's workplace and less-friendly work environments compelled the women to employ different strategies to counter-attack collective and negative attributed identities in order to achieve a less 'problematic' or more 'acceptable' social position. Some participants considered re-locating themselves in the labour market (i.e.

by changing jobs); others performed more acceptable identities (e.g. 'white-minded' Muslim woman).

So, is it inclusion, exclusion or contingent inclusion? Undeniably, the Pakistani and Algerian women in this study experience(d) a contingent inclusion in the French and British labour markets. Their skills are weighed against the (visibility of) their ethnic and/or religious identities and not the qualifications they gained and/or their work experiences. Their racialised identities produce(d) unfair treatment within the labour market, but perception of these inequalities differed across countries. In France, the existence of an overt racist work environment creates strong feelings of exclusion and oppression among both Pakistani and Algerian participants (regardless of whether or not they wear headscarves) so much so that they deploy identity strategies on a regular basis in their day-to-day work interactions. However, in Britain, both Pakistani and Algerian participants feel that their ethnic and religious differences are accepted. Yet, I found that although these differences are accepted and respected, they are not understood. Moreover, British women who wear headscarves experience(d) a stronger sense of exclusion in the workplace compared to the women who do not wear headscarves. In that respect, I argued there is a 'cap' to the acceptance of differences in Britain. Nevertheless, in both French and British labour markets, gender, ethnicity and (visibility of) religion operated simultaneously to construct similar experiences of everyday racism and feelings of non-belonging in social interactions with non-Muslim white people.

Conclusions

The aim of the research that informs this thesis was to understand the professional and educational experiences of second generation graduate women in France and Britain. The thesis took a social constructionist position that enabled me to view participants' experiences as socially constructed within particular social interactions and contingent on broader contexts. The research contributed to the achievement of an in-depth understanding of how the educational and professional positions of Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women are constructed. It explored their own sense of identity and processes of belonging (including social inclusion and/or exclusion) and how these are negotiated within social interactions with work colleagues and other social actors (including members of teaching and other academic staff and/or of government-led agencies). Throughout this thesis, the employment of an intersectional theoretical frame has helped to illuminate the complexity of the positioning of British and French Algerian and Pakistani Muslim women. It has shown the shifting commonalities and differences between and within countries and ethnic groups for the women's professional experiences. The previous chapters have illustrated that these are not only contingent upon educational trajectories, but also upon a number of other socio-economic factors, including overall constructions of (non-)belonging in society, family background (e.g. migration and social class), structural barriers specific to each country (such as policies on headscarf/niqab bans) and racism and discrimination (which was common to both countries). Ethnicity, gender, social class, religion and citizenship all intersected to construct the women's social positions. Anthias's (2009) concept of translocational positionality added to the understandings afforded by intersectional analyses by illuminating the ways in which the women negotiated their social positions *contextually*, and sometimes in contradictory ways.

In Sections 1 and 2 of this conclusion, I present two key findings from the research that informs this thesis and discuss how they contribute to existing scholarship. The first finding refers to the incompatibility between minority ethnicity and religion and citizenship and the second discusses the dissociation between professional inclusion and social and emotional inclusions in the workplace. Throughout these first two sections, I will also discuss the differences and similarities between French and British women in how they understand their social, educational and professional experiences. I suggest that strong beliefs in multicultural discourses 'blind' British women to the existence of racism while French women were very vocal about it and its effect on their everyday life. In Section 3, I highlight the theoretical contributions made by the study to existing scholarship before discussing the limitations of this study (Section 4). I conclude by making recommendations for future research (Section 5) and then return, in the final section, to the story that starts this thesis.

Racialised citizenship

This section discusses the first main finding of this study that is the social construction of ethnicity/religion as incommensurate with citizenship. This finding fits with those of previous research; yet, it advances existing scholarship by de-constructing the Muslim category in two ways: (1) by positioning religion in relation to other social categories and (2) by analysing identity constructions according to the visibility of religion.

First, this research investigated the experiences of Muslims intersectionally by placing religion in relation to gender (i.e. women), ethnicity (i.e. Pakistani and Algerian) and citizenship (i.e. British and French). Moreover, in addition to comparing the groups within each country (e.g. Pakistanis in France), this research also compared the groups across countries so that Pakistani and Algerian women's experiences were subject to examination in both France and Britain. In doing so, I uncovered similarities in experiences between well-

established minority ethnic groups (i.e. Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France) and recently settled groups (i.e. Pakistanis in France and Algerians in Britain) which I argue is due to a strong association between French/British citizenship and whiteness.

Second, this research compared the experiences of Muslim women according to the visibility of religion, that is to say, between women who wear headscarves/abaya and those who do not. This comparison illuminated the ways in which French and British Muslim women are othered. In doing so, this research suggests that knowledge of an individual's religious affiliation (Islam here) is sufficient in the construction of othering. This knowledge is easily acquired through visible religious markers, making Muslim women who wear headscarves easy subjects of othering.

Unpacking the complexity associated with ethnicity, religion and citizenship

Pakistanis have a similar relationship with Britain as Algerians have with France: a colonial past and a long history of migration. Both have attracted much scholarly attention. In comparison, Algerians in Britain and Pakistanis in France have much shorter histories in their countries of migration and have been subjected to relatively little research attention, as discussed in Chapter 1. This imbalance in research attention, however, does not mean that the well-established groups and the newly-settled ones have experiences of differential positioning. Previous work suggests that Europe's integration agenda places minority ethnic groups as 'subordinate' and 'devalued' citizens (Rattansi 2011), who constitute only a 'minor part of the national narrative' (p18) in contrast to whiteness, which is constructed as the norm (Weedon, 2004). Similarly, Said's (1981) account of the binary that governs western discourses about Islam suggests that there is little space for the diversity of Muslims in the West to be recognised. The work of Bassel and Emujulu (2010) highlights the

existence of a western rhetoric which binarises Muslim religion and British and French citizenship.

In line with these studies, I found that the existence of negative perceptions associated with minority ethnicity combined with anti-Muslim discourses positioned the minority ethnic groups in this research as not belonging in the West. Yet, compared to these studies which mostly focus on religious identity, one of the contributions of this research is the de-construction of the Muslim category thanks to the simultaneous focus on gender, ethnicity, religion and citizenship. This intersectional analysis revealed both similarities and differences between the well-established and newly-settled groups in both countries.

One key difference between French Pakistanis and Algerians was the way in which the women perceived their rights as French citizens. French Algerian women expressed a stronger entailment to, what they defined as, *their* country and were also more vocal about unfair treatment than their Pakistani counterparts. This sense of injustice is linked to their belief in the French slogan *Liberté, Égalité et Fraternité*¹ which in theory should apply to them but is not because of the women being constantly othered by the people they interact with (at work and outside). In comparison, many French Pakistani women were more accepting of oppressing and unfair practices such as removing the headscarf at work or settling for 'minimum' inclusion (such as not fighting othering practices or racist remarks as long as one has a job). This difference in attitude towards French society is linked to Algeria's colonial past with France (as argued in Chapter 4).

There were also similarities in both groups' experiences. Despite what current research shows for Pakistanis in France in this study, I found commonalities in experiences of everyday racism among French Pakistani and Algerian women. For example, Moliner (2009) described

¹ Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood.

Pakistanis as a model minority, accepted and respected in French society and Abu-Zahab (2007) claimed that French Pakistanis are less attached to their French identity and more to their Pakistani identity. I found that all French women (except one) felt strongly about their French identity but stated that they were perceived as 'fake' French (as one participant put it) by others. I found a common process of racialisation within which the women's bodily image (i.e. wearing headscarf, skin pigmentation) and opinions (i.e. regarding religious beliefs and practices) were used to 'other' them. This finding suggests that racialised identity constructions are not limited to well-established groups and that these identities entail negative experiences regardless of the numerical status of the minority ethnic group.

Moreover, these racialised identity constructions affect individual beyond the educational and employment sectors (as is the focus of current French research, see for example, Frickey and Primon's 2006 work on racism and the education to work transition of second generations). My research shows that negative experiences also impact individuals' sense of belonging and everyday social interactions and create feelings of distrust. My finding thus helps to advance existing French scholarship by suggesting the existence of a lack of equality for all French citizens based on the tension associated with accepting the compatibility of a minority ethnic *and* Muslim identity with a French citizen identity.

Unlike in France, the topic of citizenship and the ways in which it is racialised has been well researched in British literature (see for example, Waddington et al, 2009; Joppke, 2009; Raymond and Modood, 2007; Poynting and Mason, 2007; Favell, 2001b). In their collection of essays, Raymond and Modood (2007) discuss how, in theory, Britain's multicultural ideology allows ethnicity and/or religion to co-exist with citizenship but that, with the occurrence of political events (such as the 2005 London bombings), questions are being raised regarding whether this diversity is, in practice, tenable. My data, however, depict a

contradictory picture. In their interviews, British participants, both Pakistanis and Algerians, maintained that they are able to express their multiple identities² freely and without being subject to any negative othering. I argued in Chapter 4 that my participants equated this freedom of identity expression with an understanding of Britain as a non-racist country because of its strong commitment to multicultural and equal opportunity discourses. There was, however, a notable difference across the ethnic groups. Lack of experiences of racism was perceived by many Algerian women as a result of their numerical invisibility and absence from the British social imaginary. Put differently, many Algerian women suggested that their '*invisibility*' (compared to Pakistanis) allows them to live in a racism-free environment and not necessarily the existence of equal opportunity and multicultural discourses. Despite this difference in understanding their experiences, all the UK participants, at one point or another, claimed that the society they live in is not discriminatory or racist, nor are the white people they interact with. Even in cases where some participants experienced blunt racism and/or discrimination, they still described it as an extremely rare occurrence (see for example Leila's 'social experiment' in Chapter 6). Even such a statement hid many complexities.

I found 'paradoxical' discourses among British participants regarding the topic of racism in the UK. For example, despite initially maintaining that racism does not exist, at one point or another many participants acknowledged the existence of racism. This finding contributes empirically to Anthias's (2001) concept of translocational positionality (i.e. individuals can occupy multiple positions which at times can be contradictory) by showing the existence of conflicting discourses in my participants' interviews (contributions to this concept are presented in Section 3). Although my British participants denied, or at the least minimised, the existence of racism, this study's analytical evidence

²These include ethnicity/religion; ethnicity/citizenship; religion/citizenship and ethnicity/religion/citizenship.

indeed suggests that all my British participants experienced some form of racism/discrimination in their lives as a result of their ethnic and/or religious identity. This finding is in line with previous research, published as early as the 1990s (see for example Diawara, 1990). These studies highlighted the existence of an intrinsic relationship between Britishness/Englishness and whiteness which lead to other groups being 'othered', perceived as not British/English.

By adopting an intersectional approach to the study of religious identity, I illustrated the existence of everyday racism in both French and British women's accounts (whether they acknowledged it or not) but with importance nuances in terms of how the women positioned themselves and understood their experiences across ethnic groups and countries. I further highlighted how minority ethnicity and religion, regardless of a common colonial past, were used to other the women which produced a sense of non-belonging. The existence of a racialised citizenship identity in both countries corroborates previous findings which suggest that in practice, multicultural and republican philosophies produce similar experiences for Muslim minority ethnic groups (e.g. Bassel and Emujulu, 2010). Comparisons between well-established and newly-settled second generations are an angle of investigation which has not been addressed in research so far and would benefit from further attention.

Citizenship and visibility of religion

The majority of current research from France on Muslim women and bodily image has emerged since implementation of the headscarf ban and is either theoretical (e.g. Body-Gendrot, 2007) or legal (e.g. Thomas, 2006). In the UK, however, research on Muslim women's dress tends to focus on how *others* perceive the headscarf and/or niqab (see for example the discussion of a demonised image of Muslim women in Afshar's study of 2008). My research contributes to these literatures by discussing the implications of the visibility of religion on Muslim women's

identity as French or British and by offering a cross-national comparison of the experiences of women who wear headscarves/abayas and those who do not.

In particular, in my study, participants from France were acutely conscious of the effects of bodily image (facial features, skin pigmentation and dress code), and in particular of the headscarf, on their experiences of othering. They denounced the challenges posed to their citizenship on the basis of the visibility of their religion.

British women did not express similar views to French women. Although British women were aware of their particular social positions (in terms of potential stereotypes), those who wore headscarves did not mention any issues resulting from the visibility of their religion.

In both countries, however, 'overly-visible' Muslim women were subject to particular othering based on their physical appearance and were questioned by their work colleagues for the purpose of assessing their true Frenchness or Britishness. This was seen through the stories told by Seedra – French Algerian – and Malika – British Algerian – in Chapter 6. For example Seedra mentioned how she is constantly asked about her views on practices occurring in countries outside France (such as stoning of women) or other issues perceived as contradictory to religious practices (such as homosexuality) in order to assess, as she said, whether she is 'truly' French or not. Despite such psychological oppressions which have negative consequences (including, social, emotional and economic exclusions), my French and British participants stated that the visibility of their religion should not be seen as incompatible with their citizenship. In other words, they can be visible Muslims and still feel French or British but are not seen as such by the people they interact with.

By comparing the experiences of women who wear headscarves to those who do not, I have shown how visibility of religion reinforces the incompatibility between the French/British idea of citizenship and Islam. I argued that the existence of a strong and mostly implicit relationship between Frenchness/Britishness and whiteness not only restrains minority ethnic groups' rightful claims to citizenship but makes visibility of religion the ultimate othering factor. In that respect, this research has shown how both Pakistani and Algerian women navigated their bodily image (e.g. by removing visible religious markers) *and* opinions (e.g. by lying) and language (i.e. ensuring to speak 'standard' British English) and used these as discursive and performative strategies. This was seen, for example, through the stories of Aisha (French Algerian) who lies to her colleagues about her religious practices or Ruksana (French Pakistani) who used to remove the headscarf before arriving at work.

I have also uncovered that participants' positioning changed from negative to positive or vice versa as a result of their headscarf choice. In doing so, this study acknowledged the women's agency (even though constrained for some) in tackling discriminatory and/or racist practices *contextually*. Following Anthias (2001), I aimed to unpack the constructions of identities as conditioned by discourses and contexts, yet allowing space for shifts and contradictions. I therefore paid close attention to (1) the identities of the people my participants engaged with (ethnic, gender, professional and religious, if known), (2) the place the women found themselves in (specific to the interview setting, education and work or more general environments) and (3) the global socio-political context (such as 9/11).

Drawing on the concept of translocational positionality enabled the capturing of processes of identity formation. For example, the experiences of 'overly-visible' Muslim women in Britain who reported that they did not experience negative othering at their UK university but did so when they entered employment. In that respect, my study makes further

contributions to existing research by bringing together three spheres of social interactions often kept apart – societal, educational and professional – and untangling the complexity of the visibility of religion.

Therefore, on the one hand, this research showed in what context and for whom ethnicity and religion were seen as incompatible with French/British citizenship and on the other hand, it highlighted how women's bodily image was used for the attribution of a non-French/non-British identity (including physical appearance – headscarf, dress, skin pigmentation – opinions and language).

The paradox of experiencing inclusion and exclusion simultaneously

This section evaluates the second key finding of this study in relation to the participants' professional experiences. It discusses the dissociation between economic inclusion and social and emotional inclusion. This finding contributes to existing scholarship in two ways: By offering a broader scope for the discussion of issues of discrimination and racism in the labour market; and by providing an in-depth qualitative account on issues that have been primarily examined quantitatively.

First, this research investigated inequalities affecting individuals' economic participation at several employment stages. These are the submission of application, the interview stage, the first job as graduate and career progression (between 1 and 15 years after graduation). The examination of these stages was combined with the examination of work environment (including duties, diversity of team and relationships with colleagues). In doing so, this research illuminated how discriminatory and racist practices impact not only on access to employment but also economic mobility and stability.

Second, this study analysed both the issues the women faced in overcoming discriminatory and racist barriers *and* the strategies they put in place. It showed how French and British minority ethnic women were actively engaged in the construction of their professional identities which move beyond the struggle with their families; a similar struggle exists within the women's work environment. This includes a fight for the recognition of their status as a valuable colleague as their non-Muslim white colleagues. Inequality in employment, thus, takes the form of not being accepted as equal by one's peers.

'Evaluation' of intangible employment inequalities

Current literature on second generations and their employment addresses a number of topics. These can broadly be categorised according to two angles of investigation: (1) access to the job market (relative to economic participation and type of work undertaken) and (2) the relationship between education and employment, i.e. the 'returns' to educational qualifications, including the influence of family responsibilities such as marriage and childcare. Whatever the subject of investigation, the focus is on comparing economic outcomes of second generations to their white and/or other minority ethnic peers according to different factors. For example, by analysing the 2010 Census data, Khattab (2012) investigated how ethnic, gender and religious factors produced differential economic attainment among British South Asian women. In France Aeberhardt and his colleagues (2010) looked at the employment rates of second generations in relation to gender, ethnicity and educational qualifications and compared the group's results with those of their white peers. They found, for example, that the employment rates of French Maghrebi women in senior executive roles were 7 and 18 percentage points lower than white woman and white men respectively.

The literature on second generation discussed above uses quantitative or mixed-method methodology. Quantitative methodology evaluates levels

of economic participation among the group (i.e. their employment and unemployment rates). Disadvantages associated with different social divisions (such as religion) are assessed numerically to establish the impact of what Heath and Cheung (2006) labelled ethnic penalties. Similar to the quantitative literature, mixed-method and qualitative studies seek to explain how 'external' barriers affect second generations' economic participation (i.e. hindrances to remaining professionally active or in stable employment). For example, Dale (2008) combined survey and interview data to document the conditions of employment among UK-born Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. The focus of Dale's study remained on how participants balanced their family/marriage and work life. Few studies in France looked at similar issues from a qualitative perspective (but see Merckling's 2012 study on the relationship between Maghrebi women's family life and employment).

Thus the understanding of economic participation encompasses two perspectives in existing scholarship: (1) economic mobility and (2) economic activity (employment and unemployment). The effects of discrimination and racism are measured in relation to the group's hierarchical position among their peers (white and other minority ethnic groups, nationally as well as internationally). In short, existing research on second generations' employment does not offer any space for the narratives of individuals to emerge.

The major contribution of my research to existing scholarship has therefore been to highlight the intricacies of second generation women's employment experiences which I unpacked beyond statistical measurements. These intricacies were presented through a detailed examination of the women's experiences *at work*, by challenging the current assessment of career progression (through looking into for example, employment contracts and recurrent job changes) and by offering a comparative and longitudinal insight into this progression.

First, in the qualitative examination of work-related inequalities I combined the analysis of ‘external’ factors (qualification, family and recruitment in Chapter 5) and ‘internal’ factors (workplace environment in Chapter 6). In doing so, this research shows that individuals can experience inequalities despite being in employment and that these inequalities can exist in forms beyond traditional understandings of economic segregation, gaps in earnings and differential professional progress. Thus my research gave a fuller understanding of the inequalities identified for example, by Aeberhardt and his colleagues’ 2010 study on pay gaps among French Maghrebi women or the similar 2012 study by Rafferty who looked at British women’s work).

The focus on my participants’ experiences *at work* precisely revealed how beneath the surface of professional inclusion lie other inequalities which also implicitly affect mobility and stability. Issues of racism and discrimination are not limited to access to employment and upward social mobility. This research showed how less tangible inequalities – such as experiences of being othered and everyday racism – also affect employment trajectories. This was highlighted through several of the women’s stories about finding alternative employment solutions because of emotional and social exclusion at work.

Second, my research challenged current assessments of career progression. Thus, for example, while all graduates’ unstable professional positions are generally explained in terms of employability, lack of knowledge and of adequate skills (e.g. Tholen, 2014), my research showed how feelings of non-belonging pushed many of the women to leave jobs (see for example Mariam’s experience at the renowned TV channel). The accumulation of short-lived professional experiences cannot always be explained by the existence of a highly competitive job market. Changing jobs quickly and often can also reflect escape from oppressive and isolating work environments. Similarly, although second generation women’s access to professional jobs is perceived as upward

social and economic mobility (e.g. Thomson and Crul, 2007), my research showed the underlying negativity this ‘success’ can hide and the consequences it has (see for example, Naima’s account about her work as an advisor to the mayor in Chapter 6). This distinctive analysis has been afforded by the examination of the women’s relationships with their colleagues and their overall work environment.

Third, the overview of the women’s disadvantage as new graduates showed their relatively precarious position in the job market in line with previous studies (e.g. Moreau and Leathwood, 2006; Brown and Hesketh, 2004), many of which are longitudinal studies that assess graduates’ career progression against their educational qualifications (often including across group comparisons). For example, the 2008 report published by CEREQ³ notably looked at young people’s un/employment rates three years after being awarded their degrees. By examining my participants’ professional careers longitudinally (that is starting from their pre-graduation years to date) my research showed how initial disadvantages often have a temporary effect on the women’s professional progression (because of lack of experience and limited social networks). The comparisons of the professional experiences of young graduate women to those of well-established women complements existing research by contextualising the impact of different stages of employment (e.g. pre-graduation, first graduate job and career progression).

Thus, this research offered a broader scope for the examination of inequalities in the labour market. Inequalities can take the form of emotional and social exclusions; they can be concomitant to economic inclusion and can affect employment at different stages.

³ Labour market research and study centre.

Second generation women and the construction of professional identities

The similarity in many French and British participants' professional experiences suggested that racialised and religious othering operates in both countries regardless of participants' ethnic origin, career stage and field of employment. Experiences of othering were strongly embedded in particular contexts and specific discussions. These contexts refer to interactions between the minority ethnic women and their non-Muslim white colleagues in discussions pertaining to their religious beliefs and practices and/or their physical appearance (related to the headscarf/abaya).

Another significant contribution of this research has been the appreciation of French and British women's agency in countering inequalities (including 'new-graduate' disadvantages and racist and discriminatory practices). This was achieved by exploring the practical and identity strategies the women deployed, something that is frequently lacking in published studies in France where North African women are often depicted as victims of their disadvantaged socio-economic situation. In her intergenerational study on migrant women, notably Maghrebis, and their daughters, Merckling (2012) only focused on second generation women's limited professional opportunities. She overlooked their agency in terms of deploying strategies to remain economically active (such as undertaking flexible work). In contrast, the research reported here explored how Pakistani and Algerian women overcame initial barriers by making practical choices (such as studying for additional degrees and working in part-time roles). Similarly, Pailhé and Meurs (2008) reported the double discrimination (ethnic and gender) that North African women face, which restricts their employment opportunities. My study has highlighted the identity negotiations of French Pakistani and Algerian women in minimising the effect of racism in the labour market. This was noticeable in how my participants moderated their physical appearance in

order to disrupt fixed bodily images associated with Muslim minority ethnic women (e.g. by removing their headscarves or wearing mini-skirts).

Unlike in France, British studies on second generation women's employment acknowledge the active role UK-born South Asian women play in their own lives. Yet, the notion of empowerment is framed within the family context. For example, Dale (2008) identified how gaining higher educational qualifications enabled second generation South Asian women to negotiate their positions within their families (in relation to marriage and undertaking employment). This research suggests that women's struggle to sustain non-traditional gender and/or cultural identities extends beyond the family environment. The labour market is also a site of identity negotiations. These are not simply limited to achieving economic independence but also include fights for the recognition of their professional identities among their white peers.

This research showed how French and British women navigated different sites of struggle (within their family and workplace) in attempts to undo fixed identities, challenge experiences of othering and everyday racism and achieve their professional aspirations. Although the women were constantly tackling oppressive situations, I showed that French and British second generation women are active, rather than passive subjects. This research contributed to current scholarship by analysing both the issues the women faced *and* the strategies they deployed and showing their simultaneous experiences of inclusion and exclusion. In doing so, it brought together discussions of the practical resources the women put in place in the construction of their professional careers *and* the identity strategies they deployed in the construction of their professional identities.

All in all, while the French and British second generation women in this study achieved social mobility (by gaining academic qualifications) and

experienced a measure of inclusion through employment (by being in professional jobs), they experience(d) contingent inclusion as a result of social and emotional exclusions at work. Put differently, this study contributed to existing research by untangling the complexity of inequalities in the labour market and by offering a micro-analysis of minority ethnic women's professional experiences. Hence, although second generation women are professionally included in some ways, social equality remains 'capped'.

Theoretical contributions

A number of theoretical concepts have been used throughout this thesis to aid the analysis of how graduate Pakistani and Algerian women negotiate their labour market positions in France and Britain. These are the concepts of the 'other', translocational positionality, everyday racism and emotional (non-)belonging.

Drawing on Said's (1979) notion of the 'other' enabled me to analyse how the essentialised identity of minority ethnic groups is used by the white majority group to perpetuate oppression and legitimise their domination. Moving beyond this fixed 'West and the Rest' binary, I have offered a micro-level analysis of the category of the 'other' by contextualising it within society, in education and at work for particular Muslim Algerian and Pakistani women in France and Britain. By contextualising their social interactions, I showed that multiple 'others' are constructed in British and French society. I defined four categories of 'others' which (can) exist simultaneously:

- The positive ethnic 'other'
- The (non-colonised) ethnic 'other'
- The colonised ethnic 'other'
- The 'overly-visible' Muslim 'other'.

The positive ethnic 'other' refers to women who benefit from mistaken identities (such as the 'whitened' identity). The (non-colonised) ethnic 'others' are French Pakistanis and British Algerians while the colonised ethnic 'others' are French Algerians and British Pakistanis. The 'overly-visible' Muslim 'other' refers to women who wear headscarves. I argued for the existence of two overarching 'other' categories: the socially problematic 'other' (including the ethnic/colonised ethnic/'overly-visible' Muslim 'others') and the socially accepted 'other' (including the positive ethnic 'other'). Although both categories are positioned against the white norm, I showed how being identified as a socially accepted 'other' constructed non-oppressive relationships between the minority ethnic women and their white interlocutors.

The concept of translocational positionality (Anthias, 2009) enabled me to explore multiple and shifting positions for second generation graduate women in both countries. By comparing the accounts of well-established minority ethnic groups (Pakistanis in Britain and Algerians in France) to those of less-established groups (Algerians in Britain and Pakistanis in France) across two western European countries, I showed how identity constructions as the 'other' are embedded in discourses on Muslims in the West. By looking at the identity negotiations participants engaged in, I further showed how their claimed social positions were flexible and contextual; they were not only contingent upon the national framework (multiculturalism in Britain and republicanism in France) but also upon the social actors with whom the women interacted.

This in turn allowed me to illustrate how intersecting social divisions operate both commonly and differently in different contexts. More precisely, the analysis of ethnic and religious factors showed how their simultaneous operation made it difficult to disentangle one from the other, notably in cases where the participants did not wear headscarves (as seen in Naima's case in council meetings in France or in Mariam's case at the British TV channel in Chapter 6). The overlap between ethnicity

and religion (Islam in this study) showed an intrinsic association between the two. Moreover, I pointed out how the visibility associated with religion makes Islam stand alone to some extent in having its own particular effects. This further highlights how with the accretion of different events that have led to Muslims being constructed as the 'other' and threatening⁴, the identity of the 'other' in western European countries has shifted, not only to the Muslim 'other' but to the female and covered Muslim 'other'. This produced similar experiences for women who wore headscarves in both France and Britain. In that respect, Anthias's (2009) translocational positionality framework further provided a useful lens for highlighting similarities and differences in this comparative study. I argued that supposedly similar social divisions (including migration history, social class background and religion) are dependent not only on place (including national specificities, interactions with other social actors), but also on each individual's ability to deploy their identities strategically (i.e. the use of mistaken identities). I contributed to the concept by contextualising the interplay of social divisions at the individual level, as well as the structural level in interactions in society, the educational system and the labour market.

The comparative analysis of the women's experiences of being othered also allowed me to contribute to Essed's (1991) concept of everyday racism by suggesting that it is not limited to social exclusion, but also includes emotional oppression which in turn can lead to economic exclusion (as seen in the cases of those participants who left their jobs or those who are overqualified). I further argued that the coercive relationship (operated through everyday racism) between the majority and minority ethnic groups is not only sustained through what Said described as discursive processes (as indicated in Chapter 2), but also through the unspoken (in terms of behaviour and the white gaze). This showed further commonalities in the accounts of all French women and

⁴ These refer to post-9/11 national events such as the '7/7' London bombings, the headscarf and niqab bans in France, the capture of Bin Laden and the Mohammad Mèrah affair in France.

British women, who wear headscarves, in terms of how they understood their experiences of exclusion. Essed (1991) argues that the routine operation of everyday racism facilitates the recognition of such experiences, since people can contextualise these and link them to previous events. This conceptualisation contributed to the explanation of the reluctance of many British women (mostly who do not wear headscarves) to frame their experiences within a discourse of racism because they did not see their experiences as everyday, but as belonging to the past or, as one participant said, 'it happened only once'. In sum, experiences of everyday racism were a common feature across countries. However, the majority of French women reported daily experiences of racism, whereas I mainly found past and 'occasional' instances of everyday racism in British women's accounts⁵ (especially among women who wear headscarves).

The depiction of these fluid and shifting processes of identification, situated and relational, moves beyond the constructions of differences around gender and social class (as Anthias (2009) argues) since the analysis of experiences of everyday racism, (non-)belonging and otherness in this research illuminated the central role of religious identity construction in macro- and micro-level contexts for second generations.

Taken together, the thesis shows how racialisation impacts on Muslim minority ethnic women regardless of ethnicity and nationality and produces both common and different experiences of social and emotional exclusion in France and Britain.

⁵ The exception is for three participants who face these challenges in their current workplace (but do not recognise these as racist). Accordingly, not experiencing racism in their current workplace or social network further enhances British women's belief in a racism-free society.

Limitations of the study

Although this research has contributed to existing literature, there are some limitations in the study design which need to be acknowledged. Since the study consists of a small scale, non-representative sample and takes a qualitative approach, it is not possible to generalise from the findings. Yet, it allowed me to offer a theoretical generalisation regarding the social construction of social and professional positions (as discussed above).

Moreover, the methods of recruitment, which relied heavily on snowballing, affected the data collected in a number of ways. For example, I was unable to control for the fact that half of my British participants wore headscarves compared to only two in France. The recruitment method also impacted on participants' employment fields. Since I relied predominantly on my personal contacts within the educational sector in Britain, British participants worked in the public sector while French participants worked predominantly in the private sector. Accordingly, the data gathered could not allow a comparison of experiences in terms of differences, and commonalities, between the private and the public sectors.

Recommendations for future research

In my study, the majority of French and British participants were the eldest in their families. They referred strongly to the lack of guidance they received from their parents and accordingly reported their responsibilities towards their younger siblings. They highlighted the enhanced opportunities their younger siblings had in comparison to theirs. The few French participants who benefited from their elder siblings' support and guidance referred to being 'saved' from various 'pitfalls' of the educational system. A further study could contribute to the burgeoning literature on

siblings and on the educational trajectories of the children of migrants by comparing the educational and professional experiences of siblings.

In addition, having gained some valuable insights while speaking to the adult daughter of one French Algerian participant, future work could focus on 'emerging' generational changes. Some participants labelled themselves as the 'generation in transition' pointing out their 'bridging' position between the first generation – their immigrant parents – and the third generation – their own French/British-born children. They strongly believed that the structural and individual difficulties they faced, which shaped their educational and professional trajectories, would not affect their own children. Future research could investigate these hopes for a fairer society (which were especially infused in French women's accounts).

Final remarks: 'It was a bit cold in the corridor'

'Once you acquire [knowledge] through study and research, in-depth, documented, comprehensive knowledge of racism, there is no way back.'

(Essed, 2004, p132)

Racism and discrimination persist in 21st century Western Europe; notably France and Britain as reported in this study. The often subtle nature of these acts made it very difficult for many participants to articulate such experiences, but for those who did recognise these as racist, it became a 'daily war' (as discussed in Chapters 4 and 6). The intersectional framework helped to show the ways in which experiences of everyday racism were understood, experienced and constructed, predominantly shifting between the ethnic and religious social positions. The simultaneous impact of ethnic and religious identifications showed the challenges second generation minority ethnic women face while attempting to navigate through the 'cold corridors' of life. It also showed

the importance of religious identification in creating an eternal sense of non-belonging in both countries for many of the women.

Are academic achievements a warrant for professional success? Is nationality a warrant for accepted belonging? The pages you have read have shown how subtle othering processes have created contingent inclusion for second generation Muslim women who have achieved academic and professional inclusion (by securing university degrees and professional jobs), yet experience social and emotional exclusions in the workplace (as well as society at large). Ethnic and religious differences are formally silenced in the French Republic, but are used to exclude French women. In comparison, ethnic and religious differences are respected in multicultural Britain, but acceptance of differences and equality is 'capped'. So *who* is better off? Or *where* is the 'other' better off? One of my French Pakistani participants, Ruksana, summarised the view of all other participants, both French and British, regarding that question: 'in Britain, even if Muslim women are at the bottom of the social ladder, at least they are *on* it; in France, they are *nowhere* to be found on the ladder!'(my emphases). Yet, experiences of racism and/or discrimination, whether experienced on a daily basis or as a 'one-off' instance, still *are* inequalities. This strongly suggests that both French and British societies are far from operating on meritocratic and equal opportunity policies respectively.

I began this thesis with the story of my 'past' Self, a Self who struggled to identify experiences of everyday racism and whose sense of belonging was challenged in a prestigious white French university. These past three years have helped me to understand and articulate my own experiences. How frustrating it is just to keep going round and round in my head thinking about how I could have challenged the perpetrators (to use Essed's terms). But no, you cannot undo the past. As Essed suggests (in the epigraph above), '[t]here is no way not to recognize racial and other injustices once you have *learned* how to see them' (2004, p132, my

emphasis). The one who knows has the potential to act (by sustaining mistaken identities), yet might remain powerless (by being subjected to 'new' stereotypes), but the one who does not know (or resist the knowledge) can remain 'free' despite uncertainty. Is being wise(r) more desirable than being naive, immune to the existence of inequalities? Whatever position you might choose, knowledge *does* certainly equip you better for future (identity) negotiations.

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Appendix 1: Ethics Approval

Ms Pui Sin
Faculty of Children & Learning
Dean of Faculty: Professor Richard Andrews

Tel +44 (0)20 7612 6957
Fax +44 (0)20 7612 6927
Email p.sin@ioe.ac.uk

By Email
Ms Jawiria Naseem



Leading education
and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AL
Tel +44 (0)20 7612 6000
Fax +44 (0)20 7612 6125
Email info@ioe.ac.uk
www.ioe.ac.uk

27 January 2012

Dear Ms Naseem

Ethics approval

Project title: Understanding the professional experiences of ethnic minority women in France and Britain

I am pleased to formally confirm that ethics approval has been granted by the Institute of Education for the above research project. This approval is effective from 27 January 2012.

I wish you every success with this project.

Yours sincerely

+++++

Pui Sin
Research Student Administrator
On behalf of the Faculty of Children & Learning Research Ethics Committee

cc: Ann Phoenix
Katherine Twamley
IOE Research Ethics office

Appendix 2: Information leaflet (English version)

Leading education
and social research
Institute of Education
University of London

The Professional Experiences of Muslim Pakistani and Algerian Women in France and Britain

A research project

October 2011-October 2013

I am Jawiria. I am an MPhil/PhD student at the Institute of Education, University of London. For my research, I would like to carry out a number of interviews with British Muslim Pakistani and Algerian women.

Would you like to help?

This leaflet will give you more information about the research. I would also be pleased to answer any questions you have.

What is this research about?

This research is about understanding the professional experiences of women from two different Muslim ethnic minority groups in France and Britain. The focus is on second-generation Pakistani and Algerian women who are in employment or temporarily unemployed.

Since 2001, Islam has gradually become the focus of public as well as governmental attention. In the past decade, the place of Muslims in Western Europe has been presented as highly challenging and

problematic, especially in regards to the visible Muslim population (e.g. women who wear the religious dress/headscarf).

In France, religious tensions grew and resulted in the ban of the hijab in French schools (February 2004), and recently in all public places (September 2010).

Since the 2005 London bombings, Islam is at the heart of governmental concerns. The nature of British Muslim ethnic minority groups' integration is being questioned.

Thus, the purpose of the study is to understand the position of Muslim women in today's Western societies and to see if there are differences and/or similarities cross-nationally and within the two countries regarding Muslim women's experiences of the labour market.

Who will be part of the project?

Pakistani and Algerian women are chosen for this study.

Histories of colonial relationships have motivated the selection of groups (e.g. colonial history between France and Algeria on the one hand and Britain and Pakistan on the other). I will then compare the group most established in the first country with the one in the other.

What will happen during the research?

This research involves one-to-one interviews. It is a longitudinal study, that is to say I would like to interview volunteers at least 3 times over a period of 18 months. This will help me to get a deeper insight into participants' professional lives.

And, don't worry; if you wish to leave the research, you are free to withdraw at any point simply by telling me that you wish to do so.

What questions will be asked?

The interviews will allow you the opportunity to tell your story. However, there are a few themes I would like to discuss. Those are:

- Your background
- Your education
- Your work experience during previous/current job(s)
- Your perception of being a Muslim woman

How will information collected be used?

After a first series of interviews in both countries, the data collected (e.g. material from the interviews) will be transcribed and analysed. All data collected will build the basis for subsequent interviews. It will also help to stress key issues and topics that are important to participants in the thesis.

Your information will be kept strictly confidentially. My supervisors and I will be the only people to know that you have taken part in the research. During transcription, data analysis, writing of the thesis, publication and conferences, your participation will be kept anonymous. A pseudonym will be given to you to ensure complete confidentiality and any identifying details will either be changed or not used.

Notes and tapes from all interviews will be kept in a safe and secure place.

Will you know about the research results?

Yes, if you wish to know.

Please provide contact details. I will then send you a summary of the results, once the thesis is completed.

Is there anything else you need to know?

Yes. You will need to sign and date a consent form. It is a written agreement of your voluntary participation in this project and that you give your informed consent to taking part.

If there is anything else you would like to know before making a decision or you would like to take part, please contact me:

Jawiria Naseem
jawiria_naseem@hotmail.fr
01865 485 149

PhD supervisors

Professor Ann Phoenix
020 7911 5395

Dr Katherine Twamley
020 7612 5333

Thank you for taking the time to read this leaflet!

Appendix 3: Interview guides 1 and 2

The first interview guide (interview guide 1) was used for the first two pilot interviews. The second one (interview guide 2) was used during the last pilot interview and on.

Interview guide 1

- **Educational background:** can you start with your time in primary school?
 - How were your teachers?
 - How were you friends?
 - Describe your time in collège/secondary school?
 - Which lycée/secondary school did you attend? Why?
 - Professional path or general? Where? Why?
 - Decision making/people involved and their role: parents' role? Teachers'?
 - Any help received? Sought? School advisors?
 - Decisions made and expectations: what you wanted to do and what you eventually did?
- **Education-to-work transition:** when did you get your first job after graduation
 - How long did you wait? Why do you think you had to wait (or not)?
 - Where did you apply?
 - Did you receive any help during that process?
 - Why did you move to England? (specifically designed for Aicha)

Interview guide 2

- **Introduction :** could you tell me about :
 - Your family?
 - Siblings/parents / family status
 - Place of residence
- **Educational background:** can you describe your educational path since college/secondary school?
 - Which *lycée*/secondary school?
 - Professional path or general?
 - Decision making/ people involved and their role
 - Decisions made and expectations

- **Professional background:** can you describe in detail your professional activities?
 - Current job
 - Aspiration / expectation
 - If children: how do you manage your family life and your work?
 - How did you get that job?
 - Age she started and why/ which jobs did she do and why?
 - Any rejection? why?
 - How did you get the jobs?
 - Agency / contacts/ word-of-mouth/ ads
 - How did interviews go?
 - Any training?
 - Time between each job
 - Work relationships
 - Some studies show that women from Maghrebi background face difficulties when entering the labour market compared to native women. They are victims of discrimination based on their ethnicity and religion. What do you think of that? Did you ever face any difficulties?
 - Some studies show that in England, a majority of women from Pakistani origin are to be found at the bottom of the social ladder even when highly educated. Some women are victims of negative stereotypes based on their religion and cultural background (e.g. families won't let them work/ they will leave work to start a family). What do you think of that? Did you ever face any difficulty in your professional life?
 - What do you think of the studies you did and the expectations of the labour market?

- **Culture and religion:** in France, people who have immigrant parents are often called '*français d'origine arabe, africaine*'; whereas descendants of natives are called French. What do you think of this label? Do you think this has or had (will have) an impact in your professional life?
 - Perceived as '*arabe*'
 - Stereotypes
 - Racism / discrimination

- Identity :
 - Debates in France over the question of identity: 'what is to be French?' what is your point of view? What do you think of this? If I ask you about your identity, how will you define it?
 - Do you think it changes according to specific situations?
 - Did it ever change?
 - Is it important for you? Why, why not?
 - 'France for the French': what does it mean to you?
- Hijab :
 - There are now two laws forbidding the hijab in secondary schools and in public places. Do you feel concerned about it? What is your point of view?
 - A Pakistani British participant said that the hijab doesn't have any effect on her professional life. Two of the participants have worked in public and private places and have been the first point of contact with the public/ customers. What do you think of wearing the hijab and working in France?
- **Questions if time left :**
 - Three participants, among whom one was a Moroccan French /two Pakistani British, told me about physical and verbal abuses when in *école primaire*/primary school, linked to their ethnicity? Did you ever experience this?
 - Compare situations in Britain and France

Appendix 4: Detailed characteristics for all participants at first interview

Pseudonyms of participants who wear headscarves are underlined.

Pseudonyms	Age	Degree specificities and skill diplomas	Occupation	Contract type
BRITISH PAKISTANIS				
<u>Raheela</u>	28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bachelor's (BA) in Psychology - Diploma in Counselling 	University programme coordinator	Permanent Full-time
<u>Neelum</u> (also wears abaya)	32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BA in Human Biology - PGCE in Physics 	Physics Teacher	Permanent Part-time
Mariam	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BA in English Literature - Postgraduate Certificate in English Literature 	Unqualified Social worker	Permanent Part-time
Noreen	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BPharm - Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education Learning - PhD (on-going) 	Clinical lecturer	Permanent Full-time
Sehrish	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Master's in Media and Cultural Studies 	Civil servant/ Executive director of a charity	Permanent Full-time
Anya	45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BA in Economics and Geography - PGCE - Master's in Education 	Deputy head/ Specialise leader in education	Permanent Full-time

BRITISH ALGERIANS				
Heena	23	- BA in Accountancy	Special needs education advisor	Permanent Full-time
Latifa	25	- Master's in Business and International Marketing	Junior Marketing Researcher	Permanent Full-time
<u>Saadia</u>	25	- Master's in Translation and Writing	Freelance editor	-
<u>Malika</u>	26	- Master's in Psychology	Assistant research psychologist	Permanent Full-time
<u>Leila</u>	26	- BA in IT Data Base and Business Management	Unemployed (last job: Database Analyst)	-
<u>Karima</u>	26	- BA in Biochemistry - PGCE in Science	Science teacher	Permanent Part-time
FRENCH PAKISTANIS				
<u>Mahy</u>	24	- DUT (Higher National Certificate) in Management	Unemployed (last job: Programme Administrator)	-
Reema	25	- Master's in HR Administration	HR administrator	Permanent Full-time

Ruksana (stopped wearing headscarf)	25	- BTS (Higher National Diploma) in transport and logistics - Airport Station Agent Training Course	Airport station agent	Permanent Full-time
Sonia	28	- BTS (Higher National Diploma) in Secretarial Studies - Airport Station Agent Training Course	Airport Station agent	Permanent Full-time
Sana	32	- Technical BA in Management and Social Engineering	Head of Technique Management	Permanent Full-time
Meena	34	- BA in Medical and Social Sciences	Private dental assistant	Permanent Full-time
FRENCH ALGERIAN				
<u>Seedra</u>	26	- Master's in Corporate Finance	Accountant	Permanent Full-time
Fatima	27	- Technical BA in Banking	Bank adviser	Permanent Full-time
Naima	32	- Master's in Education	Advisor to mayor/Head of community and youth organisation	Volunteer Permanent Full-time
Zara	33	- Master's in Accountancy	Patisserie owner	-
Anissa	35	- Technical BA in HR Administration	HR administrator	Permanent Full-time
Farida	42	- Master's in Literature	Real-estate assistant	Permanent Part-time

Appendix 5: Transcription conventions

In the transcription extracts:

- [her colleague]: words in square brackets clarify meaning in the extract
- believe: underlined words indicate a word the participant stressed on
- LA-TI-FA: words in capital letters and hyphenated indicate a stressed word pronounced one syllable at a time by the participant
- (anger in voice): comments in parentheses indicate change in pitch and voice to reflect participants' emotional responses, laughs, long pauses and silence.
- ... : three periods indicate a short pause
- (long pause): this description indicates, varied, but longer pauses
- [...] designates a section of the quote removed if not relevant for the discussion presented

Words used in different language have been kept (for example use of Urdu and Arabic words).

Appendix 6: Socio-economic classification based on parental occupation

In the following tables, when applicable, both parents' occupation are used as an indicator of social position in order to produce a socio-economic classification of all participants while in education. The classification is based on the European Socio-economic Classification model (ESeC), as explained by Rose and Harrison (2007). The ESeC was designed 'to capture qualitative differences in employment relationships' while also offering a hierarchical classification. It recognises ten levels of classification including four groups of people ((1) employers; (2) self-employed; (3) employees and (4) involuntarily out of employment). These groups are further divided into 3 class models:

- Classes 1 and 2 form the salariat
- Classes 3-6 form the intermediate
- Classes 7-9 (can also include Class 10) form the working class

Classes 1 and 2 are the most advantaged ones including large employers, higher/lower grade professionals. Classes 3-6 include higher grade white and blue collar workers, small employers and self-employed in non-professional jobs. Classes 7 to 9 include lower grade white collar workers and skilled/semi-/unskilled workers. Class 10 includes people who never worked or are long-term unemployed (Rose and Harrison, 2007; p465). For a detailed explanation of the ESeC model, see Rose and Harrison (2007).

In the thesis, although socio-economic classification of participants is derived from the ESeC model, I will use the commonly used terms as follows:

- Upper class for salariat
- Middle class for intermediate
- Working class

Table 1 is a summary of the socio-economic classification for all participants by country; Table 2 is a detailed version. Pseudonyms of participants who wear headscarves are underlined.

Table 1: Summary of the socio-economic classification for all participants by country

	Upper class	Middle class	Working class	Total
France	-	4	8	12
UK	3	3	6	12
Total	3	7	14	24

Table 2: Detailed socio-economic classification for all participants
(A lone parent (mother is divorced/ widowed or father does not work in France/UK) household is indicated with a hyphen.)

Pseudonyms	Parental occupation		Class
BRITISH PAKISTANIS			
	Mother	Father	
<u>Raheela</u>	Mental health nurse	Unemployed	Middle class
Mariam	Head of secondary school	Small business owner	Upper class
<u>Neelum</u>	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
Sehrish	Unemployed	-	Working class
Anya	Unemployed	Small business owner	Middle class
Noreen	Media consultant	Chemical engineer	Upper class
BRITISH ALGERIANS			
	Mother	Father	
Heena	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
<u>Karima</u>	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
<u>Malika</u>	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
Latifa	Unemployed	-	Working class
<u>Saadia</u>	University lecturer	Unemployed	Upper class
<u>Leila</u>	Unemployed	IT manager	Middle class

FRENCH PAKISTANIS			
	Mother	Father	
Ruksana	Unemployed	Small business owner	Working class
Sonia	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
Reema	Small business owner	Small business owner	Middle class
Meena	Unemployed	-	Working class
Sana	Unemployed	-	Working class
<u>Mahy</u>	Unemployed	Small business owner	Middle class
FRENCH ALGERIANS			
	Mother	Father	
Zara	Restaurant manager	Retired (was multiple businesses owner)	Middle class
Fatima	Unemployed	Unskilled worker	Working class
Farida	Unemployed	Unemployed	Working class
Anissa	Unemployed	Unskilled worker	Working class
Naima	Unemployed	Retired (was unskilled worker)	Working class
<u>Seedra</u>	Unemployed	Small business owner	Middle class

Appendix 7: Sample interview transcripts

Extract 1 is from a pilot interview. The British Pakistani participant, Raheela (R), is explaining how times have changed between when she was younger and now. She recalls an event of abuse while at school which came as a surprise to me.

[...]

R: the thing is...I grew up...was born in Cranbell; I went to schools in here; did everything here. I've seen it coz actually when I was 11 I was picked on about something to do like...being Asian...

J (**interrupted**): were you?

R: yeah!

J: what do you remember about this?

R: when I was about 11, I was actually (pause) beaten up for being (pause) Pakistani. Yeah, I was...

J (**interrupted**): who was it?

R: it was two boys and a girl in the street.

J: were they white British?

R: yeah! They were white British. So that time...about three, four times actually, I was picked on....verbal abuse. They'd just thrown at me that 'you're paki, paki, paki' that type of thing. *That* was *very* common then. I mean every Asian friend I had was...

J (**interrupted**): so you are like...28 now? So that's...17 years ago...

R: yeah. So I ...yeah...that time that did happen. It was very common.

[...]

Extract 2 is from an interview carried out at a later stage. Reema (R), a French Pakistani woman, is trying to explain why young girls can wear the headscarf in schools in England and not France. I (J) asked her why. In this extract she has very strong views on Maghrebis in France. Her answers came as a shock to me but I didn't react as in the case with Raheela.

[...]

R: because the Muslim populations...they are more serious, better established in England than in France. I don't have the impression to have seen here that people from Maghrebi origin, on higher positions. You can't see for example in hospitals, doctors, who are well known, you Maghrebi people. Whereas in England, you can find doctors who are Pakistanis.

J (made her develop her answer): why do you think you haven't seen the same thing here as you said?

R: because...I don't know...it's a Maghrebi culture maybe ! I don't know...maybe they are not interested! I don't know. They don't study....they don't want to look for jobs...they have never tried to improve their image actually!

J (asked for further explanation): the image?

R: the image, the stereotypes that we see on Maghrebis! That they are hooligans, robbers! I mean....they always do something...there you go...you can take Mohammad Merah for instance, everything that happened recently. Do you think he has improved the image of Islam? Do you believe that it's going to improve things for the Maghrebi population. No! Never! Have you ever heard things like this done by Pakistanis before the attacks in the underground? No! There, people are more established and settled in! The Pakistanis are people who are very, very intelligent! They are barristers, doctors. Yeah! Because there are images like that that England has agreed to make some effort! France is not going to make an effort for people who do not make any effort! You agree with me?

[...]

Appendix 8: Spontaneous and requested responses on topics of racism and discrimination

The following tables indicate the number of times French and British participants spoke spontaneously about, or replied to a question I asked, on the topics of racism and discrimination. Table 1 is a summary of the number of responses according to ethnicity and nationality. Table 2 is a detailed version including information on participants who wear headscarves (underlined pseudonyms).

Table 1: Summary of the number of spontaneous and requested responses on topics of racism and discrimination

	France		UK	
	Spontaneous Responses	Requested Responses	Spontaneous Responses	Requested Responses
Pakistanis	33	28	31	45
Algerians	71	54	13	21
Total	104	82	44	66

Table 2: Detailed numbers of spontaneous and requested responses on topics of racism and discrimination

France	Spontaneous Responses	Requested Responses	UK	Spontaneous Responses	Requested Responses
PAKISTANIS					
Sonia	11	3	<u>Raheela</u>	6	5
Reema	5	3	Mariam	4	10
Ruksana	9	3	Sehrish	6	6
Sana	4	6	<u>Neelum</u>	12	13
Meena	2	4	Noreen	1	8
<u>Mahy</u>	2	9	Anya	2	3
ALGERIANS					
Zara	7	8	Heena	-	1
Naima	20	8	<u>Karima</u>	-	4
Anissa	9	9	<u>Latifa</u>	4	2
Fatima	10	10	<u>Malika</u>	2	7
Farida	16	3	<u>Saadia</u>	3	3
<u>Seedra</u>	9	16	<u>Leila</u>	4	4

(A hyphen indicates no response)